

# Providence City Newsletter

## Upcoming Events

### City Council

2nd & 4th Tuesdays except July,  
November and December

*Tuesday, August 13 and 27 @ 6:00PM*

### Planning Commission

2nd & 4th Wednesdays except July,  
November and December

*Wednesday, August 14 and August 28  
@ 6:00PM*

### Justice Court

From 4:00PM - 6:00PM

*Every Monday, except holidays*

### Mayor's Town Hall,

Depending on issue and level of  
citizen interest is held on the first  
Saturday of the month, and will  
be announced in the previous  
months newsletter

## Contact Information

Providence City Offices  
164 North Gateway Drive  
(435) 752-9441

### \*\* After-Hours Emergencies \*\*

Fire or police emergencies - 911  
Animal control 435-753-7555  
City related issues 752-9441; after  
hours message will have an on-call  
number to call a city employee who  
will respond.

### Direct line to the Mayor

(435) 760-8989 cell

[johnnd@providence.utah.gov](mailto:johnnd@providence.utah.gov)

## The Mayor's Memo

By the time you read this we will have had a city council meeting to hold a "Truth in Taxation" hearing. A hearing is required by state law whenever a municipal government will collect any additional property tax revenue over the prior year.

Expecting citizen questions, I have invited people I call "subject matter experts" to be in attendance and be available to directly address issues that will likely come up. My philosophy is that as a council, we seek out expert and professional advice to guide us in our decision making. I chose sound professional advice over political decisions.

Those people include Max Pierce, our city engineer who works for CRS Engineers; Chad Wooley, our city attorney whose sole practice is municipal law; Rich Anderson who is the Finance Director at Logan City who I call for advice on municipal accounting issues; Nick Jones who heads up the LTAP department (Local Technical Assistance Program) at USU School of Civil and Environmental Engineering who has given us good sound advice on the best use of taxpayer money for streets maintenance, repair and replacement; and Brad Hannig, Logan City Fire Chief. Also in attendance, Casey Snider our State Representative, and Chris Booth the Cache County Republican Chairman.

### Kicking the Can Down the Road

When I ran for mayor, I stated that too many issues had been put on the back burner. "The can was kicked down the road" I said. There are still issues that remain to be addressed. My policy is that when I know something, I let residents know. The best way I know how to do that is to communicate through this newsletter.

One significant issue that has not been addressed is the utility rates for water, sewer and stormwater. Utah cities periodically employ an outside financial firm (required) to do what is called a rate study. The study determines an appropriate rate based on the need to recover our operating and maintenance costs, as well as setting aside adequate reserves for infrastructure replacement.

Our last rate studies were done 15 years ago. Logan City does theirs every 3 to 4 years according to Logan Finance Director Rich Anderson. The rate studies will commence over the next six months and the new council will have to deal with the impact of the reports with recommended utility rates. Fair warning, I expect significant increases.

More details on this in future newsletters, or you are welcome to call and I will explain further.

—John Drew, Providence City Mayor



Providence Urban Deer Near Main Street

## City Office Administration

### *Elections*



Skarlet Bankhead  
Administrative Services Director

Providence City is holding a by-mail primary election. The ballots were mailed to voters on July 23. If you are a registered voter in Providence City and did not receive a ballot in the mail, please contact Skarlet Bankhead, City Recorder, [sbankhead@providence.utah.gov](mailto:sbankhead@providence.utah.gov) or 435-752-9441.

To cast your vote, please follow the instructions included with your ballot. If you are mailing your ballot, the ballot return envelope must be clearly postmarked before Election Day, (no later than 08/12/2019).

Ballots, in the ballot return envelope, will be accepted at the Providence City Recorder's Office, 164 North Gateway Drive, Providence, UT, on Election Day until 8:00 p.m. For your convenience, we have installed a ballot drop-off box next to the utility drop-off box. Please put your ballots in the ballot drop-off box; do not put ballots in the utility drop-off box.

### *Notice of Proposed Tax Increase*

The City is proposing to increase its property tax revenue. All citizens are invited to a public hearing on the tax increase. A Public Hearing will be held on Monday, 8/05/2019 6:30 p.m, Providence City Offices, 164 North Gateway Dr. Providence UT.

### *Providence City Youth Council*

We are now accepting applications for the 2019/2020 Youth Council. This is an opportunity for youth in the 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades to acquire a greater knowledge of the community through active participation in community affairs. Applications available on the City website: <http://www.providencecity.com/youth-council.htm>

Come Join a Children's Choir

Classes offered this fall, September through April, Mondays 4:30-5:30;; Boys and Girls elementary age students. (6 yrs – 13 yrs old) at Providence City Offices /Arts Recreation Program; Price: \$30 a month. Space is limited. To save your spot please call **Keri Swink** @ 435-232-8676 or email [vocalstepz.keriswink@gmail.com](mailto:vocalstepz.keriswink@gmail.com)

### *Flag Football*

Registration Dates: Now – August 16, 2019; Age Groups: 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grades, 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> Grades. Join us for our third season of Youth Flag Football. It is a version of American Football where the basic rules of the game are similar to the mainstream game, but instead of tackling players to the ground, the defensive team must remove a flag or flag belt from the ball carrier to end a down. For more information on these programs, visit the City's website: <http://www.providencecity.com/providence-city-recreation-activities.htm>.

### *Baseball/Softball*

The Lex Baer Field (small field) and the PONY Field (medium field) are closed for end of season maintenance. They are scheduled to open August 17. The Max Johnson Field (large field) is open.

The Uptown Park Softball Field is closed for end of season maintenance and the sports lighting upgrade project. The completion date for the lighting project is scheduled for August 21.

— Skarlet Bankhead, Administrative Services Administrator



Sheree Ostler  
Crossing Guard Lead

## Crossing Guards

Our crossing guards are gearing up for school starting shortly. We have hired two new crossing guards and have met to discuss safety and other operational issues.

We would like to remind residents that they need to be mindful now that school will be starting soon and to watch out for children and the crossing guards, and that there will also be more bicycles on the road.

Some of the true heroes in the community are the Crossing Guards that protect our children while going to and from the schools everyday. These fine folks work rain, shine or snow to assist the little ones safely to their destinations.

—Beth Munson, City Treasurer, Court Clerk, Crossing Guard Supervisor

# 2020 Fiscal Year Budget Highlights and Property Tax Increase

## *New Budget Document*

The city staff is working on a draft of a budget document for 2020 that is in what I call a narrative format. It will have all the budget numbers along with explanations for the sources and uses of revenue and expenditures for all funds. It should be done by the end of August.

This will be the first year Providence City will produce such a document and will be very helpful to the citizens interested in understanding city government finances. Being our first we may miss some things, but we'll be working each year to produce an improved product. I think those residents who are interested in being better informed citizens will appreciate the story behind the numbers.

## *Tentative Budget*

The current year's budget for Fiscal Year 2020 is tentative as a final budget is pending approval of a change in the property tax rate. We also have changes to revenues and expenditure accounts that will be reflected in the final version, and will impact (and lower) the initial proposed tax rate.

## *Expenditures - Emergency Services Contract with Logan City*

In previous newsletters I have written about expected changes to our city budget, and the impact on our financial situation. In particular, we were notified by Logan City of their intent to renegotiate the Emergency Services contract with Logan City in a letter dated November 1, 2017.

In 2018, I wrote 8 articles for the city newsletter to apprise the residents of Providence as to the details of the discussions we were having and the options we were considering. We also held a town hall meeting on Saturday, August 4 to present the situation and discuss options. On the Townhall discussion panel were 3 fire chiefs from Logan, Cache County and Smithfield. We also had Logan City Mayor Holly Daines and Cache County CEO Craig Buttars to discuss and answer questions.

The newsletter articles stated the expected amount of the tax increase needed to fund the contract increase. I talked about different options including a volunteer fire department. We had former Providence resident and former Logan City Fire Chief (7 years) Mark Meaker speak to the council a month later about the state of volunteer fire departments. Mark had previously supervised volunteer operations.

We had also met with Cache County Fire Chief Rod Hammer who put a proposal together to build and operate a fire station across from Ridgeline High School to serve Providence, Nibley and Millville. The proportionate cost to Providence was within \$20,000 of Logan's proposal of \$460,000 for a full year. Despite the proposal, Nibley and Millville had no interest.

We talked to Hyrum City that operates a volunteer fire department that Nibley and Millville contract with. The Hyrum mayor and fire chief declined to consider offering services to Providence. One of the critical factors necessary to be considered is response time by full-time professionals versus a more distant volunteer operation.

Emergency services contract history:

2018	\$54,000
2019	\$74,000
Jan, 2020	\$303,000 (new contract, partial year)
Jan, 2021	\$460,000

With 3% increases each year thereafter.

## *Expenditures - Personnel Changes*

We have budgeted for three additional staff members, two of them for half of 2020 and one for a full year.

City Manager/City Administrator      \$65,000 (half year)

Skarlet Bankhead, our Office Services Director has asked to transition to a lower paying position as a planner/land use analyst. This position is in our budget. She had been doing both jobs for a while. Skarlet has worked for Providence City for over 28 years. Skarlet has run all of the day to day operations of the city for well over a decade, while putting in 60 to 70 hours a week. For personal and health reasons she wants to as she puts it, "Get back to 40 hours a week" and plan for retirement.

To replace her with someone of comparable skill and experience will cost the city \$130,000. Her current compensation including benefits are about \$106,000.

Inspector      \$45,000 (half year)

We have budgeted to hire an inspector to handle residential, commercial, fire and code inspections to include salary, benefits and vehicle costs. Currently we contract with Cache County for residential and commercial building inspections, and Logan City Fire for annual commercial fire inspections and new construction plan review. Fees for building inspection are paid to Cache County and we receive 20% of those fees. When an inspector comes on board, we will collect 100%.

The fire inspector cost is included in the fire contract; \$60,000. After the inspector is fire inspection certified, the fire contract allows a reduction of \$60,000. The intent is to ultimately generate cost savings from these two sources for the position to pay for itself. The budget includes vehicle and other costs.

Water Department Tech      \$43,650 (full year)

Rob, our public works director has a challenge in identifying infiltration in to our sewer system. The excess water in to our sewer system adds to the price we pay to Logan City for wastewater treatment. My analysis shows over \$200,000 additional cost to our city vs. comparable volume from other CV cities. Rob has asked for an additional water department employee to help tackle the problem. If successful, the extra money spent for an additional employee will save the city and it's ratepayers a substantial amount of money.

Some facts about personnel:

- Our total budget for city staff is approximately \$1.2 million including medical and retirement benefits.
- We have one person who's total compensation is over \$100,000 a year (including all benefits).
- Smaller cities of Wellsville and Hyde Park each have two employees who are paid over that amount. (see [transparent.utah.gov](http://transparent.utah.gov))
- From our research, overall our staff is compensated less than the average Cache Valley municipal employee for the same work. The difference is about \$3 to \$4 an hour.

There are many other changes to revenue and expenditures going both ways. We do not anticipate more sales tax revenue than last year.

You should know that we do expect the final property tax rate will be lower than initially advertised which was based on a tentative budget. My estimate is \$123 for an average residence versus \$154.

—John Drew, Mayor



## Providence 8 to 10 Year-Olds Win State Championships

### *Team Advances to National Championship Tournament in California*

A local Cache Valley Baseball League team from Providence of 8 to 10 year old boys won in the Pony League state championship when it beat their final opponent on July 17, 2019 at Zollinger Park. The Cache Valley Mustangs Red All-Star team had competed and advanced to the finals in Orem. The other team that had advanced was also another Pony League team from Providence, so the final game was played in Providence.

The team competed in a national tournament in Los Alamitos, California. After beating an Arizona team, our boys lost to a team from Placentia, California.

Congratulations to the boys and their coaches, and head coach Nate Wilson for all the hard work and for making Providence Proud.

— Sheyler Gunnell, Recreation Director



### Cache Valley Mustangs Red All-Stars



Lt. Governor Spencer Cox visited Providence to meet and chat with Providence Pony League State champions

## Public Works

The City thanks all of you for your continued patience through our summer road maintenance projects.

### *Property Maintenance*

This department consists of two full time employees, Shane Hansen who is the crew chief and Austin Reed. The City also contracts with a temporary agency for help through the summer, when needed.

Property Maintenance is responsible for all City properties, this includes both the City Office building and our buildings at the public works facility. It also includes all park property not related to the athletic fields and misc. areas of property that the City owns. There are times that this department will help out the recreation department with field maintenance.

As far as taking care of the buildings, it covers everything from changing light bulbs to installing the utility drop box to fixing a leaking sink. The park areas and misc. properties include tree trimming, maintaining the playground areas, some weed spraying and some mowing and weed eating. The City contracts out the bulk of our weed spraying and mowing.



Shane Hansen  
Property Maintenance  
Supervisor



Austin Reed  
Property Maintenance  
Technician

Both Von Baer Park and the pavilions at Zollinger Park can be reserved. Shane and Austin take care of getting the area ready and cleaning up after a reservation has taken place. Our parks are a popular place in the summer for family reunions, birthday parties and Von Baer Park for weddings and receptions. Because of the amount of reservations we have, this detail sometimes includes cleaning up and getting everything ready late at night after a reservation before the next morning when someone else is using the park. We have received compliments for the way the parks were prepared before a reservation and that credit goes to Shane and Austin.

Shane and Austin along with help from the other employees also take care of crosswalk striping and any street painting that involves the school zones. As was mentioned last month, because we operate with such a small staff, this is another time that departments will overlap to help out.

Shane and Austin truly care for Providence City and the work that they do exemplifies that. As always feel free to reach out to the Public Works department with any questions, comments or concerns, you can reach us at 435,753,0313.

—Rob Stapley, Public Works Director