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# MEMORANDUM

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## *Administration*

To: Mayor Jackola and City Council

Date: March 3, 2025

From: Ron Whitlatch, City Manager

Subject: **Administration Update – February 2025**

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- Over 2000 individual bills have been submitted for the 2025 Legislative Session. We have briefed most of these (along with help from Tate Public Affairs, the City's Lobbying consultant) and narrowed the number down to approximately 90, which we will be watching and/or providing testimony on.
- On February 26<sup>th</sup>, Jason Williams and I provided in-person testimony on House Bill 3031 at the State capital. This bill concerns infrastructure funding for continued housing growth. We aim to have the legislation include treatment plant projects in the infrastructure funding, as they directly relate to housing as much as or more than on-site infrastructure. We will continue to monitor this bill as it moves through the legislature.
- In preparation for our trip back to Washington D.C., we have been reaching out to Oregon's Congressional Delegates to set up meetings. We will also be requesting meetings with several Regulatory Agencies while we are there during the week of April 7<sup>th</sup>.
- On February 24<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Jackola, Tre' Kennedy, and I met with the Mayors, City Managers, and City attorneys from Albany and Sweet Home to discuss the impacts of the drawdown over the last two years. We will be drafting a one-page document with all three cities' logos to give to legislators as we meet with them in the future. The goal of this group is to put political and media pressure on the Army Corps of Engineers to either find another solution to get salmon out of the reservoirs other than the drawdowns or provide funding for pre-treatment for our water treatment facilities.
- Staff met with a Solar Contractor several weeks ago and are waiting for a proposal to provide additional information regarding feasibility, grant opportunities, and preliminary costs. Once we have determined the costs and details, we will likely enter into an additional design contract. 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. The audio/visual aspects are currently being installed and the Dias

is being constructed. Tentatively, we think it will be operational by May/June of this year.

- 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.
- 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.
- The budget process is in full swing, and, as always, it requires a substantial amount of staff time to put together. We are on track to have the budget document to the Budget Committee in mid-April.
- We (Kelly Hart) have developed a website for implementing the Five-year Strategic Plan. Staff will use this site to document progress on the plan's items. An update will be provided to the City Council later this year.
- 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.