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TO: City Council  
FROM: Sam Anselm, City Manager  
DATE: 2/20/2015  
RE: Weekly Report

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It's been one year and six days since I began providing you with a weekly report. I hope you continue to find the information I provide in these reports worthwhile, but I also want to take the opportunity to get your feedback on what, if anything, I can do differently or better to maintain the line of communication between my office and you. So please, if you have any thoughts or ideas you would like to share, I am more than happy to accommodate your requests.

#### Key Meetings

- On Tuesday, Director Haase and I attended a **luncheon held by the Joplin Tri-State Chapter of the IMA** (Institute of Management Accountants) to discuss "*What's Happening in Joplin*" as fill-ins while Rob O'Brian was in Atlanta pursuing Project Aurora. Director Haase provided the group with an update on our budget, sales taxes, how TIFs work, and a run-down of the various disaster-related grants we've received. I provided the group with an update on a number of projects.
- On Wednesday, Director Haase, AtCM Kelly and I met with Callie Hudson, the executive director of DJA, Brent Baker, and Jerrod Hogan (both DJA board members) to provide information and discuss options for **downtown parking**. Leslie provided everyone with the history of how our downtown parking program was developed. As a group, we discussed a number of options that could be considered to address some of the downtown businesses' concerns. One option that was discussed was whether we should consider offering free parking downtown. Staff has done some research and we have asked DJA to do some research as well to see what that may look like. I saw earlier today that DJA has already put out a survey asking for opinions on the issue. Once those results and their research is shared with us, we will present the information to you with a recommendation on whether changes should be made.
- Yesterday, Director Bolander and I met with Cookie Estrada and Craig Tankersly from the Joplin YMCA to provide one another with an update on various projects, including our progress on the CDBG-DR process and vetting the Commons project, and they shared with us some research on a market analysis they conducted in order to assess how they will move forward as an organization.
- Today I spent the day with the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce at their **annual board retreat**. The morning session was spent reviewing the goals set by the board at their

retreat last year, and we spent the afternoon discussing workforce development issues and how to proceed on working with existing businesses to survey their workforce needs, then partnering with our educational institutions to meet those needs. Once the full summary of the retreat is made available I will share that information with you.

### Miscellaneous

- Finance and the PIO office are preparing a press release to accompany the **FEMA “Duplication of Benefit” letters** that I referenced in my update from February 6<sup>th</sup>. Those letters should go out next week sometime, and as I stated previously, I expect this to generate a lot of calls and some media attention.
- At the request of the PD and courts staff, we have developed a **domestic violence ordinance** for your consideration at the next council meeting. To provide you with a bit of background, we currently classify these offenses as assault, however staff feels it will be beneficial to add domestic assault as a separate offense, not only to be more consistent with state statutes, but provide for more accurate record keeping and tracking of these types of offenses.
- I learned on Tuesday that the new trolley is once again out of service due to a transmission issue. I am hopeful that it will be on the road again next week, but I’ll provide you with an update if that projection changes.
- You may recall during the budget work sessions last summer/fall, that Director Pekarek indicated they would be working on ideas to help reduce our contract costs. At the health board meeting this week they discussed one such idea. I’ll let Dan take it from here:
  - “In an effort to watch for ways to reduce contract costs with the humane society we are going to begin a test project over next few months where Joplin residents that are wanting to give up a dog/cat will need to call the health department for animal control to pick up the animal at their residence, rather than the resident taking the animal to the humane society on their own. For many years the city has had a policy whereby we allowed residents to take an animal to humane society (their own animal or a stray they have found in Joplin) for give-up and city would be billed for costs associated with the animal give-up (just like we are now if an animal control officer brings an animal). The thought process behind the policy was that the city “subsidizing” the resident drop off cost reduced the animal dumping in the city and also reduced the call load on the animal control program. The humane society charges fees for local residents that want to drop off an animal. Joplin is the only local community that has subsidized this cost for its residents.
  - The problem we are seeing is increasingly there are situations where non-Joplin residents are aware of our policy and are bringing animals to the humane society and claiming they are Joplin residents, or claiming they found the animal in Joplin in an effort to avoid the humane society fees. Additionally, there are Joplin residents that we believe are picking up animals from other locations out of the city and taking them in to give-up claiming they were their animal, again to avoid the fee. By requiring residents to contact animal control for an animal give-up we will be able to verify at least that the address where the animal is coming from is in the city. With this test run there will still be no charge to Joplin residents for an animal give-up. If they choose to take an animal to the humane society

themselves, there would be the normal humane society charge as applied to anyone else.”

- In reference to Councilman Scarce’s question about change orders during Monday night’s council meeting, one of the projects I plan to undertake in the next several months is a review of our purchasing policies and procedures. One facet of that review will be a **clarification/recommendation of how change orders are to be handled**. I am aware of several cities that allow the city manager or administrator authority to approve change orders without the approval of the governing body so long as the dollar amounts are limited (usually by percentage of the total contract up to a certain limit, or a fixed dollar amount). I am still doing research, but putting such a policy in place would allow for more effective and efficient administration of these types of projects.
- To follow up on the CDBG-NDR resiliency grant competition, we have received sufficient votes (7-0) to notify HUD and Rockefeller that we do not intend to pursue the – NDR grant. I would like to thank you for your support of staff and my recommendation to pass on this competition.

### **In the Pipeline**

- My family and I are looking at taking some vacation time during spring break, which would be from March 13<sup>th</sup> to March 23<sup>rd</sup>. With your approval I would like to take that time off, with the exception of the council meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup>, which I will be able to attend.
- Earlier this week I was contacted by a member of the state audit team indicating that they anticipate being finished with the field work portion of the audit at the end of next week. We also believe our regular auditors will be finished next week as well. After the regular auditors leave staff will still have work to do, but it’s encouraging for us to see the light at the end of the tunnel (and we’re excited about having floor space back!).
- Next week I will be asking department heads and those staff members who report directly to me to provide me with feedback on how I’m doing as their supervisor. It was around this time last year that I did the same thing, and I am interested in seeing how I’ve done in the past year. My intention is to implement this “supervisor feedback/reverse evaluation” program for all supervisors later this year. I will prepare a summary of the survey results to you once they are compiled.

I appreciate your time in reading this report, and I hope you enjoy your weekend.