



# THE FLASH

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

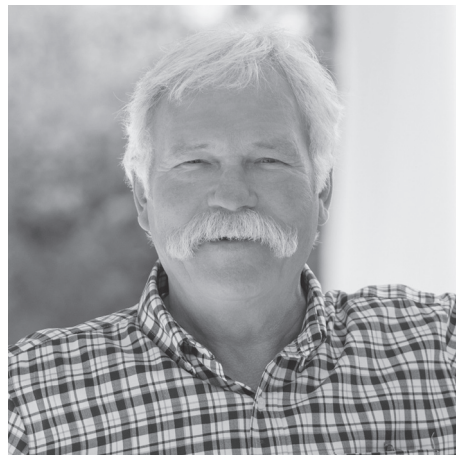
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## From the desk of the Interim City Manager

John Kennedy once said, “We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives.” As I consider my temporary employment with the City of Talent these past four months, I want to thank the elected officials, city employees, committee and commission volunteers and local citizens with whom I’ve interacted. You have all made a difference in my life during my tenure and I hope that I have reciprocated in making a difference in yours.

Another quote that Kennedy is famous for is the one given at his inaugural address that has inspired children and adults to see the importance of civic action and public service. His historic words, “Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country,” challenged every American to contribute in some way to the public good. I can visualize Kennedy’s address, watching it from our black and white TV and perhaps this is what subconsciously inspired me to commit my life and career to service in the military and in municipal government. Other positive influences for me were my parents, both of whom had their own businesses.

I worked for my dad throughout my youth, and he modeled all the



characteristics of great leadership, kindness, fairness, unselfishness, reasonableness, patience, and integrity. I’ve tried to emulate him in my career choices, and I’ve found that there is plenty of opportunity to develop these qualities in our public institutions and private enterprises. I’ve tried to espouse a philosophy of cooperation in the places I’ve worked which I define as *the act or process of working together to get something done for a common purpose and to achieve mutual benefit. But I’m not sure that this philosophy can be taught*, I think I must be *caught!* I hope that I have had a positive effect upon my friends in Talent. I have sincerely appreciated the opportunity to serve here. Thanks for the experiences, the memories, and the good time. Cheers!

## Help to Beautify Talent’s Parks: Join the Parks and Recreation Commission Today

Are you a resident of Talent that would like to be more involved in the shaping of city parks? Would you like to apply your knowledge of landscaping to making our open areas more welcoming and appealing? If so, the City of Talent invites you to join our Parks and Recreation Commission!

We are currently seeking applications for a commission seat with a 2-year term. As part of this appointed body, your main responsibility will be providing valuable recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on the direction, planning, and policies related to public parks, greenways, open spaces, recreational programs, and cultural facilities.

For more information or if you have questions, feel free to reach out to Commission Chair Ted Hilton-Walker at [parkscommission@cityoftalent.org](mailto:parkscommission@cityoftalent.org). Applications are available on the city website, at Town Hall, or by request from the City Recorder (contact details below). Submit your completed applications by 5pm on February 2nd, 2024, either in-person at City Hall or via email at [cityrecorder@cityoftalent.org](mailto:cityrecorder@cityoftalent.org). Join us in shaping the future of Talent’s parks!

## Water Quality and Corrosion Study Enhances Water Quality for Talent Residents

In 2019, the Medford Water Commission (MWC) undertook a comprehensive Water Quality and Corrosion Study, reaffirming our commitment to delivering the highest quality water to our valued customers. We are pleased to report that our water consistently meets and surpasses all applicable federal and state drinking water standards.

The study’s thorough examination revealed an opportunity to further elevate water quality at your taps by adjusting the pH of both our water sources. This proactive measure is designed to limit the potential release of metals, including copper, lead, and iron, from both your private plumbing and our distribution system water mains.

What is pH? pH is a measure of the concentration of hydrogen ions in water, which indicates how acidic or basic water is. The pH of drinking water depends on several factors, but generally lies within the range of 6.5-8.5. Our water will remain well within this range after this change. For more information about the pH scale, and what’s in the water we drink, visit [www.medfordwater.org/pH](http://www.medfordwater.org/pH).

Currently, the pH of water entering our drinking water system from Big Butte Springs is approximately 7.0, and for the water from the Rogue River, it is 7.3. Starting in January 2024, the MWC will initiate a small pH adjustment using sodium hydroxide. This adjustment will be a gradual process, with the goal of bringing both water sources to a target pH of approximately 7.8.

The introduction of sodium hydroxide is a carefully planned measure to enhance water quality by limiting the potential release of metals, such as copper, lead, and iron, from both customer’s private plumbing and our distribution system water mains. This adjustment is in line with our commitment to surpass all applicable federal and state drinking water standards.

By implementing this adjustment,



MWC aims to not only meet regulatory standards but exceed them, ensuring the health and well-being of our community. This strategic initiative not only enhances the immediate quality of water reaching your homes but also contributes to the long-term durability of our water system.

The benefits of this undertaking are twofold: it safeguards your household plumbing from potential metal releases and fortifies the longevity of our distribution system. This approach is a testament to our and Medford Water Commissions dedication to providing sustainable and high-quality water services to you, our community.

No action is required for most customers, except those that utilize processes that are known to be pH dependent, such as medical facilities/equipment users, aquarium and pond owners, breweries/home brewers, and food processing customers. For more information, please scan the QR code below.

We are proud to share these improvements with you, assuring you that the City of Talent remains committed to serving you with excellence. Thank you for your continued trust and partnership as we work together to secure a healthier and more resilient future for our city.

Sincerely, Robert Slayton, Public Works Superintendent, City of Talent

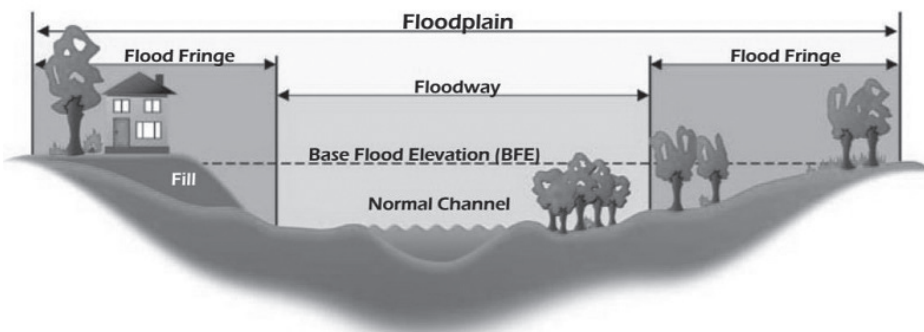
## City of Talent Releases 2024 Calendar

Is your New Year's resolutions to keep track of upcoming city events? Curious about the 2024 Talent Harvest Festival date? Look no further—scan the QR code below! The City of Talent has created an advanced calendar featuring city meetings, holiday closures, and event dates. Use the QR code to download a PDF version, and keep an eye out for a paper copy in your December water bill. Need a hard copy? Visit City Hall during business hours, and our front desk will gladly provide one. For a digital copy, reach out to our City Recorder at [cityrecorder@cityoftalent.org](mailto:cityrecorder@cityoftalent.org).



## Boosting Flood Safety: Vital Tips for Talent Residents in Flood-Prone Zones

### Characteristics of a Floodplain



The City of Talent, a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System, advises residents in areas along local creeks to take preventive measures, minimizing property loss, personal injury, and health hazards during potential floods.

### Tips to enhance personal safety in a Flood Hazard Zone

**Rearrange Downspouts** – Downspouts should carry water several feet away from your property to a well-drained area.

**Check your Sump Pump** - Perform a checkup on your sump pump, if you have one.

- Examine and clean the pump.
- Then pour water into the pit to make sure the discharge hose carries it away from your property to a well-drained area.
- Be sure the pipe is on sloped ground, so it drains well.

**Secure Fuel Tanks** - Anchor fuel tanks in basements and outside properties. Unanchored tanks can be torn free by floodwater, and the broken supply line can contaminate your basement. An outside tank can be swept downstream and damage other property.

**Check all Electrical Components** - Make sure they are 12 inches above the flood line.

- Measure the height of electrical components, such as switches, sockets, circuit breakers and wiring.
- Contact a licensed electrician to make changes if necessary.

**Elevate** - Your furnace and water heater should be 12 inches from the floor.

- Place them on top of masonry blocks, concrete or pressure-treated lumber.
- Do the same with your washer and dryer if they're in your basement.

**Practice Makes Perfect** - Practice flood evacuation with your family.

- Plan a route that everyone knows, and practice taking it.
- Identify an out-of-state relative or family friend to contact in case your family is separated during a serious flood.
- Make sure everyone in the family knows the name, address and phone number of the contact.

**Know the terms.** In order to respond correctly, it's important to know the terminology used for different flood threats.

- **Flood Watch.** This means flooding is possible in your area. Be prepared to move to higher ground or evacuate.
- **Flood Warning.** This means a flood is happening, or about to happen, in your area. Evacuate immediately if instructed to do so.

For more flood hazard prevention measures, visit [www.cityoftalent.org](http://www.cityoftalent.org) or [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).

## Talent Police Department Promotes Sergeant Jeff Gaunt to Lieutenant!



The City of Talent Police Department recently recognized the strong commitments made by Sergeant Jeff Gaunt with a promotion to lieutenant. The police lieutenant position had been unfilled since September 2020 when Jennifer Snook was promoted from Lieutenant to Chief. Jeff Gaunt came to the City of Talent after a decorated career with the City of Grants Pass and Josephine County Sheriff's Office and as a member of the Oregon State Canine Association Trainers Board. In recognition of Lieutenant Gaunt's new advancement, we'd like to take a minute to get to know him better, happy reading!

### What attracted you to come work with the Talent Police Department?

I wanted to get back into police work after retiring from Grants Pass Police Department, and I knew Talent was hiring so I called the Chief, who I heard was fantastic. I learned the recruitment was for a Sergeant position, so I thought I would like to get back in that leadership position again. Another draw was, during the Almeda Fire we sent several resources over here from Grants Pass and I along with everyone at our department closely monitored it. I also had a close friend of mine whose mother lost her home. Lastly, I lost my nephew a handful of years ago in the Big Windy Forest Fire in Grants Pass. I knew the City of Talent as well as the police department were being rebuilt, and I thought it would be a great start to something new.

### What are the positives of working in Talent?

The biggest positive of working in Talent right now is the people I work with, the relationships we have with our adjoining cities, Ashland, Phoenix, and the community. We rely on Ashland a lot to assist us, and we participate in some of their training which is not only a great asset, but the relationships create comfort in knowing there is support for each other. We also work closely with Phoenix PD, this has proven to be a relationship, training and developing opportunity as well.

### What are your goals with Talent Police going forward?

I never thought I would be at this level, so now it's time to stay focused on what's best for the department and community, basically the same path that is being traveled. This department is family oriented that networks and we all weigh-in with goals and ideas. The best thing is we have a great Chief at the wheel steering the ship. There will be obstacles to hurdle, but obstacles are opportunities and when leadership comes into play, we build bridges together as a team and community. Live day by day, because tomorrow may never come, so make the best of today and do all you can for each other and treat yourself well.

### Anything you'd like to say to the residents of Talent?

This is a good opportunity to thank ALL those I work with from everyone who works at City Hall, prior City Manager Jordan who was an intricate part of my initial hiring, to the current City Manager Tom Humphrey who stepped in and grabbed the reins to lead us, to the Mayor who has done nothing but show me care and respect, and to the people in this great community.