



PROVIDENCE CITY NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Events

City Council

3rd Wednesday

February 17th @ 6:00PM

Planning Commission

2nd Wednesday

February 10 @ 6:00PM

Justice Court

From 4:00PM - 6:00PM

Every Monday, except holidays

Open court hearings have been suspended until further notice. Check with the court clerk for questions.

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

(Cache County non-emergency dispatch)

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

Link to Subscribe to

Public Notices:

<https://www.utah.gov/pmn/>

Public Meeting Notice (PMN) website for all Utah jurisdictions

The Mayor's Memo

Park Facilities

At the January 20 the council approved the first ever Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan. The council members all concluded that MHTN, the outside consultant hired to lead the planning effort had done a commendable job. You can view the adopted master plan here: <http://providencecity.com/master-plans/>

Part of the plan process involved surveying residents and interviewing key stakeholders. The results indicated a strong interest in creating and improving a trail system. This is followed by adding park space and improving amenities in existing to existing facilities.

The survey also indicated an interest in open fields that allow for flexibility in what sport/activity/game is played. Survey responses said that after trails, the priority should be for large multi-use parks of 10 acres or more.

Ryan Snow our city manager has been contacting property owners for possible larger park facilities. One conclusion of the plan is that Zollinger Park is maxed out as far as being able to accommodate

more amenities.

One of the challenges is prioritizing the recommendations made in the plan. The plan document includes a tool to score potential projects (see Section 6 - Priorities and Funding).

Housing Availability

You are probably familiar with searchable websites that list properties for sale such as realtor.com, zillow.com and trulia.com. As of this day, I find only 3 homes on the market (realtor.com) in Providence below \$400,000; two townhomes of about 1300 square feet each, and a 3-bedroom home built in 1882.

On January 13 the Planning Commission met and had a discussion about housing affordability/availability. One of the issues brought up is that an expected annual 2.5% organic (from within) growth in Cache Valley will result in a doubling of population within 30 years.

Valentine's Day

Don't forget Valentine's Day, Sunday, February 14.

John Drew, Providence City Mayor

City Manager on Government Accounting, Taxes and Fees

Municipal government accounting is separated into what we call funds that account for different business activities. Each fund is treated similar to a business with its own set of revenue and expense accounts.

By design, each fund should be able to operate financially independent of the other funds. While this is an over-simplification, I do so to help understand this concept. For example, the City's water expenses are covered by the water fees that are charged for usage. The more one uses the more it costs the city to provide and therefore the more that user pays.

The General Fund is a bit different. Unlike other government funds, the city's General Fund is primarily funded by sales and property taxes. The General Fund covers expenses like road repair and maintenance, parks maintenance, land use, and public safety.

Many of these services the city offers do not have a direct revenue associated with them or are only partially funded such as street maintenance, repair and replacement. There are also entities that don't pay sales tax or property taxes, like schools and churches, but nevertheless benefit from city services.

Fees for Service vs. Property Taxes

As we look to balance the fees or charges, we are quantifying the cost of the service so it can be directly associated with revenue. For example, recycling charges should equal the amount the city has to pay Logan for that service. It's ideal to charge a fee as close to the cost of a service, as we can so that those who use the service cover the cost of the service.

As we have begun to evaluate the various fees the city charges it has become apparent that a number under charge based on our actual costs. The result is we compensate with higher property tax. We are looking at the possibility of raising various fees while lowering the property tax rate. This will move the burden of property taxes to those that use the services.

When you have an imbalance, it creates a possible unintended subsidy for entities and services that don't pay property tax. Likewise, if property tax is lower and rates are too high it creates a subsidy the other way. Similar to Goldilocks, we are looking for the just right balance

—Ryan Snow, City Manager

City Office Administration

Business Licenses and Dog Licenses

If you haven't already done so, please remember to renew your business and dog licenses. Business License Renewal: 2021 business license renewals were due January 1. Late fees apply February 1.

- Home business: \$25 license fee, \$12.50 late fee, total due \$37.50.
- Commercial business: \$50 license fee, \$25 late fee, total due \$75.
- Dog License Renewal: All 2020 dog licenses in Providence City expired on December 31. Late fees apply on February 1. Along with your renewal, please provide a proof of rabies vaccination.
- Spayed/neutered: \$15 license fee, \$10 late fee, total due \$25
- Unaltered: \$25 license fee, \$10 late fee, total due \$35.

Competitive Youth Baseball

PCL (Providence City Comp League) is a competitive baseball league for youth teams, for players age 8 – 14 years-old. Registration: now – March 12. Teams can register online at providence.sportsites.com/player. Please visit providencecity.com/baseball/ for more information.

Recreation Youth Baseball, Softball, and Kickball

Registration for youth baseball, softball, T-ball, and kickball begins February 22 and runs through April 16. Register online at providence.sportsites.com/player. Please visit providencecity.com/baseball/ for more information.

Recreation Wiffle Ball

Providence City will offer recreation youth and adult Wiffle ball this year. Watch the City's website and future newsletters for more information.

Umpire positions open

Providence City is now accepting applications for umpires. Applications are available on our website, <http://www.providencecity.com/jobs-available.htm>.

— Skarlet Bankhead, Administrative Services Director

Drug Disposal / Take Back Program

In the January newsletter on Page 1, I wrote an article about a drug drop-off box that had been installed in the lobby at the city office building. The box is a intended for residents to dispose of unused medications.

The box is emptied once a week. The picture on the right is the contents of the drop-off box after one week's worth of use.



—John Drew, Mayor

Public Works

Backflow Preventers

For customers with underground sprinkling systems. Current state plumbing code requires a backflow preventer on all underground sprinkling systems.

The backflow preventer is a device that prevents impurities or contaminants from being drawn into the drinking water system. Many sprinkling systems already have the proper backflow preventer installed and only need to be tested annually. Others may not meet state and local regulations and may need to be replaced with the proper backflow preventer.

The regulations also require a state certified backflow technician test the backflow preventer annually. After the test has been completed, please submit the results to the City so that we can update our records. For a list of local technicians, please contact the Public Works department at 435-753-0313.

Thank you for helping to keep our drinking water system clean and safe.

Winter Parking

Please remember winter parking hours are still in effect and again we thank you for your patience and cooperation with our snow removal.

— Rob Stapley, Public Works Director

Animal Control

I reported last month that this little guy had been abandoned in the parking lot at Cache Humane Society on the morning of December 30. He had been left in a cardboard box when it was 21 degrees.

He turns out to be an interesting combination of Border Collie (medium dog - 50 pounds, herding, high energy) / Great Pyrenees (large dog - 100 pounds, shepherd, calm & patient) mix that had been purchased from a breeder; certainly not a mutt.

I received several comments from residents and staff about the poor creature stating that the perpetrator should be tracked down and cited.

The law did catch up with the owner who abandoned the dog. Stacey Frisk, the Humane Society Executive Director said that the video and address information was provided to the Sheriff's animal control officers.

Stacey said Officer Powell tracked down the perpetrator and was seen marching this person in the front door of the Humane Society. Under threat of citation, the owner filled out the surrender paperwork and paid the surrender fee.

Justice was served.

—John Drew, Mayor



Letter to City Residents on Fiber Optic Project

Dear Providence City Residents,

As you are hopefully aware, Providence City has been pursuing a municipal fiber-optic network which will deliver incredible internet connectivity options to all residents in the city. As part of the process, the city will hold a public hearing for the estimated \$8M bond required to install this important infrastructure.

Hopefully many of you have been following the city's website, which provides a lot of information – including FAQs about the fiber-optics project. Perhaps others of you may feel sudden alarm at the notion of such a bond if you haven't been following the details. To you whom have concerns, I want to write from one resident to another.

Providence City has been considering a municipal fiber-optic network for a couple of years. More recently in 2020, the idea of installing fiber network infrastructure became more important as there have been unprecedented levels of internet connectivity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since my wife, Jeanell Sealy, was elected to City Council, I have been carefully following the efforts of the city to investigate the installation of fiber. Perhaps like you, I initially had a significant number of concerns with the concept of a municipal fiber network. Questions ran through my mind and I expressed many concerns.

Amidst my own whirlwind of thoughts, the City Council commissioned a financial study. The result of that study provided several options to the city. One option was to utilize a company, Utopia, wherein the city pays for the infrastructure but does not own or operate the system. Another set of options was provided by Strata Networks wherein the city would own the infrastructure but would contract a third-party to operate the system.

Subsequent to the delivery of the study, the city held a public fiber workshop and other public meetings on the topic. As an ardent advocate to protect the citizens' residential interests on this topic, I sent a letter to the city and shared my views, concerns, and questions. A short time later, Strata Networks provided an unsolicited proposal for a private-public-partnership (PPP).

My career as an electrical engineer keeps me busy for well over the standard 40 hours per week. Despite this fact, I agreed to join a citizen-run volunteer technical advisory committee (TAC). A public call for qualified citizens of Providence City resulted in a couple of other residents also joining the TAC. Combined, the volunteer members of the TAC have a significant number of years of experience in professionally related fields.

The purpose of the TAC was to thoroughly evaluate the municipal fiber-optics network from a technical and logistical point of view, review Strata's PPP, and provide recommendations to the City Council in the interest of Providence's residents. As part of the TAC's efforts, it has spearheaded significant negotiations on the technical and logistical aspects of contracts for installation and operation of the municipal fiber network.

As a result of the significant efforts of the volunteer TAC members, as well as the City Council, an installation and operation agreement have been approved which align with the PPP and best serve the interest of the residents. Below are several key points.

- All residents of the city will receive a fiber-optic internet connection.

- There is no connection fee for the fiber-optic installation to the home.
- Every resident will have the option to receive basic internet service.
- The fiber-optic network is an "open-access network" meaning each resident will be able to choose any Internet Service Provider (ISP) that joins the city's open network.
- Service for enhanced internet for symmetrical speeds of 250 Mbps and for symmetrical speeds of 1 Gbps depending on the ISP and service options a resident chooses. (Note that most ISPs do not offer symmetrical speeds. My current service is 100 Mbps download and only 5 Mbps upload!)

At this point, the monthly fee for each service level has not been determined.

Beyond these great benefits, some of you may still question whether installation of a fiber-optic network would be considered government overreach. I had similar concerns; however, the TAC performed research on this topic and reached out to at least one well-known ISP to ask about their infrastructure and whether private installation of fiber-network would be possible.

The result of this research clearly indicated that the city cannot wait for private companies because these companies are not apt to replace existing wire-based (but severely limited) internet connections given the investment required. Furthermore, such companies have limited incentive given their near-monopoly status for modest internet bandwidth.

In short, as a resident of Providence City, I support the city's decision to move forward with bonding for the municipal fiber-optic network. In today's environment, internet connectivity continues to be at the forefront of technological needs for the majority of residents.

I hope you will join with me in congratulating the efforts of the city in bringing the much needed infrastructure to Providence City. This leading-edge fiber-optic infrastructure for internet connectivity will become more essential as the years progress.

Sincerely,

Ky Sealy



Ky has a masters degree in electrical engineering from USU and is a recognized industry expert with many patents in the area of wireless power transfer. Ky also periodically teaches students and engineers as an invited lecturer. His wife Jeanell serves on our council and has an electrical engineering degree as well.

Renovations Planned for Old Rock Church

The owner of the Old Rock Church met last month with county and city fire and building code inspectors to discuss renovation plans for the building. <https://oldrockchurch.com>

Ralph Call, the owner of the Old Rock Church says he has plans to hire an architect to assist in returning the chapel to much of the original design. This would include removing raised floors and reopening the chapel front door that faces Main Street. Other renovations would include adding restrooms, replacing carpeting, adding vintage window glass that had been replaced and restoring woodwork to its original finish.

The chapel portion of the building was built by the LDS Church with construction beginning in 1869 and completed in 1872. The rock walls are 30 inches thick and 20 feet tall. Besides LDS meeting house, the building doubled as a town hall. A south wing was added in 1926 for classroom space.

In 1969 the Church sold this property and it later became a fabric store with a reception center, a private home, an assisted living center, and has been a bed and breakfast for about 25 years.

The Old Rock Church is the oldest major building in Cache Valley and one of the oldest in the intermountain west. The church was in use five years before the Church completed its first temple in the west, which was in St. George.

Today, the chapel serves as an event center for weddings, celebrations, receptions, family reunions, conferences, meetings. The South wing has a main floor with a parlor and two upper floors with themed guest rooms. The exterior of the property has manicured grounds suitable for outdoor events in the warmer months.

The Old Rock Church is on the National Registry of Historic places in recognition of its architectural and historic significance. It is a beloved Providence landmark and icon.

The city council will be considering preparing a master plan for the historic downtown area for the historic buildings and monuments around Main and Center Streets. Any questions or comments would be welcome.

— John Drew, Mayor



The Old Rock Church today at Center and Main

Planning and Zoning Commission News

Have you noticed all the building and development going on in Providence this last year? The Planning and Zoning Commission certainly has. From State and City code, our charge is to:

“Provide recommendations to the City Council on the following items: amendments to the General Plan, amendments to the Zoning and Subdivision Codes, rezones, and right-of-way vacations. The Planning Commission also approves or denies preliminary and final subdivision plats.” The Planning Commission meets the second Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at the Providence City Offices.

We have been hard at work with developers and builders to ensure developments are following the intent of the General Plan which was updated and adopted in 2020 and is our guide when working with developers and builders. Check out the new developments in Providence: <http://providencecity.com/community-development-2/>

The goal of the general plan is to:

“Guide and manage growth in a way that preserves natural scenery while also providing more opportunities to live, work, shop, and recreate in Providence.”

You can find the plan at: http://providencecity.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/PGP_General-Plan_Final_2020_0421.pdf

If you want to know what is planned for your area of town, we urge you to pull up the document and review the future zoning. The Plan was adopted only after months of discussions, citizen input, surveys and work by the Planning and Zoning Commission, the City Council, Mayor, city staff and professionals with years of experience helping cities plan.

As we work to serve the citizens of Providence, we urge and encourage you to be involved with the process. We all live here and want to preserve our unique town but still provide opportunities for managed and directed growth.

Hope to see you soon.

Kathleen Alder - Chair, Providence City Planning and Zoning



Power Outage? Street Light Out or Intermittent?

Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) provides electrical power to all Providence residents. RMP also provides power to and services all street lights. Providence City has no role or control over service.

A power outage or a problem with a streetlight, is reported on a RMP webpage:

<https://www.rockymountainpower.net/outages-safety.html>

If you call the city office, you will be directed to the RMP website to enter information on this webpage. If you are reporting a streetlight problem the website will ask for an address and pole number.