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MEMORANDUM

Administration

To: Mayor Jackola and City Council

Date: January 6, 2025

From: Ron Whitlatch, City Manager

Subject: **Administration Update – December 2025**

- Staff worked with Sara Wilson Consulting to finalize the Strategic Plan Update and City Council priorities throughout December. The updated document will be on the January City Council Agenda for approval.
- We are continuing to work with Business Oregon on a potential Industrial Economic Development where the company is looking to expand on the West Coast. Lebanon is one of two sites being considered in Oregon. The City has currently applied for a grant to complete an updated wetland delineation of the properties under consideration.
- Staff is continuing to work through the process of getting an Order to proceed with the cleanup of the Champion Mill property. Once the Order is in place, City Crews will begin cleaning up and disposing of the accumulated garbage. The property owners will either pay for the cleanup as it occurs, or a lien will be placed on the property.
- Staff will be working with three property owners along Berlin Road to clear and clean up several encampments. Resource Officers with the Police Department have been out in this area identifying where the encampments are and the individuals staying in them.
- We have spent time throughout the month preparing for a Council Work Session in January to outline the steps necessary for reopening the Municipal Jail. This Work Session will be held on January 28, 2026.
- We are continuing to work with our outside legal counsel for claims against the Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). The claim will be filed with the Federal District Court in the coming weeks. This is likely to be a lengthy (and slow) process, and we will provide more information as it becomes available.
- 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 has been preparing for next year's budget process. All Department year-end projections are to be completed by the third week in January. There will also be a City Council Work Session in February or March to discuss any Utility Rate and City Services Fee adjustments.

- Staff is continuing to work on the sale of the Santiam Travel Station. Staff will work with Udell Engineering to vacate a portion of the Third Street Right-of-Way and draft easements for recording. We are also working with outside legal counsel to develop the final sales agreement. This process will likely be complete in January or early February.
- Holding regular Department Director Meetings (every two weeks) to keep moving priorities forward.
- Staff has been working with PEAK Internet over the last couple of months to develop an updated Franchise Agreement. This agreement will be presented to the City Council in January or February for approval.
- We 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. Susan submitted a DLCD Technical Assistance Grant on behalf of the City to update the Parks and Trails Master Plan. Unfortunately, we were not successful in receiving this grant. We intend to submit again during the next round of Technical Assistance Funding.
- We have received a Planning Grant for a sanitary sewer analysis and transportation analysis of the Champion Mill site. We are currently under contract with Kittleson Engineers to complete the transportation aspect of the grant. We are in the process of scoping the off-site sanitary sewer improvements required for the future redevelopment of Champion Mill.
- Over the next couple of months, Staff will be reviewing all city-owned properties in an effort to identify properties no longer needed. Once the list has been updated, Staff will engage the City Council to recommend any that should be declared surplus.
- The City's Employee Recognition/Holiday Party was held on December 12th. This is the first time in five years that employees were recognized for years of service. This was an excellent time for staff to come together, socialize, and get to know employees from other Departments.
- Staff is proposing not to allow rental of the new Council Chambers due to it being difficult to secure all of the new audio/visual equipment and Council dais. Rental of this room also puts a strain on our limited Library Staff.