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# MEMORANDUM

## *Administration*

To: Mayor Jackola and City Council

Date: January 31, 2025

From: Ron Whitlatch, City Manager

Subject: **Administration Update – January 2025**

- On January 28<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Jackola, Jason Williams, Kelly Hart, and I attended the League of Oregon Cities City Day at the State Capital. The event consisted of multiple speakers discussing various topics related to City Government. We also met with Senator Janeen Sollman, Staff from Representative Christine Drazan's office, Representative Lisa Fragala, and Staff from Representative Cate's office. We have scheduled and attended these meetings to discuss infrastructure funding and other topics impacting the City of Lebanon.
- Mayor Jackola, Kelly Hart, and I met with Representative Jamie Cate on January 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss Lebanon's upcoming Legislative Session and Capital Funding requests. We are making a concerted effort to meet with our Representative several times yearly to keep a good pulse on items that may impact the City of Lebanon. The City will also submit a Capital Funding request through Representative Cate's office related to the priority projects at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Staff will continue to pursue options for a solar array at the Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility. A meeting with a Solar Design Firm has been set for February. Once we have the costs and details determined, we will likely enter into a contract for design. Due to the freeze in Federal Funding, we may need to look at alternative sources to fund the project. More information will be presented to the City Council as we receive it.
- We are moving forward with relocating the City Council Chambers to the Library Community Room. We have obtained pricing for the audio/visual aspects needed and a new Dias. City Crews will begin the cabling portion of the project in early February.
- The City had multiple permit violations at the Wastewater Treatment Plant of our National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit from April 2022 to July 2023. Staff has had a preliminary meeting with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) to discuss these, some of which will be reduced. We will continue to work through this process with ODEQ and the City's consulting firm, Kennedy Jenks. Staff will provide an update as we learn more moving through the process.

- Staff continues to spend considerable time answering questions/complaints regarding the new City Services Fee. We are also continuing to review individual accounts, meter sizes, and door counts for multi-family complexes. With any new billing of this magnitude, we expect changes and corrections to individual accounts will be needed within the first six months as it is rolled out. Staff will work diligently to ensure that these are handled timely.
- Staff continues to work with Sean Tate (Tate Public Affairs), who is helping the City navigate legislative affairs and advocate for the City. We currently meet with Sean every other Wednesday.
- Staff is still focusing on the Green Peter Reservoir drawdown. Although it was halted this year due to issues related to water plant operations, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACOE) has indicated that the drawdowns will continue in future years. We will meet with Representatives from the City of Salem in early February to discuss the drawdowns. The USACOE has indicated they will begin drawdowns on Detroit Reservoir, impacting Salem's drinking water supply. They asked to meet with us to gain insight into what we have done to try and mitigate the drawdown impacts. Staff will continue to seek ways to stop it and follow through with the Tort Claim filed for damages.
- Holding regular Department Director Meetings (every two weeks) to keep moving priorities forward.
- Continue participating in the Department of Land Conservation and Development's completion of Linn County's Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan update. This plan includes updates for all cities in Linn County and will be presented to the City Council for approval in 2025.
- We are working on a new agreement with Lebanon Farmers Market to move their location to the Holiday Station at the corner of Park and Oak Streets. The goal is to have this in place by 2025.
- Kelly Hart and I continue to meet with Susan Patterson from the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments twice a month to identify grant opportunities that could benefit the City. We are currently working on funding opportunities to support wastewater plant projects, water service line replacements, street projects, and any other projects that could benefit the city.