

NEWSLETTER

Issue 202 * April 2014

Extra patrols focus on city center

Police have added extra patrols for the city's Central Business District. The patrols focus on offenses that range from removing homeless people sleeping in doorways to ticketing bicyclists riding on sidewalks.

The goal is to improve safety and conditions for patrons of the Central Business District, roughly the area between "A" to "M" streets and 4th to 8th streets.

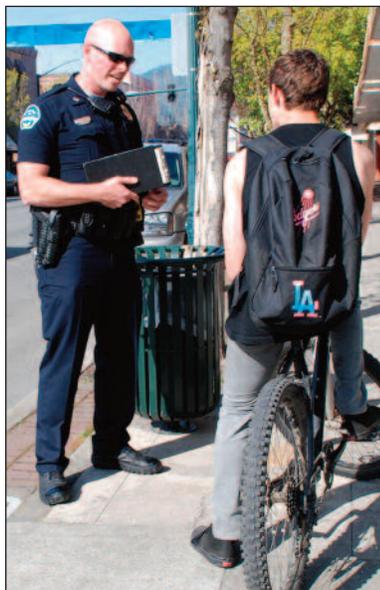
Police Officer Lucas Six prefers to "walk the beat," but officers also patrol on three-wheeled electric scooters called T-3s, and soon will be riding bicycles, too.

On a walk one afternoon in March, Six stopped bicyclists, woke up a woman sleeping on a bench, told loitering groups to move on, and talked with business owners.

"Our job is to see that everyone abides by the rules," Six said. His first contact was with a 14-year-old bicyclist who rode against traffic, ran a red light, then rode onto a sidewalk. The maximum fine for all the violations is \$630.

Six gave the teenager a \$25 ticket and a lecture on how bicyclists must obey the same laws as motorists. Six was easy on the teen because he stopped when told and was polite. "If we can get the message across, then he might be a bit more aware in the future," Six explained. "Our goal is to prevent injuries."

Further on, Six walked by a group that was loitering. He told them to move along and warned that if they were



Above, Officer Six writes a ticket to a woman who was sleeping on sidewalk bench. Below, Six chats with business owner Tim Tipton. At left, Six gives a lecture and a ticket to a young bicyclist who ran a traffic light.



still there in 10 minutes, he would ticket them.

After just two months of the patrols, vagrants and other suspicious characters scatter when they see an officer approaching. So, Six doesn't walk straight down a street. He turns frequently, takes "less traveled" routes, and doubles back.

Business owners also have noticed the police presence. A shop owner on "G" Street told Six that there are fewer

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Planning for new water treatment plant under way

In February, the City Council adopted an update to the 2004 Water Treatment Plant Facility Plan, which Public Works staff uses to plan plant projects. The update was spurred by a 2011 seismic and structural review of the Water Treatment Plant that concluded the plant has a high seismic risk and is likely to collapse in a strong earthquake.

The plant was built in 1931, with several expansions over the years. Under the 2004 plan, the plant underwent numerous projects to modernize, repair and improve the structure. Most did little to stem the slow deterioration of the aging structure. Now the original building, which is long past its expected lifespan, is showing large-scale signs of fatigue and decay.

Adoption of the 2014 plan marked the conclusion of almost two years of work by consultants, Councilors, staff and community members whose objectives were to:

- Evaluate the plant's recent performance and the impact of current and future drinking-water regulations.
- Evaluate the condition and remaining useful life of the plant's mechanical and structural systems.
- Incorporate water demand projections to identify potential water plant volume shortfalls and a timeline to develop additional treatment capacity.
- Evaluate alternatives for maintaining the water plant and providing expanded capacity for future growth.
- Evaluate siting and construction of a new water plant.
- Develop a capital improvement program plan based on community input and analysis of choices for the existing plant and a new facility.

An Advisory Committee of community leaders and City Council members assisted in the evaluation of five capital improvement alternatives. Using an independent facilitator from the Grants Pass community, four workshops were held over a three-month period. The committee evaluated each alternative considering not only economic, but social and environmental impacts. The alternatives were:

- Making only minor structural improvements to help the plant survive an earthquake;



Plant Superintendent Jason Canady explains the water filtration system to the Water Treatment Advisory Committee, which evaluated the structure of the 83-year-old plant and its ability to meet the community's future water needs.

- Renovating the existing water plant;
- Rebuilding the water plant on the existing location;
- Building a new water plant similar to the existing plant on a new site; and
- Building a new water plant using new technology that would allow the plant to fit into a smaller "footprint" and cost less to build.

The Advisory Committee presented its recommendation to the Council in August 2013. In reviewing the materials and the scoring performed by the committee, the Council directed the facility plan update to be completed with the recommendation to build a new water treatment plant at a site to be determined.

Adoption of the 2014 Water Treatment Plant Facility Plan Update is the first step in constructing a new water treatment plant, which will help to ensure Grants Pass residents will have the water they need in the future.

In the coming months, Council will be making important decisions related to building a new plant, such as determining the size of the facility and how construction will be financed. Residents are invited to view updates and progress reports at www.grantspassoregon.gov/water.

If you would like more information, please call Public Works Director Terry Haugen at 541-450-6110, or Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Jason Canady at 541-450-6119.

2014-15 City Budget Process

By the Numbers

1 In December, the City Council gathered input from the public, its citizen committees and staff.

2 In January, the Council used that information to create a set of goals for the year. The Council then ranked the importance of projects designed to meet those goals.

3 The City Manager, who also is the Budget Officer, uses the Council's goals and rankings to create a budget.

4 In May, the Budget Committee – made up of Councilors and members of the community – will review the budget during a series of public meetings. The committee then will send a recommended budget to the City Council.

5 In June, the City Council will conduct a public hearing on the recommended budget. If the Council makes any changes that would increase expenditures by 10 percent in any major category, an additional public hearing would be held. The Council then must adopt a budget before July 1.

Budget Committee Meetings

The public is invited to attend the meetings, which begin at 6 p.m. on May 6, May 13, May 15 and May 20 in the City Council Chambers.

Budget Information

Available at the end of April at: www.grantspassoregon.gov/Index.aspx?page=434

Citizen participation helps make budget a reflection of community

Most everyone needs or wants more things than they can afford. City government is no exception.

“Everything comes with a price tag,” City Councilor Rick Riker said. “With the City budget, we need to balance what we want, what we can afford, and the quality of life.”

To help achieve that balance, the budget is the product of a committee that has eight citizens and eight City Councilors.

“The lay participation and open meetings give the people of the city a chance for their input,” committee member Tom Brandes said.

“While the final budget must be approved by the City Council, it must have had prior budget committee approval,” he added.

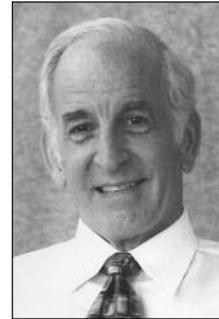
Brandes served on the committee last year, and has been reappointed to serve another three years. “I volunteered because I am concerned about the city infrastructure and keeping up on needed repairs or replacement of some aging structures,” he said.

The Water Filtration Plant and Water Restoration Plant both were built in the 1930s and have been expanded several times over the years. With age and increased demand, however, the plants are close to being obsolete.

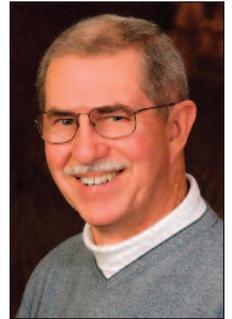
Brandes, a retired physician who has lived here for 40 years, also sees the committee as a good way to do public service.

“I feel like I know more than the average citizen about our City government because I have attended almost every Council meeting for the past two years,” Brandes said.

“I bring diversity to the committee, and I probably have different views on parts of the budget than



TOM BRANDES



RICK RIKER

others on the committee,” he said.

Diversity is one reason why the Budget Committee is important.

“Whenever you have involvement of people outside the core group, that’s an advantage,” Riker said. “It broadens the level of understanding and raises the bar on trust.”

Under Oregon law, local budgets must be put together by the Budget Officer, which in Grants Pass is City Manager Aaron Cubic. The law also requires that budgets offer ways to outline programs and services. In addition to a written summary in the budget document, each department gives a presentation to the committee on what they do and what they need.

“I appreciate the presentations,” said Riker, who has been a Councilor and Budget Committee member since 2010.

State law also requires that local governments encourage citizen involvement before a budget is adopted.

“When the committee meets, everyone has the opportunity to ask questions,” Riker said. “In fact, we as a Council encourage people to ask questions,” he added.

The public is invited to the budget hearings, which will begin at 6 pm on May 6, 13, 15 and 20 in the City Council Chambers, 101 NW “A” Street.

Extra patrols

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“bums” when police are around. When asked about his concerns, the owner told Six about recent vandalism down the street and regular customers who won’t stop by unless there is a parking spot close to the store.

A downtown merchant for 30 years, he also acknowledged that such problems are common to the downtown areas of many cities. In fact, when he opened his shop 30 years ago, he said he was concerned about poor street lighting and drunks from the four bars that used to be located on “G” Street.

Six also stopped to talk to a food vender at the corner of 6th and “K” streets. Tim Tipton of Taste of Alaska said he appreciates the new patrols. “Whatever you guys are doing has made a huge improvement,” he said.

Six writes down the merchants’ comments, and the names of everyone he stops, even if he doesn’t ticket them. Soon, the Department of Public Safety will analyze the violations, information and concerns Six and other officers have recorded. The data then will be used to create a permanent police beat for the Central Business District.

How to recycle your green waste

Free collection

Every spring, the City sponsors a free collection of yard waste for residents (no businesses). This year’s collection will take place April 14 to May 2.

Leaves, grass and other vegetation must be bagged and placed on the curb by 8 a.m. on your pick-up day:

- Northwest - Monday
- Northeast - Tuesday
- Southwest - Wednesday
- Southeast - Thursday

Bags must not weigh more than 40 pounds. Branches may be tied in bundles that are no more than 3 feet long and 3 feet around.

Stumps, sod and lumber are not accepted.

Year-round recycling

The companies that haul trash within city limits – Republic Services and Southern Oregon Sanitation – also provide curbside pick-up of green waste. Please call the companies for rates and information.

Haul it yourself

Republic Services and Southern Oregon Compost accept green waste for their composting operations. For hours and fees please call the companies.

For more information

- Republic Services: 541-479-3371
- Southern Oregon Sanitation: 541-479-5335
- Southern Oregon Compost: 541-479-7409
- Clearwater Technologies: 541-471-6226

Make your own compost

Composting is nature’s way of recycling. It can turn your fruit, vegetable and yard trimmings into an organic fertilizer and soil conditioner for your garden.

To learn how to make compost, please visit:

- <http://jocomasterrecycler.org/Composting>, or
- <http://www2.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>, or call your trash hauler.

If you would like to buy compost, please call Republic Services (which operates the former JO-GRO facility), Southern Oregon Compost, or Clearwater Technologies.



Your Grants Pass City Government

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City Council meetings begin at 6 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Council Chambers, 101 NW “A” Street. The meetings are televised on Cable Channel 21 and posted online at www.grantspassoregon.gov. City Councilors and staff talk about local issues on radio station KAJO (1270 AM) at 9:30 a.m. on the 1st and 2nd Tuesday of every month.