

# INSIDE THE 105

October 2018



## City of Yelm Newsletter

*From the Desk of Michael Grayum, City Administrator*

### City Hall Update

Excitement is building for our transition to the future City Hall building. The IT network has been upgraded, carpet and paint colors have been selected, and contractors are getting to work. City Council continues to deliberate on the best use for our historic building and we anticipate moving into the new one by the end of November. As we prepare to move into our new space, we all need to work together to identify ways to streamline programs and services to increase support for each other and the customers we serve. One of the many benefits of our future location will be having a single service counter to create a one-stop-shop for customers to receive assistance with utility payments, permits, planning, pet licensing, facility rentals, and more.

Our new location will also be a catalyst for us to improve operations. We are evaluating options to reorganize to create a front counter team focused on improving customer service as part of hiring for the vacancy in the Planning Department. We will be reaching out to the Union as we review and update job descriptions. Meanwhile, I want everyone to map out the primary processes, procedures, and duties and recommend ways to make things more efficient and effective in our new location. Start thinking about and sharing ideas with your managers. Don't worry about getting everything perfect out of the gate because I expect us all to always be working to find ways to do things more efficiently and effectively as part of our culture of continuous improvement.

### Did You Know...

Every day more than 1,400 cars travel on Tornado Alley—our new road to the back of Yelm High School. This successful project in partnership with Yelm Community Schools helps parents and students get to and from school safely, while also relieving congestion on Yelm Avenue during peak travel times. This effort, combined with our success getting the funding to move up construction on the Yelm Loop, is another significant step forward to improve transportation in our community. Thank you to all involved!



### CELEBRATIONS

#### Anniversaries

October 14 – Sonia Ramirez,  
5 years

#### Birthdays

Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> – Tim Rarick

Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> – Tyler Harper

Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> – Chris Davis

Sept. 5<sup>th</sup> – Jared Geray

Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> – Bill DeVore

Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> – Bill VanBuskirk

Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> – Molly Carmody

Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> – Donni Burnham

## Yelm Hosts Legislative Discussion And Tour Of Statewide Water Rights Issues

In response to our testimony to the new Water Rights Task Force and invitation for legislative leaders to come to Yelm, last week we were honored to host a committee of elected leaders to discuss issues of statewide significance. Together, we discussed and toured our awesome mitigation project at the Smith Farm, as well as our water reuse/recharge system - which was the first of its kind in Washington State.

Thank you to Grant, Chad, Council member Tad Stillwell and Mayor JW Foster who worked with me to host and convene this legislative tour, as well as our partners in this project and co-presenters - the City of Lacey, City of Olympia and Nisqually tribe. Together, we are working to implement the legislative path forward to secure additional water rights and plan for our city's population growth, which is projected to double in the next ten years. Water rights are a key component to manage residential and economic growth in Yelm and communities across Washington State. Preventing sprawl and increasing density inside city boundaries is better for the environment, and the revenue generated is essential to keep pace with our ability to provide essential services for customers.



## Yelm Earns Distinguished National Budget Award

For the first time in our city's history, Yelm has earned a Distinguished Budget Award for producing a budget that achieves national standards. We were independently evaluated by the Government Finance Officers Association and recognized for how well our budget serves as a policy document, a financial plan, an operations guide, and a communications resource. Change is difficult and I thank everyone who worked together to help transform our approach to managing finances and meet the highest principles of governmental budgeting. Special thanks to the Department Directors and finance team who pulled together to provide support during a leadership transition. A big thank you also goes to our new Finance Director Joe Wolfe who hit the ground running, Mayor Foster for his empowering approach to leadership, and the City Council for their support.

Beyond the budget, we've initiated and implemented several other notable financial improvements, including: creating a long-term revenue forecast, establishing financial policies, budget reserves, and dedicated accounts for replacing vehicles and equipment. We will continue to make more improvements next year, including the development and adoption of a biennial budget to remain focused on a longer-term time horizon, and the publication of quarterly budget reports to increase transparency and communications. Thank you to everyone for making our new approach to budgeting and financial management a wonderful success. Keep up the great work!

## Celebrating Our Growing Family

Our Court Clerk, Donni Burnham, is back from maternity leave and we are excited to welcome baby Holli and Scarlet to our Yelm Family. We're also excited to welcome Dana Spivey's first grandbaby, Aurora, who was recently born. Join me in congratulating Donni and Dana!



## Name The Next Newsletter

The change of address at our new building will bring about a change to the name of our employee newsletter. 'Inside the 106' doesn't have the same ring as 'Inside the 105,' so join me in thinking of new names.

If your department comes up with a winning idea, I'll buy a pizza lunch for the entire crew. Let me know your ideas, as well as your feedback on some I'm considering:

- Plain Talk (*connected to the plains of our prairie*)
- Yelm Community Corner
- Yelm Insider
- 597
- Mountain View News
- Close Encounter
- City View
- Mountain View Messenger
- Yelm Station

## Technology Upgrades Improve City Services

I'm excited about two major projects your teammates are working on that will make the work of all employees easier and enhance service to our customers. The first is our transition to the BIAS software, which will be a major enhancement from the Incode system we've been using for decades. We will also make online payments and transactions free for customers as part of this significant improvement, which is scheduled for implementation by Q1 of 2019. Thank you Grant Beck, Joe Wolfe, and our finance and utility team members for all your work with this transition.

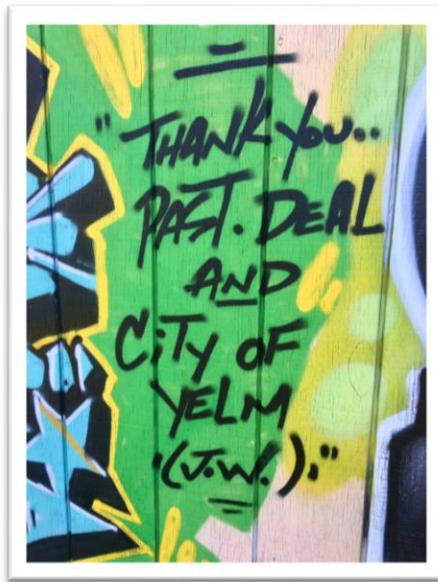
The second major upgrade is to our website. I'm excited for our collective effort to provide a complete overhaul to the design and organization of our website. We will see significant improvements to information accessibility, search ability, and mobile interface. These technology upgrades are part of our ongoing efforts to increase transparency and communications. Great job Jason, Aaron, Grant, and all the Department Directors working together on this successful effort! We should be ready to go live by Q4 of this year.

## New Process Streamlines Services And Support Businesses

We're excited to announce we've partnered with the State of Washington Business License Services to create a one-stop-shop for business license applications and renewals. We've been working with the Governor's Office and state agencies on our mutual efforts to help businesses succeed and grow. Our new process allows businesses to register with state agencies and cities at the same time through a single-payment process. Ashlee Sund has done a great job coordinating our transition to this integrated system. As a result, Yelm is the first city to adopt the model ordinance and implement this innovative approach. Great work team! Join me in congratulating Ashlee and our Finance Director, Joe Wolfe, on this successful new program supporting local businesses. More information about this program is available at: [business.wa.gov/BLS](http://business.wa.gov/BLS)

## Professional Artists Design Graffiti Wall

Volunteers are coming together to create a new community project to empower and connect with young people. One of the many goals of this projects is for kids to see good examples of public art, cooperation, and respect for different ideas that will hopefully grow into other more socially responsible behaviors. The volunteer artists are grateful to Mayor Foster who brought folks together to provide a creative outlet for young people and made this all possible on private property without any taxpayer costs. We applaud the Slopak family for their gracious acceptance and cooperation. We will continue to engage the artists to keep this going as an evolving art project, while continuing to focus on keeping it clean and appropriate.



## Honoring Jim May's Public Service

It is with mixed feelings to say goodbye to Jim May. It is always sad to lose a dedicated, hardworking employee. Our only consolation is that Jim is happy to be moving to Idaho with his family and enjoying another fun career adventure. Jim has contributed a lot to the success of the City of Yelm. We acknowledge his efforts and thank him for the unconditional commitment and dedication throughout the years as a City of Yelm Police Officer and most recently Public Works Maintenance Worker in our Parks Department.

## Looking Forward

We're at the beginning of budget season and working hard to develop a biennial budget for 2019 and 2020. We recently initiated this long-term approach to budgeting to coincide with the long-term revenue forecast we recently established to help us be more proactive and plan for a positive future. We appreciate the support from City Council and will present the Mayor's proposed budget on October 9.

Before we do, we will share the budget highlights with employees at our all-staff meeting and BBQ on October 5. We will review many collective accomplishments from this past year, review projected revenue, discuss budget drivers, and highlight the Mayor's priorities this budget is built upon. Going forward, every regularly scheduled public meeting will include some form of budget presentation, discussion, or opportunity to review detailed proposals by City Council members as they work together to adopt the budget by December 31, 2018.

Also on the horizon, at the October City Council Study Session, we will have Johnson Controls INC. provide a presentation on the findings of their Investment Grade Audit we recently contracted with them to complete. Based on their assessment, JCI will lay out for Council a menu of options and recommended road map for improving efficiency and increasing environmental sustainability in our facilities across the city.

Then, at the November and December Study Sessions, Council will continue deliberating on the future use of our current City Hall building and we will have a presentation on water rights so Council can better understand the complexities and many nuances of this important topic, which is imperative to our future residential and economic growth.

## It's Official – Congratulations Chris Vaccaro

Join me in congratulating Chris on passing the final test to become a Certified Building Official! Chris came to Yelm with excellent experience in building inspection and plans review. He stood out among several highly qualified candidates as the best fit for our team and commitment to providing excellent customer service. Chris has become an integral part of our team and now has the official paperwork to show what we already know... that he has the personality, smarts, morality and passion for the job. Congratulations Chris. Keep up the great work!

## Yelm Loop Yelm Loop Open House Outlines Future Improvements

Thank you to everyone who participated in our recent public open house on the State Route 510 - Yelm Loop Phase 2 project in partnership with the Washington State Department of Transportation. The Department said the Community Center was an ideal venue and reported a very high percentage of attendees were supportive of the project. We had great participation from the community with 124 people signing in. We will keep moving forward, building on the momentum of our recent success securing \$20M+ from the Legislature to move up the completion date of this important project for our community and region.

