



# THE FLASH City of Talent

An update from City Administration, Planning, Public Works and Police Departments

The Flash, which occupies the following two pages, is a publication of the City of Talent and is editorially separate from the rest of the Talent News and Review. All content and editorial choices contained in the rest of the paper are the sole responsibility of the TNR and are not in any way associated with the City of Talent. -JG

## From the Mayor's Office

Champagne taste on a beer budget is the downfall of many a cities' financial program. It is not unusual in today's world for a city to have serious financial problems, sometimes resorting to



bankruptcy or large scale layoffs. Many times this is a result of carrying too much debt for their income or using short-term funds to finance long-term services such as police, fire, etc. Cities are left with the challenge of how to continue funding a service when short-term funding comes to an end. Many times this is just not possible. In a nutshell, the health of any city has to do with how well they handle their finances. I am pleased to say that Talent has a sound financial program. Our reserves and contingency funds are approximately \$1.7 million, or about 20% of our \$8.5 million fiscal year 2012-2013 budget. Contingency funds are funds kept available for emergencies. The city's debt service is only about 4.7% of our total budget. Much of this debt service is in the water fund which is self supporting. This sound financial position which we now enjoy did not happen by accident. A number of responsible City Councils and City Managers paved the way to where we are today. I personally want to thank Administrative Services Director Denise Woodman for her many years shepherding the City of Talent's financial program.

I will deliver the annual Mayor's State of the City address at a regularly scheduled City Council Meeting on **February 6, 2013**. This address gives me the opportunity to express to the City Council and the Citizens of Talent, in much more detail than in this article, our strengths and our weaknesses in providing essential and discretionary services. Having a sound financial program is extremely important but we must also provide first class services. I hope to see you on February 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Bill Cecil, Mayor**  
541-535-1566  
mayor@cityoftalent.org

## Welcome New City of Talent Councilors

Welcome new City of Talent Councilors Darby Stricker and Joan Dean. Both are active members to the Community and will be a great addition



Meet the new City of Talent Councilors, from left to right: Councilor Cooke, Councilor McManus, Councilor Auer, Mayor Cecil, Councilor Glendenning, Councilor Stricker and Councilor Dean.

to the Council. Darby Stricker was elected for Councilor seat #2 and will serve a 4 year term. Joan Dean was elected for Councilor seat number #3 and will serve a 2 year term. Council meets every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. All citizens are welcome to come see this team in action.

## Utility Bill Payment Options

All Water Utility Customers have the opportunity to enroll in an "Equal Payment Plan" for the payment of monthly water utility bills. This has been a popular program for some, and allows them to equalize their monthly payments for water usage over a 12 month period rather than having to deal with higher water bills during the warmer months of the year and lower bills in late fall and winter months.

To participate in the program a water customer signs an agreement with the City that they will make equal monthly payments based on their annual consumption. The criteria for qualifying for this program are as follows:

- 1.) You will need to have one year of payment history with the City (i.e. you have been a city water customer for at least a year;
- 2.) Sign up for the program in March;
- 3.) You agree to pay the calculated monthly payment on time each month.

The actual monthly payment is based on your water usage history. Looking at the previous year of usage assists in setting the monthly payment at an amount that would, over the course of a year, cover the highs and lows of the bills.

By signing up in March you will be able to build up a credit balance so that when the larger bills occur during the summer months there will be

money there to cover that. Each year at this time the City reviews each one of the "Equal Payment Plan" accounts and adjusts the monthly payment to reflect the previous year usage as well as any balances on the account. If the monthly payments are not made then the City will terminate the agreement and place the customer back on a regular billing that requires full payment each month. Please call the Water Department at City Hall (541) 535-1566 for more information about this program.

## 'Firelines' The Chief's Report

### Apparatus and Equipment Bond Measure

The fire district's Apparatus and Equipment Bond Measure was narrowly defeated at the November 2012 General Election by 344 votes (4,312 yes votes, 4,656 no votes) or 48.08% Yes to 51.92% No. The good news, even though the measure was defeated, the election was very close. Additionally, the district was able to identify and communicate our apparatus and equipment needs to our customers. The reality is the equipment is old and getting older. There is no question the aging equipment continues to be a liability for customers and firefighters and needs replaced.

As we move forward, the fire district will look at options such as reducing the amount of the bond and resubmitting to voters, review borrowing options including 10-15 year lease purchase programs, continue to research and apply for local, state and federal grants as well as review and prioritize existing programs and expenditures.

## Budget Planning Fiscal Year 2013-2014

Budget planning for fiscal year 2013-

FEBRUARY, 2013  
Volume 15/Issue 2  
Official  
Newsletter of the City of  
Talent  
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2014 is well under way and the Board of Directors appointed the Budget Officer and approved the Budget Calendar at the January 15, 2013 Board Meeting. The initial Budget Committee Meeting is scheduled for February 19, 2013, 5:30 p.m., at Fire Station 1, 5811 South Pacific Highway, Phoenix, Oregon.

The Budget Committee is comprised of the 5 Board of Directors and an equal number of citizens at large. The citizens are appointed by the governing body and serve terms of three years. Terms are staggered so that about one-third of the appointed terms end each year. The budgeting process encourages citizen input and is a vehicle for obtaining public opinion about programs and fiscal policies of your district.

Come on down and get involved. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to give me a call or e-mail chiefdan@jcfid5.com.

**Dan Marshall, Fire Chief**  
Remember at Jackson County Fire District # 5-*"We Still Make Housecalls"*

## Talent Public Works: Street Sweeping

Street sweeping plays a vital role in the City's attempt to minimize debris and material that would otherwise enter the storm drain system and eventually discharge into Bear Creek. Please remember that leaves, yard debris and pet waste should not be swept into the street for removal. The intent of the City is to minimize the debris that makes its way to the locale water bodies. The City of Talent contracts with the City of Phoenix to sweep the Streets within the City of Talent. The streets within the city are generally swept early in the morning on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month with occasional increases in days when leaf volume is at its highest. If any residents are concerned with their respective road frontage being swept please do not park on the street

the above listed days. The majority of the town is swept once per month on one or the other of these days. It is **not** a requirement that cars are not parked on the street these days. If you have any questions regarding street sweeping in the City please feel free to call Talent Public Work at 541-535-5531.

### **From the Parks and Recreation Commission**

Interested in being involved with the Parks in Talent? The Commission has begun 2013 with one full position and two alternate positions open. Please consider serving on the Commission in one of these capacities. Besides our monthly meetings, Commissioners are occasionally assigned a few hours "homework" each month. It's not a huge commitment, and it means so much for our parks. Applications are available at City Hall and on the City website: [www.cityoftalent.org](http://www.cityoftalent.org)

### **News from Talent PD By Chief Mike Moran**

There has been a significant rise in theft of mail in the Rogue Valley. Medford Police have identified approximately 50 victims of mail theft from January 1st to January 17th, 2013. There was an incident just outside of Talent in late December involving a suspect in a large black pickup going into a mailbox. One recent victim had a valuable ring being mailed stolen. It was pawned but by the time the crime was uncovered it had been melted down.

The suspects appear to be targeting unlocked mailboxes. The suspects steal checks and credit cards in either the outgoing or incoming mail. In some cases, the suspects are using information from actual checks to then forge checks. Often times, the victim is not aware of the criminal activity until several days or weeks after the crimes.

We would like to encourage residents to not place money, checks, or other valuables in an unlocked mailbox. Many people place their bills in unlocked mailboxes, put the flag up and leave it overnight. To twist an old nautical phrase "Red flag at night, mail thieves delight."

If you need to order checks from your bank or credit union, pick them up at the office instead of having them delivered to an unsecure mailbox. Please monitor your accounts often and run a free credit check available from each of the three major credit reporting services. You can run one free report each year from each provider. Spreading them out at intervals over the year allows you to always actively monitor your credit report.

Our number of car break-ins also is rising. It is amazing the amount of valuables left in unlocked cars that are stolen from cars parked in driveways. The most frightening situation is when guns are left in a vehicle unlocked. I saw a recent case where someone left two handguns in a vehicle and they were stolen.

My driving tips for February are cold weather related. Leave early for any trip you take when the temperatures are near freezing. Moisture on a road that doesn't get a lot of sun can form into black ice quickly. When your

windows are iced over or have a lot of moisture on them, clean them fully. I see many people driving with most of the window still iced over and they look out through a small port hole of cleared windshield. Driving like this is not only not smart and unsafe, it is illegal and you can be cited for it. Take a little extra time to fully defrost or scrape your windows.

One of the great gems we have in Talent is the Camelot Theatre. I recently went to my first production there of "Spotlight on Etta James." It was an incredible performance by all involved and a fun night out. I encourage anyone who has not yet gone to the Camelot to see one of the shows as soon as possible.

### **News from the Together for Talent Committee**

Interested in becoming a **Talenteer**? This is a great Committee to be involved in if you have a passion for trees, trails, forums and want to help make Talent a better place. If you want more information you can contact Melissa Huhtala at 541-535-1566 or [melissa@cityoftalent.org](mailto:melissa@cityoftalent.org).

Currently Together for Talent has created a Suggestion Box asking citizens what they like about Talent and what suggestions they have. There has already been great feedback and we would love to hear more. The suggestion box is located in the lobby of the Talent Library.

Looking for an after school activity for your children? If you are interested in Spanish storytelling for please contact Dolly Warden at: 541-897-0065 or email: [dolly.warden17@gmail.com](mailto:dolly.warden17@gmail.com)

### **Traffic Safety & Transportation Commission Openings**

Currently the Traffic Safety & Transportation Commission has openings. The Commission meets as needed every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday every other month during the day. If interested you can get an application at City Hall or the City website: [www.cityoftalent.org](http://www.cityoftalent.org)

### **NOTICE OF TALENT CITY COUNCIL VACANCY**

The City of Talent is seeking applications for City Council Position No. 1. Talent

City Council positions are elected and/or appointed by Council, when a vacancy occurs, until the next general election. To qualify, candidates must reside within the City limits and be a registered voter in the City prior to submitting an application for appointment. Council meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday each month.

The appointee's term would begin immediately upon his/her appointment and extend until December 31, 2014. For more details and obligation information please make an appointment with Mayor Cecil at 541-535-1566 or [www.mayor@cityoftalent.org](http://www.mayor@cityoftalent.org)

**Applications must be submitted to the Office of the City Recorder no later than 5:00 PM, Friday, February 8, 2013.** Applications may be picked up and dropped off at City Hall, 110 E. Main Street, Talent, Oregon 97540. You can also obtain an application on the City website: [www.cityoftalent.org](http://www.cityoftalent.org)