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# MEMORANDUM

## *Administration*

To: Mayor Jackola and City Council  
From: Ron Whitlatch, City Manager  
Subject: **Administration Update – June 2026**

Date: June 29, 2026

- We have received the draft Wetland Delineation Report for several parcels off of West Oak Street. This is in conjunction with a potential Industrial Economic Development, in which the company is looking to expand on the West Coast. Lebanon is one of two sites being considered in Oregon. We are currently waiting on review comments from the property owners. Once that is complete, the report will be submitted to the Oregon Division of State Lands for concurrence.
- Due to increased operating costs, LINX Transit will not be operational on Saturdays throughout the summer. This is being done to avoid overrunning the projected funding from the biennium Federal and State Grants used to operate LINX Transit. We will assess this in the fall to determine if adequate funding will be available to bring back the Saturday Service.
- We are currently working with Sean Tate and several legislators to draft a potential Bill for the 2027 Legislative Session to address wetland constraints within Urban Growth Boundaries. I will provide more information as we go through the process.
- In conjunction with the Wastewater Treatment Plant Biosolids Improvements Project, we have initiated the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund Program with Oregon DEQ. The initial steps include a review of our Wastewater finances from DEQ to determine the loan amount we would be eligible for and how much Principal Forgiveness (essential grant) we could expect. This process will likely take 6-8 months.
- The City of Lebanon, along with several other surrounding cities, has been awarded a regional Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant. This grant will develop a Safety Action Plan, which is required to be eligible for Construction Dollars from future Federal Highway Grants. Due to the time required to be notified of the award, it is likely that executed contracts to begin work will be several months out.
- In conjunction with the Brownfield Grant to determine environmental impacts on the Champion Mill Site, Staff will be meeting with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to determine next steps. We also have David Evans & Associates modeling the sanitary sewer for this site, and Kittelson Engineers completing a Transportation analysis. Both of these studies were paid for with grant funds and final reports are expected later in 2026.

- Staff is making final preparations to the informational flier and web page for the upcoming Municipal Jail Levy measure. We will likely be hosting an “open house” at the Police Department later this summer, in conjunction with another event, for citizens who would like to tour the Police Department and Jail.
- 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. An amended complaint will be filed in early March. This is likely to be a lengthy (and slow) process, and we will provide more information as it becomes available. Albany and Millersburg have now joined the lawsuit and will share in attorney fees with Lebanon and Sweet Home.
- Staff continues to work with Sean Tate (Tate Public Affairs), who is helping the City navigate legislative affairs and advocate for the City. In August, we will present the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Priority Legislative Efforts for the 2027 Session. The City Council will be asked to review and recommend the top five items they would like LOC to work on. Sean has also agreed to help with necessary tasks as we explore the operations levy for the Municipal Jail.
- We have been made aware that Congresswoman Bynum will be recommending our Wastewater Project for \$2.0 million in funding. This will be a lengthy process, as it must go through Congress and be appropriated before Lebanon receives the funds. I will continue to share information as it becomes available. No new information this month.
- The City of Lebanon and Western U Oregon have submitted a joint application for a Connect Oregon Grant. If awarded, the grant would fund the improvements needed to gain access to the proposed future campus site. Aspects of the project include new street access off of East Grant Street, a railroad bridge (allowing vehicular traffic to travel underneath, and the corresponding utilities. The City of Lebanon has agreed to hire an Engineering Intern for the duration of the project (approximately 3 years), with grant funding. This position would support day-to-day oversight of the project during its design and construction. We are still waiting to hear whether the grant will be approved.
- Staff has spent substantial time during the month of June wrapping up FY 26 and getting ready for the upcoming Audit.
- We are moving forward with the Community Development Block Grant for the Children's Room addition at the Library. The grant is being written by Cascades West Council of Governments, with review being completed by City Staff. We have also completed the required Environmental Review and submitted it to Business Oregon for approval. The architect has submitted plans to the City, which we have been reviewing and commenting on. We expect a 90% cost estimate in the coming weeks.
- Holding regular Department Director Meetings (every two weeks) to keep moving priorities forward.

- 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 benefiting the city.
- When time allows, Staff has been 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 first System Development Charges Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting was held on June 25<sup>th</sup>. This was an initial overview meeting to get the committee familiar with the SDC Process. The next meeting will be held in late July. This effort will update the Wastewater and Drainage SDCs and the project lists associated with each system. We hope to have the project completed by late 2026.