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TO: City Council
FROM: Sam Anselm, City Manager
DATE: March 27, 2015
RE: Weekly Report

Good evening, everyone. Please see below for this week's happenings and musings.

Key Meetings

- On Tuesday Councilman Woolston and I attended the Joplin Regional Partnership's quarterly meeting with elected/appointed officials. The meeting was held in Neosho in their renovated civic center.
- On Thursday we had the ground-breaking for the I-44/49 interchange project that will provide direct interstate access to our industrial park. The event was well-attended and the speakers did a great job. It is scheduled to be completed and opened sometime this November – as we approach a firm date for a ribbon cutting, we will send out the details of the event.
- Earlier this afternoon I had my regular meeting with the executive director of the Downtown Joplin Alliance. We discussed a number of topics, chief among them some of their project ideas for inclusion with the CDBG-DR capital planning process. As I indicated earlier this week, the period for accepting new project ideas has closed, and at the request of Councilman Scarce, I have asked staff from Deloitte for an updated list of all of the projects that will be reviewed and presented to you for discussion and approval. As of this writing I have not received that list, so as soon as I receive it I will forward it to you. DJA also met with Director Bolander last week to get additional information about the downtown parking issue as they advance towards making a recommendation.

Miscellaneous

- Earlier today I was asked by a member of the TIF Commission to call a meeting so staff could give them an update on the status of our TIF projects. In the past, we have given council an annual update on the TIFs in conjunction with the regular audit presentation, but we are required to give a similar update to the TIF commission on an annual basis as well, which we have not done. The TIF Commission is scheduled to meet on April 30th to discuss the proposed South Main Street TIF, so I think it would be appropriate to present the annual update to the TIF Commission at the same time. This breaks from our past tradition of presenting the information to the council first, but it would be my recommendation that we proceed. From a process standpoint, I favor the idea of meeting

with our boards and commissions before the information is presented to council, so that you have information and input/recommendations not just from staff, but from our citizen representatives who serve on these boards as well, giving them more of a voice in the process.

- Parks and CVB staff have been in preliminary discussions about changing the venue for this year’s Fourth of July event. This year the Blasters will have a home game on this date, so to support their efforts and bring a change of pace, we are looking at doing the event at Ewert Park, and it could consist of free swim for the kids, lawn games, music, etc. to promote a more family-friendly atmosphere. As I said, we are in the very early stages of exploring this idea, but from what I have been told, the location of our Fourth of July event has moved from time to time. But if you have any strong feelings either way, please let me know.
- Per council request, following is the breakdown of our cost of issuing sewer and trash bills since we took the service over in FY 2013. The list includes both 2013 and 2014 figures. Staff in the finance department has been getting sewer billing policies and information from other cities to determine if there are any “best practices” that we should be following as they pertain to the issuance of delinquent notices. Several cities only send out one notice before they shut off service, and we are exploring whether and how much in savings we may see if we adopt this practice.

CITY OF JOPLIN
SEWER/TRASH BILL COST PER BILL
FISCAL YEAR 2013 AND FISCAL YEAR 2014

	Fiscal Year 2013	Fiscal Year 2014
Operating Expenses (Trash)	\$ -	\$ 37,705.02
Operating Expenses (Sewer)	<u>467,800.77</u>	<u>617,360.08</u>
 Total Operating Expenses	 \$ 467,800.77	 \$ 655,065.10
 Number of Bills Mailed	 191,041	 251,533
 Cost per Bill	 <u>\$ 2.45</u>	 <u>\$ 2.60</u>

Note: One-time Capital Costs not included in the cost per bill calculation.

One-time Utility Billing Capital Expenditures:

Fiscal Year 2012	\$ 136,129.79
Fiscal Year 2013	98,412.79
Fiscal Year 2014	<u>8,386.99</u>
	 <u>\$ 242,929.57</u>

- The state auditors continue to request information from staff, so even though the field work portion of the audit is complete, work continues. I have no idea at this point when they will finish their report, but as we are notified of any developments I will pass them along.

- Last week I was notified by the parks department that 8 of the 10 tennis courts at the athletic complex have experienced some type of structural failure. We are getting estimates for the repair, but we expect them to be rather high to be fixed properly. In light of that, and because of rather minimal usage of the courts, I have asked staff to prepare a “Plan B” and identify other possible uses for that portion of the complex if it is determined that the costs are too high for the amount of usage they receive. We are investigating whether insurance will be able to cover all or a portion of the repair costs, but it is too soon to tell at this point.

In the Pipeline

- April 6 is shaping up to be a busy meeting. The chairman of the Finance Committee will present their recommendations on the golf course, Parks staff will provide an update on the progress at Joe Becker Stadium, there will be a public hearing for the Hope Valley CID, and ordinances for Hope Valley CID and Redevelopment Agreement may also be presented for your consideration, among others.
- May will mark six months since I assumed the position of city manager without the “interim” label attached, so I would like the opportunity to sit down with you in closed session and go over your expectations and goals for me to work on for the rest of the fiscal year. If you could begin thinking about some goals, I would appreciate it.
- This year’s MCMA conference will take place May 6-8. AtCM Kelly and I will both be in attendance at the conference.

Finally, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to have some time off with my family over spring break. Sea World San Antonio was neat, and seeing fossilized dinosaur tracks was pretty cool, but the most amazing sight of all was driving past the world’s largest convenience store, Buc-ee’s, in between New Braunfels and Austin. According to an article in the Wall Street Journal, the facility is 67,000 square feet, has 60 gas pumps, 84 gleaming toilets, and 30+ cash registers, and provides some strong evidence that there is perhaps some truth to the slogan, “Everything’s bigger in Texas.” We ended up stopping at one of the smaller ones for gas, which probably had 40 gas pumps of its own.

If you have any questions, comments or feedback about any of the items presented above, please let me know. Otherwise, I hope you have a great weekend.