



925 S. Main Street
Lebanon, Oregon 97355

TEL: 541.258.4900
www.lebanonoregon.gov

MEMORANDUM

Administration

To: Mayor Jackola and City Council
From: Ron Whitlatch, City Manager
Subject: **Administration Update – August 2025**

Date: September 2, 2025

- We have spent time this month reviewing the various proposals that are being considered for the Special Legislative Session regarding Transportation. We will continue to monitor this for impacts to Lebanon and the State Highway system that runs through the City.
- We are still exploring solar possibilities. A City Council Work Session is scheduled for September to further discuss moving forward with a solar project.
- Staff has submitted written comments to Oregon DEQ regarding the draft NPDES Discharge Permit for the Wastewater Plant and the associated impacts.
- Staff is continuing to work with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) to determine the final fine that will be assessed to the City for the permit violations at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Staff will provide an update as we learn more throughout the process.
- We continue to spend a significant amount of time preparing for the upcoming City Council Work Sessions that will occur over the next several months.
- We are continuing to work with our outside legal counsel for claims against the Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). The claim has been submitted to the Regional Staff at USACOE, and from there, it will likely be filed in the District Court. As more information becomes available, we will share it with the City Council.
- 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.
- We are continuing to implement the Five-Year Strategic Plan goals for year one. We are now preparing for the Goal Setting Session in November.
- With Kelly Hart submitting her resignation, we will begin a recruitment process soon. Kelly has been (and continues to be) instrumental within the organization, and filling the role that she played will be difficult.

- We are continuing to move through the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) process regarding the appeal filed by Laura LaRoque regarding the Code Interpretation of Trails in the RL Zone. The goal is to go to mediation prior to the formal appeal process. We will continue to keep the City Council informed as we progress through the process.
- 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.
- 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 exploring funding opportunities to support wastewater plant projects, water service line replacements, street projects, and other initiatives that will benefit the city.
- We have received a Planning Grant for a sanitary sewer analysis and transportation analysis of the Champion Mill site. Scoping for the transportation aspect of the Grant with Kittleson Engineers is complete, and they will begin the study this fall.
- Councilor Steinhebel, Linn County Commissioner Tucker, and I toured the CHANCE daytime facility and Shelter in Albany on August 22nd. We will be meeting again with the Executive Director (Emma Deane) in late September to discuss ways in which they could help Lebanon. It was a very eye-opening experience in how they are reaching out and helping the unhoused in Albany. I would encourage anyone who has not toured these facilities to do so.
- We are continuing to work with City attorney Kennedy and outside legal counsel to determine what, if anything, we can change to our Broadband Franchise Agreements. Ultimately, we would like to recoup costs from these providers for the use of our right-of-way; however, FCC Regulations may not allow this.
- The Communications Survey is out and available on our website, social media, and paper copies. We are seeking feedback from the public on how effectively we communicate and how we can enhance our communication. Results will be shared with the City Council this fall.