

Mayor's Monthly Newsletter

April 2024

Hello Selah Community! Here are the highlights from April for the City of Selah.

The Selah Downtown Association hosted a group from the national and state Main Street America program. They were in town to award an Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem grant for \$5,000.00 and \$1,500 toward professional development certification with the International Economic Development Council. The SDA was one of only 30 organizations nationwide to be so recognized. I was honored to participate with them all day April 9th. Katrina Henkle and her team of volunteers should be congratulated for being recognized with these grants.

Immediately following this event, the City Council met and approved the three Collective Bargaining Agreements for the City's Teamster groups which had been negotiated over the past several months. During the same Council Meeting they approved two resolutions to update the E. Goodlander/Lancaster signalization project and one for reimbursement of expenses for the Flock camera installations project from last year.

The Council also approved hiring HLA Engineering and Land Surveying for professional services related to a remodel of the Civic Center. This is necessary in order to proceed with funding applications for possible grants as we move forward.

In addition, they decided to move forward with Yakima Valley Council of Governments as consultant to complete the Climate Element of the City's future Comprehensive Plan update.

At the second Council Meeting, the Council approved the budgeted purchase of a new Vector truck for \$623,740.38. And yes, this is expensive; but also, very necessary to keep all of the sewer lines functioning properly. Our old one is nearing the end of its useful life and must be replaced soon. This is a prudent purchase to avoid serious problems going forward.

The City also finalized the grant process to actually receive the money from the Department of Commerce that allows us to proceed ahead with the development stage of the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant. This grant is for \$1,398,740.00. Thanks to Representative Chris Corry for his efforts in moving this forward.

We have applied for a Surface Transportation Block Grant through Yakima Valley Council of Governments to resurface First Street between Fremont and Yakima Avenue. It would also update the signalization at Naches to meet current ADA and safety standards. This grant application is seeking up to \$700,000.00 without any match requirement.

Continuing the monthly program of recognizing Selah School District students with a Selah Community Pride Award, I recognized the FCCLA LifeSmarts team. Family, Career and Community Leaders of America is a national career and technical student organization for students in Family and Consumer Science Education. Their focus helps them to develop real

world life skills that make them very employable and highly valued members of their community. The four ladies on the team are all seniors at Selah High School. They are Hannah Rees, Hannah Christianson, Indiana Hilmes and Macie Ladd. As a team they have won the state competition two years in a row and this year placed second at the national competition.

The Association of Washington Cities has a scholarship program where Mayors from all across the state can nominate one person to receive one. This year I nominated Indiana Hilmes and she received one of eight awarded. Not only will she receive the \$3,000.00 scholarship; but also, she has been invited to be a speaker at the state AWC convention in Vancouver this June with all expenses paid.

This month I initiated the next phase of recognition for Selah residents with a Community Pride Award for extraordinary efforts to improve the quality of life for all in Selah. This award went to Katrina Henkle for her work at the Selah Downtown Association. As Executive Director, she has led a group of volunteers working to cultivate the “Main Street” approach to revitalizing the historic downtown area of Selah and engaging small business owners and residents.

Staff presented to the City Council some potential funding models to build a new police station with a possible City Hall Administrative wing; **all without raising taxes**. This will be an ongoing discussion that you can look to see more on in the very near future.

The next couple of months will be very busy around town. The new Selah-Naches Food Bank will have their ribbon cutting ceremony at 9:00 AM on May 2nd. Even though they have been open for awhile now, this will serve as a grand opening ceremony for the broader community.

Community Days with Barb Petrea and team leading the charge promises to deliver most of the old standby activities; but some fun new things as well. Get involved and join in on all the fun activities all week May 16-19. While there, checkout the City’s information booth

High School graduation is always a time for the community to come out and celebrate.

The City will be sending a delegation to the state Association of Washington Cities Convention in Vancouver this year. This is always an opportunity for leaders to interact with their counterparts from other cities and participate in education and hands on training sessions that can be brought back home for fresh ideas benefiting the City.

That’s all folks for this month.

If you wish to be added or removed from the Mayor’s Monthly email please send a message to roger.bell@selahwa.gov.

Roger Bell, Selah Mayor