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TO: City Council  
FROM: Sam Anselm, Interim City Manager  
DATE: 3/7/2014  
RE: Weekly Report

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### Meetings

- During our weekly staff meeting on Tuesday, we learned the following, which I think you may also be interested in:
  - The auditors should be completing their field work for the 2013 audit today, which puts us on schedule to **meet the April 30 deadline**. We'll present the findings to you during one of our May meetings.
  - The HealthNuts committee is currently offering a "Lose Some, Win Some" weight loss contest, and 70 employees are participating. We're in Week 8 of the 12 week program, but it has been well received. The committee is looking at other programs to roll out in the future as well.
  - HR staff and I will be announcing an **employee suggestion program** that will allow employees to submit ideas on how they can improve processes in their work place, increase morale, etc. As I told many of you during our individual meetings, I'm a "process guy" and I think our greatest potential for making improvements to how we do things is to rely on the expertise and opinions of those employees we charge with the responsibility of implementing those processes. In conjunction with this idea, I'll be putting out an **employee survey** to get feedback from employees on a number of general topics. As far as I can tell, it has been a decade or more since we have done an employee survey, and I think we're long overdue.
  - The health department will be undergoing a **federal WIC audit** following up on the recent state audit that was conducted.
- The **CIST committee** met again on Tuesday; I was not feeling well so I could not attend, but according to staff it went well. There were several questions that were raised that necessitate the need for a work session with the CIST members, so the next meeting on 3/11 will be centered around answering those questions with the help of our LRTP consultant who helped us identify the projects we should focus on, and allow the committee members some time to have their questions answered before we proceed with asking them to rank the projects for the renewal.

- On Wednesday staff met with representatives from Wallace-Bajjali to go over the plan for Monday night and get any last minute updates on the projects they'll be discussing. Staff decided to use that meeting to **formally announce to the public the split of the library/theater project** into two separate projects on the same site. I spoke with Jacquie Gage later that afternoon to give her a heads up, and she said the board would be pleased with the announcement. After Gary gives his presentation, I'll make the announcement along with the mention that we'll be putting out an RFQ for a consultant/project manager for the library project soon.
- Yesterday I met with some key non-profit leaders to discuss how the city can **build a better partnership with our non-profit community**. We discussed several ideas, but I believe there's room for collaboration among key stake-holders in order to build a better relationship and understanding of what some of the serious issues are that our community is facing. For example, our teen pregnancy rates are apparently way above the state and national average. That issue can have some far-reaching effects on our local economy, health of the community, etc. It is not the city's role (in my opinion) to drive the bus, but we should definitely have a seat on it.
- Finally, this morning I met with Finance Director Haase to discuss the **budget process and timeline** for this year. April is right around the time that staff begins preparing information. For this reason primarily, I think we should keep the process the same as in years past, but based on who fills the role of city manager on a permanent basis, I believe there's great opportunity in transitioning our budget to a performance/goals/outcomes based approach that is more collaborative and transparent. However I will be seeking input from staff into ways that we can build more collaboration into the existing process. *Feel free to chime in as well.* We are somewhat limited by the charter in terms of what our process can be and what the ultimate budget document can look like, so please be aware of that as you consider this topic.

### Miscellaneous

- We received a request from an organization to issue a proclamation designating Joplin as a "Purple Heart City". Several neighboring communities have been contacted about doing so (Springfield and others have already issued similar proclamations), as a way to promote our appreciation for our veterans. Look for that item on your agenda for 3/17.
- Numbers time:
  - Online utility payments continue to grow. In December 2013 (partial month) we had 190 payments made online; In January that grew to 710. In February we had 1,039 payments, representing a 46% growth over the previous month. We'll continue to push awareness of the online bill-pay feature, along with other features of our website that are not being used to their fullest extent.
  - Our transit ridership report for February indicates ridership is down 5.4% comparing February 2014 with February 2013. But when you exclude the FEMA routes that we were running in 2013, ridership is actually up 4.3% compared to the same month last year, so there's room for optimism.
- Finally, after the new council is seated in April, we should start thinking about a retreat/planning session to begin identifying goals to accomplish as a community/organization. During the Chamber of Commerce board retreat last week, we used an outstanding facilitator to identify chamber goals, and whether we use her,

someone else, or some other form of the CART or Blueprint for the Future process used in 2007/10, I believe it's important to get together once a year and think strategically about things. *I'd be interested to hear your thoughts on this topic and whether I should start setting it up.*

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns about any of these items. Enjoy your weekend, and we'll see you Monday night!