



CITY OF SILVERTON

AUTUMN 2022

Mayor's Corner

It's a little surreal to note that this will be my final submission to the City Newsletter as Mayor of a city that means so very much to me, but here I am. The deadline for the next submission will occur before the next Mayor is sworn in, but it will be published after they take office, so naturally I think that's a great time for that person to start communicating directly with you.



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There's been no shortage of people I need to thank for making these past six years as Mayor, and frankly the past 18 years as part of the Council, an honor I'll never forget and deeply appreciate, including my wife and family, my small circle of really close friends, all of the Mayors and City Councilors I've served with, an absolutely amazing group of current and former City staff members, dozens and dozens of volunteer committee members, and of course, each of you.

During my time with our Council, I've learned a lot of things about myself, reconnected with a love of writing that started at Silverton High a long time ago, and have been so fortunate to meet people who have expanded my field of vision and understanding of issues I wasn't seeing before.

I don't know who the next Mayor will be, or who the three or four new Councilors will be, and I choose to have faith that the only reason they would ever run for these positions is because they want to serve your needs and the needs of the community rather than their own. When that is the case, as it is currently, and when seven people have no fear of an opinion that is not their own, as is also currently the case, the future of our city will always be in good hands.

The past six years have challenged our community in ways we never would have imagined. A two-plus year struggle to respond to and evolve with the changing impacts of COVID-19, a once-in-a-lifetime devastating ice storm, and the first ever wildfire threat so close that much of the community was evacuating (and if not for a late change in the wind patterns, very well have suffered the same fate as our neighbors in the Santiam Canyon) aren't exactly the highlight reel that anyone would hope to reflect on.

To put an exclamation on those particular challenges, I've watched much of our community become so entrenched and divided along political lines that I spend a good part of everyday thinking about how and if we can reverse that. Ironically, I wouldn't even see any of the spotlight issues as being political in nature if it wasn't so obvious how both sides of every argument have congregated.



Kyle on a Rotary civic clean-up party in 2021.

Photo by Jim Kinghorn

That said, one thing was absolutely common to the Pandemic, the Ice Storm, and the Wildfires – our community's first response, or even simply instinct if you will, was to help other people. Any other person. Every other person. With absolutely no bias as to who they were, what they believed, how they worshipped, who they loved, or what color they were.

That wasn't the only thing the three events had in common though, as just like clockwork, that mindset eventually shifted back to division for many, including finger-pointing about how these things happened, what could have prevented them, how they may have been more successfully managed, and what facts were even facts about them in general.

Here's the most interesting part, to me anyway. All those questions should be asked, and all of our daily habits should be analyzed, and all of our standard response plans should be continuously reassessed against new events and new information – that's how we learn, grow, and use yesterday's lessons to impact tomorrow's preparation.

We just don't have to fight with each other to do it.

There will be four new members of the Silverton City Council no matter who wins in the coming elections. That's a majority, and could possibly represent a seismic shift, and that doesn't have to be a bad thing, unless that shift is in the Council's ability to work cooperatively regardless of their position on a given matter. I can only hope the body will understand what the current one does: differences of opinion have never been the problem – the fear of those differences is the real threat.

I've said for 15 years that the best Council our community could ever have would be seven people



Kyle being sworn-in as mayor in 2017. File Photo

with significant philosophical differences who are willing to listen to each other, consider all information and opinions, and make the best decision possible for our citizens (which more than likely won't include 100% of anything hoped for by any specific member). It's worked without fail for the last eight years and it's provided our citizens the most thorough, comprehensive decision making possible.

I worry though, that the determination of many to see what they don't understand or recognize, build a defense against it, and settle only for its complete destruction because it doesn't reflect their own philosophy, ideology, and desires for their community, state, country, and world, is simply too strong. I'm asking you each as citizens of our great community, to not set aside those differences, but to embrace them as the beginning of every dialogue that will move us forward to the solutions that this city needs.

As great a place as this is, we have real problems like all other communities. It's so expensive to live here that we risk two of our most important demograph-

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Community Development Department Updates

Here's an update from Silverton's Community Development Director, Jason Gottgetreu, on the many City development projects in the works.

The City will be conducting an Economic Opportunity Analysis that will analyze the amount of existing buildable commercial and industrial land in the City and forecast the amount of land needed to support the projected job business growth to ascertain if additional land is needed and what strategies or policies may be needed to support and encourage economic development.

The City will be conducting a Transit Study to gather input on what additional transit services would be beneficial and utilized in Silverton. There is additional State revenue available to expand transit service and the first step is to conduct a study to determine what services community members want and would use.

The City has allocated funds to construct Phase I of Pettit Park that is to include a walking trail around the lake. The intent is to facilitate public access in a manner that would be compatible with future phases of a larger park project on the site.

The Planning Commission is working on a number of Development Code updates such as, creating guidance for water conservation through the devel-



Pettit property. Photo by Kristine Thomas

opment process, creating clear guidelines on tree preservation during the development process, and providing development paths that facilitate developments that contain a variety of housing types.

The Civic Center construction continues with the latest milestone being the pouring of the concrete slab. The next step will be the erection of the steel frame of the structure which will start to give the project real shape.

Welcome New Community Development Planning & Permit Assistant

The Community Development Department welcomed Cleone Cantu as their new Planning & Permit Assistant on Monday, Aug. 29, 2022.

Cleone replaced Kate Schlee who moved to Texas in July.

Cleone comes to the City with 21 years of customer service experience, with her most recent five years of experience in the construction industry: where she coordinated 15 construction crews, handled construction permits applications, and scheduled inspections.

We are honored that Cleone has chosen to service the Silverton public, developers and builders by becoming a City of Silverton employee.



City Manager's Corner

Water Conservation

As fall begins we want to thank all who made an effort to conserve water this summer. The City launched the "Silverton Saves Water" campaign that provides practical tips about reducing water consumption. Tips included information about creating rain gardens, dishwasher use, composting, lawn watering and much more.

Car Free Day

Mayor Palmer proclaimed Sept. 22 as "Car-Free Day." This proclamation encouraged people to use alternative transportation such as carpooling, telecommuting, buses, bicycling and walking. As an organization, we tried to set the example by providing an incentive – lunch – for employees that didn't bring their vehicle to work. The results exceeded our expectation as employees car pooled, rode the Silverton Trolley, and found different ways into work.

Staying In-Touch

You may have noticed an increased presence by the City on social media. We're not only giving information about meetings, volunteer opportunities, etc. but also highlighting what makes Silverton great. One of the most popular posts we made on social media was spotting a Western Tanager bird in Old Mill Park.

Construction Update

Silverton's new budget began on July 1 and includes significant capital projects. Some projects, like the new Civic Center, are easily visible and others are not. Each month we provide the City Council with an update on the projects which is published with the City's Council meeting agenda.

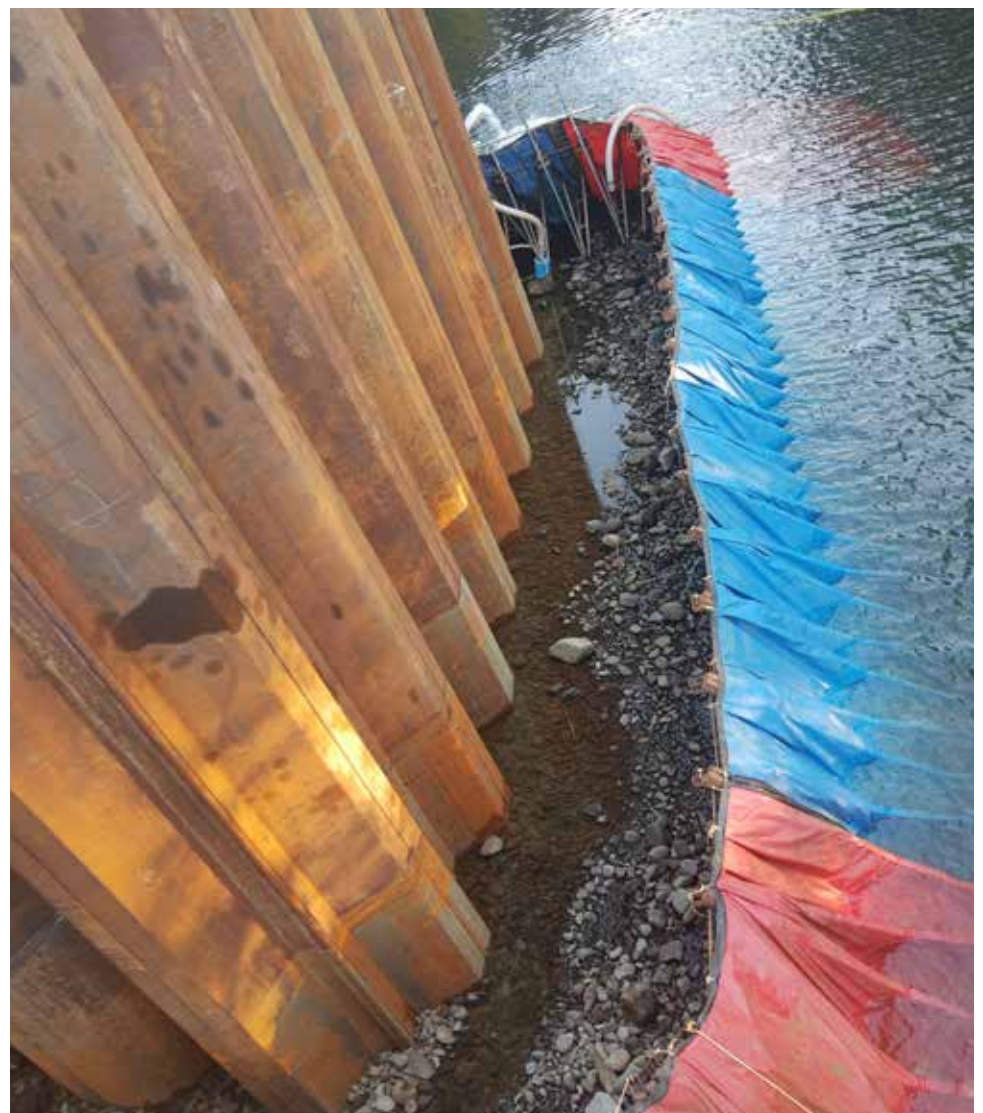
The City completed resurfacing portions of Jersey, Lewis and Second Streets. This project included re-asphalting and upgrading curb ramps in the sidewalks.

The skate park will be lighted. Four new lights will be installed around the skating area. During October, conduit will be installed for the lights. The poles will be erected once the conduit is installed. Landscaping along Main Street will be enhanced as part of the project.

The City purchased new drinking fountains for Coolidge McClaine Park, Old Mill Park, Lincoln Park, Pioneer Park and the Silverton Reservoir. These drinking fountains will include



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The portadam at the water intake construction project along Silver Creek near the pool.

a bottle filler feature. They will all be installed by next spring.

Work on the new water intake structure in Silver Creek is moving forward. A temporary portadam is being

installed to create a dry working area where the pumps will be replaced.

Tune into the City's web page for updates on these and the other City projects.

Mayor From page 1

ics – retired volunteers holding our community’s history, and blossoming young professionals holding our community’s future – being forced to live elsewhere and bringing their gifts to those communities instead of ours.

We have citizens – yes citizens – living in tents, under bridges, and outside, sometimes with children, and while our awareness is so much greater than five years ago, and our support of those working to solve this problem is obvious, it will take much, much more than both of those things to make the difference that part of our population needs. These are our people as much as those in your neighborhood and in large numbers share one thing in common – the lack of a family-based safety net when domestic violence, job-related displacement, major medical tragedy, addiction, mental illness, or many other sadly not uncommon issues whittled their choices down to very few.

We also now know that despite many efforts to celebrate diversity in our community, people of color, certain religions, various cultures, and members of the LGBTQ+ population have long felt unwelcome here by large parts of our population.

I’m proud to say that three task forces created by City Council over recent years are pointed squarely at those issues, but despite that pride, I promise you that it will take much, much more than city committee work to move the dial in the right direction.

As a community, it is essential that each of us comes to conversations on these issues with their genuine ideology, but also with a promise to discuss them and search for solutions with an open heart and no fear of an opinion that may be 100% the opposite of whatever they bring to the room.

We can’t ignore these issues and we can’t push them off to other communities. These productive members of our community are many of the same people you see trying hard to make a living in order to live here and trying to find a way to fit into this place that they love. We can help.

Attend a task force meeting, take the time to attend a Town Hall meeting, attend or watch City Council meetings (*please!*) and above all, join these discussions away from social media and the urge it creates to communicate with words and tone we’d never use in person.

Seek out the viewpoints of others, especially those completely at odds with your own, and be open and ready to find ground that you both can live on. We can’t shift a national trend or reverse statewide infighting, but we do have the



Kyle taking part in breaking ground on the new civic center this past April with city staff and councilors.

Photo by James Day

opportunity and strength to make sure our own house is in order.

When something looks bad and really upsets you, try applying a relentless benefit of the doubt on the off chance that you’ve seen something unclear, been told the wrong thing, or that the Facebook Department of Reliable Information might be... well... unreliable.

We live in a world of rising costs and may be headed toward a significant recession, but there is some good news – not everything costs money. Benefits of the doubt, kindness, decency, open hearts and minds, allyship, support, fairness, respectful discourse, compromise, understanding, help for others, volunteerism, community service, and a genuine desire to solve problems are all completely free. They don’t cost a cent, but as far as investments go, there are no better and the return is profound.

Treat the next City Council with patience and understanding – no matter what, a majority of them will be new to the body and won’t be immediately ready to be resilient in the face of criticism. They will make mistakes, as each of us has, but with your support, their genuine desire to help move us forward can be what defines them.



Kyle on clean-up duty at the 2017 Silverton Pet Parade. Photo by Jim Kinghorn

As for me, thank you from the bottom of my heart for something that I’ve valued more than any words I know can express – it’s been the opportunity of a lifetime. I’ve been on a lifelong pursuit to pay back this community for a childhood that I could only describe as being right out of a book, and though I’ll never even the score, I don’t plan to stop trying. It just won’t be in this particular capacity.

Silverton City Council



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Residential Winter Sewer Averaging Begins in November

The City of Silverton residents can save on monthly sewer costs by conserving water during winter months, which is the billing cycle known as Winter Averaging.

Since the City does not have a way to account for the amount of wastewater you discharge, the City has come up with a fair way to charge for wastewater system use. The assumption for wastewater use is that during the winter billing months of November through April water usage is confined to inside your residence and goes down the drains to the wastewater sewer plant to be treated.

The sewer rate has two components: (1) Base Charge and (2) Usage Charge based on water consumption. Added together, they make up the total sewer charge that you see on your statement.

The sewer usage charge is determined by taking the average monthly water consumption (measured in cubic feet) for a six month period between November (beginning with the water meter reading in October) through April (ending with the meter reading taken in April) billing periods. Once that average is determined the usage portion of the sewer is bill \$7.88 per 100 cubic feet of usage (to compare water usage is billed \$3.53 per 100 cubic feet). It is also billed a base fee of \$28.49 per dwelling unit.

Unless there is a rate change which normally will occur in July, this is your fixed sewer rate until the following May when the average is recalculated. This means that the sewer portion of a customer's bill will not increase in the summer months due to irrigating, car washing and filling of swimming pools.

Residential customers have the option to "opt-out" of the averaging method and have the usage charge based on actual water consumption for each month all year long. To "opt-out" the

customer must complete a form and submit it to the Finance Department by April 30. To opt back in you have until April 30 and must fill out the same form. If a customer would like to opt back in during the year you will need to wait until the following sewer averaging period. That form is located on the City's website at: www.silverton.or.us/utilities

To make sure your bill accurately reflects your usage, carefully review the water usage provided on the utility bills during the Winter Averaging period. Current customers during this period will see current year and prior year information on their bills. If you think the usage is high, you may want to check for a leak which may affect your new sewer rate. Leaks can result in double or triple the overall average consumption used to calculate the new sewer rate.

How to check for a leak in your house:

- Make sure no water will be used for 30 to 60 minutes;
- Take a water meter reading;
- Wait 30 to 60 minutes without using water; and
- Take a second water meter reading.

If the meter reading changed, it could indicate there is a leak, and repairs may be in order. Notify the Finance Department as soon as possible regarding a potential leak as it may qualify for an adjustment to your utility bill. Toilet leaks, however, do not qualify for a billing adjustment. A leak adjustment request form can be found on the City's website: www.silverton.or.us/utilities

Questions regarding your water and sewer bill should be directed to the Finance Department at 503-873-5321 option #1 or finance@silverton.or.us.

City Calendar

October

Monday, Oct. 17 – **City Council Special Meeting** 6:30 - 11 p.m. Silverton High School Library & Zoom.

Wednesday, Oct. 26 – **Homeless / Housing Task Force Meeting** 6 - 8 p.m.

November

Monday, Nov. 7 **City Council Regular Meeting** 6:30 - 11 p.m. Silverton High School and Zoom.

Tuesday, Nov. 8 **Planning Commission Regular Meeting** 7 - 9 p.m. at Silverton High School Library & Zoom.

Friday, Nov. 11 **City Hall Offices Closed – Veterans Day**

Wednesday, Nov. 23 **Homeless/Housing Task Force Meeting** 6 - 8 p.m.

Nov. 24 – 25 **City Hall Offices Closed – Thanksgiving**

December

Monday, Dec. 5 **City Council Regular Meeting** 6:30 - 11 p.m. at Silverton High School and Zoom.

Tuesday, Dec. 13 **Planning Commission Regular Meeting** 7 - 9 p.m. at Silverton School Library & Zoom.

Dec. 25 – 26 **City Hall Offices Closed** (inc. Christmas Day observed)

Wednesday, Dec. 28 **Homeless/Housing Task Force Meeting** 6 - 8 p.m.

January

Jan. 1 – 2 **City Hall Offices Closed** (inc. New Year's Day observed)

Monday, Jan. 9 **City Council Regular Meeting** 6:30 - 11 p.m. at Silverton High School Library & Zoom.



Upcoming agenda items are subject to change and meetings are subject to rescheduling or cancellation. Please check the City's website for the latest information and remote participation options. Remember, you can sign up for City alerts direct to your email or phone – look for the red "Stay Connected" button on the homepage! If you do not have a home computer, please use the public computers at Silver Falls Library to access the City's website for meeting agendas and information.

www.silverton.or.us

* Denotes meetings on SCAN TV

Leave Your Leaves at the Silverton City Shops Nov. 19 & Dec. 10

It's Fall and that means the leaves are here, there and everywhere. To ensure our city's streets can be swept to Silvertonians' satisfaction, please remember to put your garbage cans at the edge of your sidewalks and not in the street. The City's street sweeper cannot maneuver around garbage cans and recycling bins. The City's collection contractor, Republic Services, expects to pick up cans from the sidewalks and not the streets.

Did you know there's a City of Silverton Ordinance for keeping yard debris out of City streets? It's Ordinance 12.28.050 Depositing earth or debris on streets or sidewalks.

No unauthorized person shall deposit any earth, gravel or debris upon any street or sidewalk. (Ord. 467 § 15(5), 1962)

To help you adhere to the ordinance, there are TWO upcoming leaf recycling events at the Silverton City Shops. Please bag up your leaves and bring them to: 830 McClaine Street on Saturday, Nov. 19 and/or Saturday, Dec. 10, 2022 between 9 a.m. - 1p.m.