

# City of John Day Newsletter

December 2013

## Snowplowing Priorities Reminder

For the past several years the City has been faced with decreasing street revenues; mainly due to the loss of timber forest receipts from the County and stagnant State gas tax revenues. The City has tried to maintain the same level of service with fewer funds; unfortunately, the time has come to make tough decisions on how the City will continue to maintain its street system. With winter upon us, the City would like to remind our citizens of the following priorities:

### SNOWPLOWING PRIORITIES

The City Council agreed with the recommendation that the hills will be the City's top priority for snowplowing with Ford Road going up to the Blue Mountain Hospital as the number one priority. Depending on the situation, Valley View Assisted Living would be next and then the airport. A smaller truck will take care of the smaller hills such as SE Elm Street, Franke Drive, Highland etc.

The State Highways will continue to be plowed as in the past as per the City's agreement with ODOT. We want residents to know that the side streets will not be plowed until there is at least 6" of snow. Public Works Director

*Street Maintenance Priorities continues on back page*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Street Maintenance priorities, Fire Station update, Burn Permits and Advisories; Downtown Beautification Project update.

Visit our website at [www.cityofjohnday.com](http://www.cityofjohnday.com); send us your comments at [grayp@grantcounty-or.gov](mailto:grayp@grantcounty-or.gov).

**Would you like to become a volunteer fire fighter?**  
**Please contact Fire Chief Ron Smith for more information at 541-575-0028.**

***Best Wishes for a Safe and Happy Holiday!***

## Water/Sewer Rate Increase

*Effective January 1, 2014*

It was the recommendation of the City's auditor Kent Bailey of Guyer & Associates, that in order to keep up with the cost of inflation and to provide for adequate reserve funding; the City needs to raise utility rates annually.

At their December 10, 2013 city council meeting, the John Day City Council adopted resolutions to raise water and sewer rates. Effective January 1, 2014 the residential base rate for the first 4,000 gallons of water will be \$31.50. This is a \$1.00 increase per month to the base water rate.

Effective January 1, 2014 the residential base rate for sewer will be \$39.50. The resolutions can be found on the City's website at [www.cityofjohnday.com](http://www.cityofjohnday.com); click utilities on the left hand side of the home page.

## Fire Station Update

The City of John Day and the John Day Rural Fire Protection District have decided to pursue a \$1.2 million dollar bond measure to provide necessary funding for the construction of a new fire station. The City is soliciting proposals from qualified bond counsel to assist the City with the preparation of the resolution and notice of measure election, ballot title, bond resolution, and any other documents necessary to issue the bonds. The project budget is approximately \$1.8 million; the City anticipates that the fire station project will be funded with the proceeds of the general obligation bonds issued by the City and also by general obligation bonds issued by the John Day Rural Fire Protection District. The City and the Rural District are reaching out to private foundations and local fundraising efforts to fund the balance of the project.

Deadline for proposals is December 31, 2013. The City and the Rural District anticipate being on the May 2014 primary election ballot.

Dave Holland informed the Council that the City can no longer afford to plow all of the flat streets in town and it is something that has to go away; however, he stated, if we start having safety issues on the flat streets, we will lay sand down in specific spots, such as in front of the post office or at the intersections as needed.

#### **SNOW PLOWING PRIVATE ROADS, DRIVEWAYS AND APPROACHES**

The City of John Day will no longer be able to sand private roads and driveways. In the past the City periodically sanded Ferguson Road and some private driveways as a courtesy when the roads or driveways became a safety issue. As the City is prioritizing snowplowing and sanding on city streets due to funding constraints; the City can no longer justify sanding private roads and driveways without compensation (reimbursement) from the property owners for time and materials. The City will sand upon request and compensation from property owners; however, the special sanding would depend on the availability of the sander and property owner's need to be aware that the City streets are our priority.

In the event of snowfall, property owners and residents are reminded the City of John Day Ordinance requires you to clear snow and ice from the sidewalk abutting your premises. Please remember your elderly or handicapped neighbors who would appreciate your assistance with snow and ice removal.

The John Day Police Department is asking for the public's assistance in clearing sidewalks to help with pedestrian traffic and their safety.

This recent cold weather has been challenging for us all. The Public Works Department has worked extensively to get main roadways clear and have done a good job of doing so.

John Day City Code requires the tenant, occupant or property owner to clear sidewalks. Certain sidewalks in town are in desperate need of cleaning. Pedestrian safety is being jeopardized the longer the sidewalks remain in this condition.

Some people such as students and the elderly are dependent upon clear sidewalks as their only means of transportation. Sidewalks in the business areas are of great priority due to being in areas of higher traffic flows. In many places, pedestrians are being forced to walk in roadways.

The City of John Day is not alone in this problem. Many other cities have similar ordinances and are asking for the cooperation of their citizens as well.

#### **Burn Barrel Permits**

Burn barrel permits expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. Burn permits can be renewed at John Day City Hall, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Burn permits can also be found online at [www.cityofjohnday.com](http://www.cityofjohnday.com) and mailed to City Hall, 450 East Main Street, John Day, OR 97845 or faxed to 541-575-3668.

#### **John Day Area Burn Advisories**

John Day area burn advisories let you know when it's time to take action to protect the health of your community. This advisory lets people know when they can and cannot burn.

Burn advisories are issued daily when weather inversions are most likely. Please listen to your local radio weather report to see what advisory has been issued for the day, or check the city's website at [www.cityofjohnday.com](http://www.cityofjohnday.com); click links and look for the Air Quality Index link. For more information please see the John Day Outdoor Burning Guide enclosed.

#### **Transportation Enhancement Project – Downtown Sidewalk Beautification Project**

The City of John Day and Oregon Department of Transportation held a second public meeting for the project on November 21, 2013. ODOT Senior Right of Way Agent Leslie Hasse explained the easement negotiating process to the public; several questions were asked and answered.

The project is a partnership between the City of John Day and the Oregon Department of Transportation to improve sidewalks and beautify downtown John Day. The project will begin at the intersection on Main Street south to SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and on sections of Main Street from the intersection east to SE Elm Street.

The project is scheduled to go out for bid by May 8, 2014. We anticipate construction to begin next summer and be completed by the winter.