

# City of John Day Newsletter



September 2016

## Greetings from the new City Manager

Dear Residents – Since this is my first newsletter as the new City Manager I wanted to take a moment to tell you how excited I am to be a part of this great community. In 2007 I married a gal from John Day. I've been coming here ever since on vacations but never thought I would become a resident. This has been a great opportunity for me and my family to move home, and we have felt very welcomed since we arrived. Thank you to those who have stopped by and please feel free to come by City Hall and introduce yourself.

I would very briefly like to share with you my philosophy on local government and my agenda as City Manager. I graduated in 2003 with a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology from Brigham Young University and in 2016, I earned my Master of Public Administration from the University of Washington. During the intervening years I worked as a consultant and technical advisor to the Department of Defense. Most of my career has focused on science and technology utilization in the public sector – looking for opportunities to leverage innovation and data-driven decision making to help government agencies become more effective and efficient.

As the City Manager for John Day my hope is to use my experience to the benefit of our residents. I am aggressively pursuing options to expand our digital infrastructure, looking for new opportunities to expand local fiber optic networks to help position our community to compete in the digital economy. I am also looking for ways to unlock the value of our public infrastructure through asset monetization – turning our public lands and facilities into new sources of revenue for the community. Ultimately my goal is to help our community operate more efficiently, saving money by reducing operating and maintenance costs, and in the process improving our quality of life.

I'll share more of these ideas with you in time, but for now I'd like to introduce a couple of changes that are coming to City Hall.



## New City Website

We have contracted with *Aha Consulting* to design a new city website. The new site will go live on or around January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. The site will include a public events calendar, email distribution lists that will allow us to send tailored content to residents, social media integration, and alerts for emergency response to keep you apprised of local incidents. Along with the new site, we are also in the process of digitizing the City's municipal code and our development code to make them more accessible to residents.

## US395: Sidewalk Improvements

I am pleased to announce that the City has received funding and approval for a new sidewalk enhancement project. ODOT will be constructing sidewalks and improving the storm water system on the west side of South Canyon Boulevard from SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Grant Union Jr./Sr. High School. This will complete the sidewalks to our school. The City was also awarded a special cities allotment (SCA) grant from ODOT to help offset our cost for this capital improvement. Preliminary engineering and design will take place over the course of the next year, with construction beginning in 2018. This is a project that was started by my predecessor, so please take a moment to thank Peggy Gray for her efforts in securing this amenity for our community.



## Redefining Wastewater Treatment

As many of you know, we are in the process of updating our wastewater treatment plant. The current facility was built in 1949 and is in need of replacement. The City completed a wastewater facilities plan in 2009 as the first step in that process. The 2009 Plan focused on designs for a traditional mechanical plant. We are now in the process of updating that Plan to include two new options: a year-round wastewater reuse process using hydroponics (plants grown in reclaimed water), and a lagoon treatment storage and agricultural irrigation system option.

The new Plan will allow us to explore options for monetizing our wastewater, turning an asset that would otherwise be wasted into a valuable resource that can be used in controlled environment agriculture (CEA). We are considering a range of financing and technical design options to determine if a facility like this can be replicated in our community. If so, we will be able to use our reclaimed water to grow cash crops in industrial-scale greenhouses that will help us reduce the overall cost of our wastewater treatment while at the same time kick starting a new industry in John Day.

This is an endeavor that will require intensive time and research, but both the City Council and I feel that it is time for bold measures to help revitalize our economy. This will be a multi-year process, and we welcome your input and suggestions as this opportunity progresses.



*The images above are from the WaterHub, a hydroponics wastewater treatment facility in Atlanta, GA developed by Sustainable Water – a firm that designs, builds, operates, maintains and finances wastewater treatment facilities.*

## Burn Ban Still in Effect

Our area is still under a general fire restriction. Check back with City Hall or contact John Day Dispatch at (541) 575-0030 to verify when the burn ban will be lifted.



## Sale of Old Fire Station

The City intends to sell the old fire station building, located at 209 S. Dayton Street. The building is zoned Commercial (Downtown) and may be used for commercial purposes but may not be used for household living. The appraised value of the building is \$85,000. If interested in making an offer, please contact City Hall at (541) 575-0028 or email us at [cityofjohnday@grantcounty-or.gov](mailto:cityofjohnday@grantcounty-or.gov).

## Keep Fido Safe

The City Council is exploring problems to address resident complaints of dogs as a public nuisance. The Police Department has responded to 37 dog-related complaints so far this year. One in every three incidents were for off-leash dogs that attacked a person or another animal. We have a shared responsibility to ensure the safety of our residents. The Council is looking into options that include stricter enforcement, stronger penalties, partnerships with non-profit agencies, and potentially a local licensing and nuisance ordinance. Our police officers will also be stepping up enforcement and citations. However, the primary responsibility for any pet remains with the pet owner. Please help us do our part by ensuring your pet is secured whenever it is not in your presence and by reporting animals at large to 911.

Thank you for all you do to keep our city great.

Sincerely,

Nick Green, John Day City Manager