City Administrator Report

November 19th, 2019

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

I hope each of you have had a good couple of weeks since we last met. There are many exciting projects underway, which I predict will be big for the community. I’m excited at the direction of this organization.

I have been working with the School and Community committee meeting on a few initiates which will help with the promotion of our community. We have been discussing fundraising for an electronic sign, and where this could be placed. I would assume that as this continues progress, staff will be coming to you with more information.

In addition to this, I have been working with the committee and the leadership class at the high school on a community advertising effort. We have been discussing advertising materials that have been used by other communities, and what a creation for Valley Falls could look like. We are also exploring alternative funding for the production of these materials. I am happy to report that the leadership class has expressed excitement about this project. More information to come.

We have continued to have meetings and general conversations with individuals who have questions about health and welfare code enforcement. As the council is aware, this process is reaching the prosecution phase for some cases, which means that a judge will make a ruling. As always, we will continue to educate our citizens about the process and what exactly is expected of them. I have created a place on the website which walks readers through how the health and welfare process works – it can be found [here](https://valleyfalls.org/health-and-welfare-code-enforcement). (<https://valleyfalls.org/health-and-welfare-code-enforcement>)

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I will be attending the KACM annual conference in Garden City December 4th-6th. This means I will miss the meeting on December 4th. I will be able to call in and participate that way. I appreciate this Council’s commitment to continuing education.

The FEMA disaster reimbursement process is in stand-still. I have received an email from Emergency Management Director, Keith Jeffers, that there have been only two Jefferson County applicants who have had their initial damage review meeting. We have been urged to be patient as we will be contacted as soon as KDHE staff can reach us. Recently, I spoke to Mr. Jeffers and he gave an example of a City who had a disaster declaration back in 2014 - it was just finalized last summer. To be clear, this could be a lengthy process.

Chief Koch and I traveled to Oklahoma yesterday (11/18), and completed the paperwork needed to bring the new police vehicle back. Please make a point to come in and check it out. We were quite happy with the quality of the car, and I envision that this vehicle will be an asset for this community for the foreseeable future. As a reminder, we are on a contract to buy from Joe Watt’s dealership. This means the bill for this vehicle will come due around January 15th, 2020.

I have been working with AT&T over the last few months to get us switched from a regular business account, to the “FirstNet” portion of their business account selection. Largely, the FirstNet branch of AT&T business is dedicated to law enforcement and other first responders. However, we were able to get our Public Works Department line on this as well.

The benefit of FirstNet is that our cell phones will have priority access to cell phone tower reception in the event of a disaster/emergency. In addition to this, it will take our monthly cost per line down to $39.99. This is down from $70-$80, depending on the package. I’m a firm believer that little cost savings; add up to big savings eventually. With this in mind, we were able to finally complete the transition to FirstNet, however, this took staff time to work with AT&T.

Going forward, we are looking at “call-tree” options which can help with staff efficiency, as well as offer more convenience to our citizens. Chief Koch, Paul Juedes, and I will be exploring call-tree options for the police department, and potentially the City as a whole eventually. This idea came from Chief Koch and his staff; I would like to thank them for thinking of ways to become more efficient. More updates to come.

**As a result of the last council meeting:**

The Community Survey has been sent out. We have received a few back so far. I’m excited to see the feedback. We are currently at 40 respondents. Please, reach out to your network and ask them to participate!

I have chosen to close out the response period on January 31st at 5pm. I will plan on having the findings from the survey ready for the Council’s consideration no later than the second council meeting of February. The survey drawing can take place on the first meeting in February.

**Planning and Zoning Board:**

Mr. Pat Herrington has submitted a variance request to the Building and Zoning board. This requires a 28-day waiting period after publication (11/21), which will make his hearing 12/17/2019. The building and zoning board will take final action on this variance request.

**Meetings recently attended included:** Meeting with Administrative Hearing Officer, , Councilmember meetings, Department Head Weekly Meeting, Meeting with Paul about major project planning, School and Community Meeting, Chamber of Commerce meeting, Meeting with waste management company who is interested in bidding, meeting with prospective attorneys, numerous meetings with citizens about health and welfare code enforcement, interview with the vindicator.

**City Council Meetings, Study Sessions, and Executive Sessions**

**Tentative future City Council agendas include the following items at this time:**

1. Strategic Plan Work sessions.
2. FEMA Disaster Recovery application.
3. Employee evaluation form
4. End-of-year budget amendments

**Code Enforcement Statistics:**

This section will include a report of the number of cases currently in the code enforcement process, as outlined in City Ordinance. This section will be the analysis provided to the council, unless there is a practical application of discussing properties and/or owner name(s). (I.E. on the agenda, citizen complaint or public comment, need to approve expenditure above $500, etc.) *Please advise if you have any questions about this, and/or have suggestions.*

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| **Code Enforcement Phase** | **# of Cases** |
| **Violation Observed/ Letter Pending:** | **0** |
| **30 Day Notice Letter Sent** | **0** |
| **30 Day Letter Re-inspect / 10 Day Letter Pending** | **0** |
| **10 Day Letter Sent** | **0** |
| **10 Day Letter Re-inspect / Review w/ Admin Hearing Officer/ Sent to Municipal Attorney** | **1** |
| **Cases pending court** | **9** |
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| **NEKES** |
| **Cases Pending** | **3 (one case close to completion)** |

**Website update:**

*This section will be a brief update on the progress being made on the website. Please review, and let me know if you have some suggestions.*

Upload survey

Update homepage slideshow/ correct “click here” links/ Closed for Veterans Day update

Update on homepage/ add city hall hours/ add department phone numbers/ governing information

Added direct link to police department on homepage, removed non-relevant links

Update ‘About Us’ tab/ location information

Update calendar of events

Update ‘contact us’ page

Update hours information on library tab

Scan and upload all planning and zoning regulations. Revise some information on Planning and Zoning Commission under committees section of website

Updated Building Permits Section with information regarding common requests.

Update electric provider information

Completed draft explaining code enforcement process and placed on website.

Deleted Veterans Day closed notice.

Added news event that City Hall will have new hours

Linked homepage slideshow item to news event that there is new hours.

Added slide on homepage indicating when City Hall will be closed for Thanksgiving.

**Planned items on website update:**

Economic profile

Economic Development Committee

RFP/RFQ/BIDS

Mayor and City Council

**City Financial Health Snapshot:**

Reports are prepared for the last meeting of each month.

*Please see the separate attachment:*