

Mayor's Report

07 February 2022 – 12 February 2022

Larry Jacobsen

I took a bit of good-natured teasing in our last Council meeting about these reports. We all agreed that they are a bit “nerdy”. Specifically, they are too detailed, don’t have enough pictures, and not very entertaining. Guilty as charged. While I was chatting with our daughter, Brooke, who is getting ready to teach math to high schoolers, I realized that I have similarly accused her of being a nerd. My goodness, when this girl gets together with friends that she hasn’t seen in a while, they review prepared PowerPoints to make sure they cover the important events since the last time they talked. Sometimes your kids become your teachers. Brooke’s advice for me was to own my nerdiness, and I am taking her advice. I am confessing that not only am I a nerd, but I am also proud to be a nerd.

A main point of writing these reports is to communicate on a regular cadence with Nibley’s citizens. If we establish that cadence, even on minor topics, then when can better interact when the big things come along. There are various ways for me to communicate with you, for example, I could do more on Facebook and I enjoy writing articles for the Nibley Newsletter. Shaun Dustin (our previous mayor) tried “Muffins with the Mayor” - townhalls on Saturday mornings. Those all serve a different purpose from what I am trying to achieve with these status reports. In full nerdy fashion, I am going to stick with these reports for a while and see if they get traction.

Feedback is a gift, and you could give me that gift. If you see this report, perhaps you could send me a text or give me a call (435-512-7495) to tell me that you saw it. I am happy for your critique, but for now I’m not asking that big of a gift. Instead, just tell me you saw this report. Thanks.

It’s been a quiet week in my adopted hometown, Nibley, Utah. (I realize that’s probably a copyright violation.) Here are the highlights of the things I worked on this week.

- Met with an owner of agricultural land adjacent to Nibley regarding groundwater.
- Met with Deputy Bartschi regarding Nibley’s law enforcement contract with Cache County.
- Met with a Nibley citizen about high vehicle speeds in their neighborhood.
- Met with Rod Hammer, EMS and Fire Chief, regarding our emergency services contract through Cache County.
- Met to discuss design concepts for a Nibley Park in the Ridgeline development.
- Attended training from the Utah Land Use Institute
- Attended the Cache Mayor’s Association

Groundwater and agricultural land. Justin Maughan and I met with a Nibley neighbor over concerns of decreased water supply from a spring on the neighbor’s property. That spring is vital to the continued agricultural use of that land. We agreed that digging trenches to put in utilities on new developments in Nibley can re-channel groundwater, even if the new trench is not right next to the spring located outside of Nibley. We also acknowledged that we are in an historic drought (record low levels on the Great Salt Lake), and we agreed that Nibley’s pumping of culinary water from hundreds of feet below grade likely doesn’t affect the spring’s output. The State Water Engineer, in fact, considers that concern as we trade surface water rights for culinary water rights. Nibley City does not want to adversely impact this neighbor, and we talked about engineering methods to mitigate the channeling concern. I thought it was a productive discussion.

Nibley law enforcement. Justin and I met with Deputy Bartschi from the Cache County Sheriff's Office. Nibley City contracts with Cache County for law enforcement, and much of this discussion was about that contract. We recognized a couple of items to work out before we finish this fiscal year, and a couple more before we write the next year's budget. Sheriff Jensen's office gives excellent monthly accounting of the provided services, and I asked Deputy Bartschi about a particular item regarding traffic stops in Nibley. I preface this with an admission that I am not an expert in law enforcement, and I bring it up so I can ask for your input. In addition, this was an issue raised during the last campaign. Combining December and January traffic stops, we issued 31 tickets and wrote 86 warnings. Roughly 25 percent of traffic stops resulted in a violation. My question for you, as a person who lives and drives in Nibley is this. Are writing warnings as effective as writing tickets to protect the safety of Nibley citizens? Deputy Bartschi gave an excellent answer to that question, and before I share it, I would love to hear from you. Please text or call me at 435-512-7495.

Resident meeting to discuss traffic speeds. Ironically, just after Deputy Bartschi finished with us, a resident came in to the Nibley office to talk about excessive speeds in their neighborhood. We discussed methods of slowing traffic. Those methods include road design (a little late in this case), along with driver education such as radar signs and violation warnings, along with speed-limit enforcement. We have a good tool for documenting speeding problems with our radar signs in stealth mode. In this mode, the device doesn't display the speed, rather, it just measures and stores it in memory. I promised to place a sign in their neighborhood. By the way, we never use radar signs to issue citations.

EMS (Emergency Medical Services) and Fire Protection. Justin and I met with Rod Hammer, EMS Chief and Fire Chief for the southern half of Cache County, not including Logan. Nibley City contracts with Cache County for EMS, in a similar way that we contract for law enforcement. The "not including Logan" part is important because until a couple of years ago, Logan City provided EMS services to all of Cache County through a contract established more than twenty years ago. When I was on Council, I attended a meeting that confirmed Logan would terminate that contract and only provide EMS to Logan. This put the remainder of Cache County in a bind. While this sounds like I am picking a scab, I mention it to give credit to Nibley City and Cache County for implementing a plan while I was on "sabbatical" from city governance to provide EMS to our citizens. Good job, folks. By the way, our First Responders also provide a valuable service to our citizens through a separate, but cooperative, effort with Cache County EMS.

Park Design. Darren Farer, Nibley City Engineer, organized a kick-off meeting with several Councilmembers, Parks and Rec Committee members, and our consultant to look at options for the new Nibley Park enabled by the Ridgeline project. This is going to be a great asset to our citizens, one that capitalizes on the natural resources in the area. At this point, the design effort will focus the Parks and Rec Committee. Please reach out to a Councilmember or a Parks and Rec member with your ideas, and stay tuned for an official invitation to give input on this park.

Land-Use Training. Never enough training. This was a good session put on by the Utah Land Use Institute. The Land Use team provided great stories as examples of legislative actions where cities can say yes or no depending on whether they like a proposal, and administrative actions that are technical application of ordinance and are not decisions made on like or dislike opinions. I especially appreciated the Land Use team's update on referendums where citizens have an opportunity for direct democracy on legislative decisions.

Mayor's Association. Becky and I attended a largely social function with other mayors and on Saturday night. I mentioned previously that I don't do necessarily well in "largely social functions" (it's that nerd thing again), but it was also a chance to build relationships with other mayors. Besides, Becky allowed that attending this got me off the hook for Valentine's Day. As I mentioned to the Council in our last meeting, relationships – whether between married people or between the city and project proponents – are all about agreeing on expectations. For the past 26 years, I have been lowering Becky's expectations of me, even to the point that this event covered Valentine's Day.

That's the news from Nibley City, where all the women are strong, all the men good looking, and all the children above average. (Another likely copyright violation.)

Thanks for reading. You are my boss. Please call, text, or email anytime.

Larry
435-512-7495
larry@nibleycity.com