

# City of Monmouth

## City Manager's Report

*A Report on City of Monmouth News, Happenings, Successes and Other Items*

*June 2, 2014*

### **Volunteers**

The City of Monmouth is blessed with a host of volunteers that help us with decision-making and support our services. Over 60 volunteers serve on our various Boards and Commissions, which advise the City on issues such as land use, traffic safety, parks and recreation and Senior Center services. We also have WOU students serving as interns on a regular basis. Volunteers help out each year for spot events and projects such as tree plantings and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festival. We have also supported several scout and high school senior projects. Two groups of volunteers support the City year round and are integrated into our daily operations. If you call the Senior Center, you will likely be talking to a volunteer. Volunteers also teach classes, coordinate events and activities and directly support Senior Center users. At the Library, volunteers mend books, shelve books, help with summer reading programs and process audio-visual materials. In a typical year, Library volunteers contribute 2200 hours of service. This is the equivalent of 1.5 employees! Thank you, volunteers, for all you do.

### **Arts and Culture Activities**

Your Arts and Culture Commission has been busy recently. The Commission held a spring concert by the Student Loan String Band. It was an excellent event with a very entertaining band. The Commission also selected a piece of art from the WOU Student Art Show. If you've ever been in our City Council Chambers/Court Room, the pieces of art you see are several years of purchases from this annual show. This year, for the first time, the Commission's selection will be displayed at the library. Behind the scenes, the

Commission is working on developing materials that show art and event venues in Monmouth and is working with the Ash Creek Arts Center on an arts survey.

### **Talmadge Road Pedestrian Improvements**

If you are walking north on Talmadge Rd. above Madrona St. you will encounter a gap in the sidewalk. Typically, street improvements such as roads, bike lanes and sidewalks are installed by developers when parcels are developed. In this case, we have a gap where new development has not taken place. The roadway in this section has a good bike lane, but no sidewalks. And it is not very well lit. Citizens have expressed concerns about the safety of this section, which serves as significant pedestrian route for neighborhood residents and students.

We are pleased to announce that this "gap" will be closed this summer. The City and Polk County are partnering to provide a continuous bike lane and sidewalk for this section of road. The project has a lot of moving parts. Portions of the road are managed by Polk County and portions by the City of Monmouth. Extra street right-of-way had to be acquired. Utilities will need to be relocated and new street lights installed. Polk County and the City will share project costs, with Polk County serving as the project manager. Design and survey work is underway, with construction ready to start in the near future.

### **Bounty Market**

As a reminder, our new Bounty Market is up and running. It is open on Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Main Street Park. It is already

great and will only get better as more produce becomes available. As a way to support the market and to increase our visibility, the City will have a booth on most market days. Different departments will be staffing the booth. Please feel free to stop by our booth to see what information we have or to ask a question.

### **Tree Plantings**

As I noted earlier, we love our volunteers that help us plant trees. Their efforts and the leadership of our Tree Advisory Board have really had a positive effect on our town. This year's Tree Board spring planting was along Craven and Powell streets. The WOU Volleyball team helped the Board plant 25 trees.



Tree Board member Brian Sparks has become a "tree planter's best friend" by pre-drilling holes at our planting sites.

### **New Police Department Employees**

Casey Gibson has been hired as our newest Police Officer. Casey grew up in Sheridan, OR. He has attended Chemeketa Community College and has recently taken classes at Western Oregon University. Casey graduated from the Mid-Valley Reserve Academy and served as reserve deputy for the Polk County Sheriff's Office for the past three years, with the last year as a temporary full-time deputy. He also still serves as a volunteer firefighter/medic for the Sheridan Fire District. Casey comes to us with more knowledge, training and experience than the average new hire due to his employment at the sheriff's office. He will attend the 16-week basic police academy beginning July 21st.

Garrett Hoffman has been hired as our Community Service Officer. He has been very successful in working with community members to remove abandoned vehicles from the streets and mowing down tall grass and weeds from their properties. He also is very good at following up on animal complaints and encouraging pet owners to license their dogs. Garrett grew up in Gold Beach, Oregon and graduated from Gold Beach High School in 2010. He first attended Southern Oregon University, then Southwestern Oregon Community College, and is now attending Western Oregon University. He is working toward a 4 year degree, majoring in Law Enforcement.

### **Backyard Chickens**

The City approved a temporary ordinance two years ago that allowed chickens to be kept in back yards. The purpose of the temporary ordinance was to test this idea. Chicken advocates know of nine backyard chicken coops in Monmouth. Since we haven't heard of any adverse effects from these (or other) coops, the City will move forward to make backyard chicken rules a regular part of our City Code. A related issue that came up during the prior discussion was whether there was a way to accommodate multiple residences sharing a coop. This brings up an entire new list of regulatory and management concerns that we are still sorting through. The good news is that the "city folks" on staff are receiving some excellent advice on collective chicken raising from our local Soil and Water Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation staff.

If you have any questions about items in this report or anything related to the City, please call me at 503-751-0146 or e-mail me at [smcclure@ci.monmouth.or.us](mailto:smcclure@ci.monmouth.or.us).

**Scott McClure**  
City Manager

