



THE FLASH

FEBRUARY 2024
Volume 24
Issue 2

An update from City Administration, Planning, Public Works and Police Departments

The Flash, which occupies the following two pages, is a publication of the City of Talent and is editorially separate from the rest of the Talent News and Review. All content and editorial choices contained in the rest of the paper are the sole responsibility of the TNR and are not in any way associated with the City of Talent. -JG

Welcome Message from New City Manager

I am pleased to return to full time public service as the City Manager in Talent.

A City Manager first needs to be a good listener and observer. This will be the focus of my first weeks serving as Talent City Manager. I need to learn the community and its people. I need to learn the existing system of the Talent city government. I need to meet with the Mayor and Councilors to learn about their priorities and vision for the community. I need to become acquainted with the City Staff, and learn about their abilities and concerns.



I need to begin to establish working relationships with our partner agencies in the region, and with grant-funding agencies at all levels. And, I need to learn all of those passwords and codes that seem to permeate internal systems to keep them secure. All while also dealing with managing the business of the day.

For me, public service is a vocation and an avocation. I appreciate the willingness of the City Council to allow my use of my one-day-per-month administrative leave time to continue my service as a Municipal Court Judge in Brookings, Port Orford and Bandon. I think I “got the bug” for public service while participating in the Boy Scout program where our troop was very public service oriented. And, during the City-hosted “student government day” in high school, I chose the role of “City Administrator for a day.”

I’ll be attending at least one meeting of each of the City’s Commissions and Committees over the course of the next month. And I would also like to hear from residents and business operators. My email is gmilliman@cityoftalent.org and I can be reached through the City Hall main telephone number at (541) 535-1566. Questions, complaints, suggestions and accolades are all welcome.

A little about my city management philosophy. First and foremost, I am a subscriber to the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Code of Ethics (COE). The COE has 12 tenants, and can be found here: <https://icma.org/page/icma-code-ethics>.

My work ethic has been consistent with these guidelines throughout my career. Chief among my working practices is to conduct myself in a manner that maintains public confidence in the position of City Manager and the profession, the integrity of the City government, and my responsibility to uphold the public trust.

City Managers are not policy makers, but can play a role in assisting the City Council in making policy. My practice is to submit proposals to the City Council; provide them with facts, technical and professional advice about options; and collaborate with them in setting goals for the community and the organization.

It is important for the City Manager and all City Staff to recognize that the elected City Council is accountable to the community for the decisions they make, and the City Manager and staff are accountable to the City Council for implementing those decisions. While I may not always agree with a Council policy decision, I always work with staff to implement that direction to the best of our ability. There is a sign on my desk at City Hall that reads simply that “It CAN be done.”

It has been my practice to serve all members of the City Council equally and impartially. The City Manager and staff should stay out of politics, should not endorse or oppose any candidate for Mayor or the City Council, and should keep all members of the City Council equally informed.

Tenant 9 of the COE calls on the City Manager to keep the community informed on local government affairs, and to encourage and facilitate active engagement and constructive communication between community members and City officials.

In my first job in local government as an Administrative Assistant with the City of Bell Gardens in Los Angeles County my basic assignment was to manage

community relations, organize community events and assist the City with implementing a new urban renewal program. The City had just levied its first property tax and my first assignment was responding to resident concerns and questions. My role in Bell Gardens continuously expanded, and came to include assignments such as managing code enforcement, accounts payable, procurement, managing the hiring process, implementing transit service, managing a citywide street tree program, and the construction of a community center and a public works facility, serving as interim Public Works and Parks and Recreation Directors, and as disaster planning/management coordinator ...and basically handling anything that fell off the City Managers’ desk. I served as interim City Manager twice before leaving for my first regular City Manager job at age 28.

From that point on I have enjoyed a long and varied career in local government... with a three year hiatus during which I organized a group of investors to acquire and operate the California Western Railroad...the historic “Skunk Train” in northern California.

Past experience has been successful and, on the whole, enjoyable. But it is now time to apply that experience to assist Talent in continuing to move forward in its recovery from the devastating fires of 2020 and to develop the City organization consistent with the City Council’s overarching goal of having a well-run organization that proactively plans for the future.

My initial observations are that Talent has an active and involved citizenry. The City Council and the City Staff are dedicated to serving the community. The City has a small staff with big challenges.

Among those challenges is implementing the City Council’s vision for rebuilding the community, dealing with aging infrastructure, and operations costs rising at a faster pace than revenue...a challenge faced by most Oregon cities.

About me? I am a native of Los Angeles and have resided in Oregon for about 16 years. My first wife...a cancer victim...and I met in high school and enjoyed 49 years of marriage. We have two daughters and two grandchildren. My current wife of two years is originally from China. She also has two children and two grandchildren. We decided to relocate from Brookings to Medford before the Talent City Manager position became available, and we are still in the midst of moving.

New Bathroom Installed at Kameran Springs Park

In an effort to enhance the park experience for residents, the City of Talent is pleased to announce the recent installation of new bathroom facilities at Kameran Springs Park.

Opened on January 20th, 2024, the new restroom, located near the parking and playground areas, features convenient amenities such as a drinking fountain and bottle fill station. This achievement is a result of years of planning, research, and a careful selection process by the Parks and Recreation Commission, ensuring a modern design and pleasing color palette.



The final touches, including ADA compliance, are now complete, and our Public Works department plans to add decorative landscaping this spring to further enhance the facility.

Shape Your City: Join Talent's Citizen Commissions and Committees Today!

The City of Talent invites residents to actively engage in local governance by joining one of the City's citizen commissions or committees. Your participation in these roles will play a crucial role in providing valuable recommendations to the City Council, leveraging the wealth of knowledge, experience, and expertise within our community.

Current committee and commission vacancies:

Budget Committee – 2 vacancies

Join our Budget Committee: Play a Role in Shaping Our City's Financial Future! The Budget Committee is an important advisory group, mandated by state law to have a mix of elected and appointed representatives. Their primary work occurs in April and May, aligning with Talent's fiscal year from July 1 to June 30. Committee members serve a three-year term, with meetings scheduled before City Council meetings at Town Hall.

Traffic Safety and Transportation Commission – 1 vacancy

Discover How Traffic Safety is Addressed in Talent: Explore the Work of the Traffic Safety and Transportation Commission! Comprising both city staff and dedicated citizen representatives, this essential commission meets bi-monthly to review traffic safety matters, ensuring public safety in our community. Entrusted with making traffic control decisions, the Traffic Safety & Transportation Commission actively addresses concerns raised by the City Council and our residents.

Parks and Recreation Commission – 1 vacancy

Join the Parks and Recreation Commission for Fun and Impact! Be part of the team that advises the City Council on making our parks fantastic. Get involved in promoting community awareness about enjoying city parks and the significance of recreational opportunities. Ready to bring the fun? Join us!

Planning Commission – 1 vacancy

Get involved in shaping Talent's future! Join the Planning Commission and contribute recommendations on land use planning to the Mayor and City Council. The commission oversees community planning and development reviews, meeting monthly or more as needed. Members actively participate in developing the city's Comprehensive Plan, Zoning, and Land Division Codes. Your voice matters!

Together for Talent Committee – no limit on members - the more, the merrier!

This is a committee of volunteers that look to preserve and enhance the quality of life in Talent by building community, promoting sustainability, and encouraging participation. Essentially, that means that if you have an idea, project, or event that can represent these core values, the Together for Talent committee is excited to hear from you!

To apply, visit the city website or scan the QR code below to download an application. Return it to the City Recorder at City Hall or via email at cityrecorder@cityoftalent.org. Paper applications are also available at Town Hall during business hours.

Scan the QR Code below to download a committee/commission application!



Boost Your Business: Renew Your Talent Business License Today!

In the hustle and bustle of running a business in Talent, it's easy to overlook some of the administrative essentials. We gently want to nudge all businesses to take a moment and check on the status of their business licenses. These licenses are more than just pieces of paper – they are your passport to legitimacy and a key component of building trust within the Talent community.

Consider this a friendly reminder to ensure your business licenses are current and aligned with city regulations. The cost of a business license is \$60.00 per year. In addition to the basic business license fee, there is a charge of \$5.00 per employee for each employee with a business having more than two employees. Business licenses are due by February 1 of each year.

Business license revenues supplement other taxes and fees the City receives and helps pay for service to our business community...including 24-hour police services... at a higher level than can be funded from the City's general tax base.

When you receive your business license certificate, display it proudly as a positive and responsible image that your business is "going the extra mile" to support the Talent community. Please call Talent City Hall at 541-535-1566 for more details, email at finance@cityoftalent.org, or visit us online at www.cityoftalent.org.

From Cabinets to Canvas

Local Artistry Takes Center Stage in the Talent City Hall Building. A glimpse of past, present and future artists providing 'Beyond the Walls' experience in Talent.

Ron Hodgdon 06/2022 Ron is a popular local artist. He specializes in Water Colors, Graphic Arts, and Photography

Charley Cross 1/24/2024 Photographer "If I help you pause and see something fresh, or if you feel moved, then I have done my job."

Mitch Aragon 1/24/2023 Etched Granite "I continue using discarded (granite) stone and upcycling it into an art piece to bring joy and beauty to homes and gardens."

Miles Frode 3/9/2023 Bold oil paintings/sculptures. "Miles falls asleep and wakes up in art."

Tarik Ragab 7/6/2023 Acrylic painting. "Artist and musician whose visual art combines Lowbrow, Street Art, Pop Culture, and Surrealism."

Erin Carney Moline 7/25/2023 "Erin creates powerful collages made with tape and cardboard, to serene acrylic."

Jarrett Rex Davidson 10/9/2023 Jarrett creates 3D art using wood, glass, and traditional methods that has "characters and representational themes that have recurred throughout art history."

Elizabeth Schrey 1/9/2024 Photography. "Influences are sparked by my curiosity of my surroundings and the dramatic connections between theatre and photography."

Bruce Bayard 1/9/2024 Miniature trains "All graffiti on these models are based on what I've seen rolling by over the years, but all created new; original tags."

Silvia Trujillo 4/10/2024 Watercolor landscapes and local teacher in the Rogue Valley.

Megan Young 8/15/2024 Plein air painting "exploring unfamiliar places through plein air painting which caters to my sense of adventure, while enhancing my appreciation for the natural world."

To learn more about submitting art for display at Talent City Hall, please contact Talent Public Art Committee Chair Donna Ruiz at publicarts@cityoftalent.org.