

MAYOR BELL'S WINTER UPDATE

January 2024

Well, we survived the great ice storm of January 2024! As bad as it was, it could have been much worse if our trees had not been trimmed and maintained by homeowners, Public Works staff and our power providers, so it wasn't just luck, it was preparation! Public Works, Police Department



and Fire District personnel were prepared and proactive for whichever emergency occurred. A big thank you is due to everyone who kept our streets as safe as possible, responded to our calls for help and kept our water running and toilets flushing and in most cases our electricity on. None of these things would have happened without the dedication and perseverance of many people. There were certainly lessons learned and things that we can do better, so there was a debrief to address these issues and plan for the future. Unfortunately, some of the issues experienced (i.e. loss of power and internet) are out of our control, but we will continue to work with those providers to explore ways to minimize future disruptions.

For those of you who were not able to attend or view the State of the City address in January, I will summarize the main points.

- **Accomplishments:** replacement of aging water infrastructure in several areas of town; construction of a 3rd well; maintenance and replacement of some city streets and public right of ways (including a lighted crosswalk); maintenance and improvement of parks; expanded public events which ensure city vibrancy and add to a stable economic base; retention and addition of dedicated city staff and administration.
- **Challenges:** increased water scarcity and increasing demand; increased through traffic (domestic and freight); increased costs for materials and services which leads to budget uncertainty and more competition for project funding.
- **Plans for the future:** funded feasibility study for an East/West connector (regional traffic by-pass of sorts) as well as an Ad Hoc Transportation Committee to make recommendations regarding traffic safety; continued work on strong partnerships with county, state and regional partners to develop strategies to address water and traffic; improved budget forecasting and project management; evaluation of external contracts, use of contract staff; increase city fund balances; continue to evaluate and decrease the cost of debt service; and continue to encourage and increase opportunities for citizen input to help shape the direction of the city.

These are challenging times for us as individuals as well as for the community. While many issues are out of our control, I have no doubt that through creativity and determination we will continue to move forward and keep Coburg an inviting and livable community. A community that reaches out to neighbors and takes care of others in tough times.

If you would like to add your voice to city government and learn more about how the city operates, there is a city council vacancy. Contact City Recorder Sammy Egbert at sammy.egbert@ci.coburg.or.us or 541-682-7852 for more information.

I look forward to seeing you around town and enjoying Spring with all of you.

