



CITY OF SELAH

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Mayor's Monthly Newsletter

October 2025

Hello Selah from the desk of Mayor Roger Bell. We have had a truly exciting year in progress and October was busy with budget preparations and related matters.

The first Council Meeting included a presentation from Yakima Valley Council of Governments as an update on the services they provide for Selah including our climate plan. We also passed resolutions to designate HLA to provide contract engineering services for the years 2026 through 2028; one as an interlocal agreement with Yakima Transit to provide paratransit Dial-A-Ride services; another one for a quit claim deed conveying property previously used for the Taylor Ditch; one for additional professional services in reference to the Well 5 drilling project with HLA; and the last one declaring the Civic Center Phase 1 work to be complete. The Council also passed an ordinance to increase the salary range for a City Administrator.

We held a public forum to hear from residents on a proposed ordinance to enact changes to the permitting process for mobile vendors and peddlers. Many people in the audience spoke on both sides of this issue.

I appointed Lt. Michael Gause as Selah's Interim Police Chief and said goodbye to outgoing Chief Dustin Soptich with best wishes for his new adventure with Union Gap. Utility rates were introduced for discussion on potential increases for 2026. This included current negotiations status with our contract garbage hauler, Basin Disposal Inc.

We held a Study Session on utility rate increases being proposed over the next three years and the reasons they will be necessary before moving to the second Council Meeting. During Council, we passed resolutions providing engineering services on the Home Avenue sidewalk project; contracting for police dispatch services from Yakima Sheriff's Office; declared the East Goodlander traffic light project as complete; and three that establish increases in water and sewer rates of 5% each along with a 12% increase in garbage rates, all of which are effective January 1st of 2026.

The Council also passed ordinances adopting the Real Estate Excise Tax 2 or REET 2; one changing the current 2025 budget allowing for an additional \$20,000.00 donation to the Selah Downtown Association to provide for the 2026 July 4th celebration (the City receives 75% back in credit for taxes owed to the State); the last ordinance was updating our unlawful parking to provide clarity and provide for violation fines to increase so as to improve compliance.

During the last meeting, I also continued my practice of recognizing folks that make Selah such a great place to be. This month, I gave Selah Community Pride Awards to 7th grader Emy Upson for continually being a shining role model for her fellow classmates; to an 8th grader, Benson Decker, leadership and dedication within the school and community; two high schoolers, Hayden Nelson-Hawkins and Brayden Grams, for their everyday impact on school culture. They each received a certificate and a Selah Community Pride Coin.

Our architect for the new municipal building for Police, Court, and City Hall has presented us with the first draft floor plan and cost numbers for our staff team to review.

The Yakima Training Center is currently hosting a Japanese military unit, the 22nd Rapid Deployment Regiment, led by Col. Masahiro Yamashita (about 400 troops). I had the honor of welcoming them to Selah. Along with Mattson Fruit donating about ten cases of apples, we went to the YTC and presented them as a gift from the community. If you see the troops around town, please welcome them with good old Selah hospitality.

I encourage all residents to get involved in the community.

I am in the office almost every day and willing to meet with citizens to discuss your concerns and ideas for improving Selah.

That is all for this month. Enjoy the nice weather we are experiencing. I look forward to giving my next month's update.

If you wish to be added or removed from the Mayor's Monthly email please send a message to michelle.damron@selahwa.gov

Roger Bell, Selah Mayor