

Mayor's Report

29 August 2022 – 3 September 2022

Larry Jacobsen

The citizens of Nibley are my boss. We all hope for a good boss, and I am lucky enough to have a great boss. It is my responsibility to keep my boss up to date on things I am working on, and that's the goal of these status reports. Thanks for having an interest in what's happening in Nibley City governance.

First, a big thanks to Amber who I met at Nibley Fit yoga classes. When I took some time off from writing these reports earlier this summer, it was partly because I wasn't sure they were doing anybody but me any good. Amber was the first person to ask about the missing reports. Thanks, Amber, for helping me get started again. This is the third report in three weeks, and with Amber's help, we will keep it going.

Stokes Nature Center Development in Nibley

The biggest and best news this week was from the Stokes Nature Center announcing they have received a \$1.9M grant from the Department of Commerce to develop an outdoor learning center on their property in Nibley. Yippee! If you haven't seen it, here is a link to a news article with Kendra Penry, the Executive Director of the Stokes Nature Center.

<https://share.newsbreak.com/1pokhu9f>

The property is located on the north side of 2600 South and close to Highway 165. The combination of our own Firefly Park Nature Park and the Stokes project is a great opportunity for Nibley City and the Nature Center to work together. These resources make us proud to live in Nibley. I was lucky enough to participate on a Stokes' design committee for this property a few years ago, and I am extremely grateful to the Nature Center's willingness to work with the city. This is gonna' be a great!

Garbage Collection

With Logan's decision to quit collecting garbage outside its city limits by 1 July 2023, an unofficial "Group of Mayors" continues to work on a collaborative solution for garbage collection. Many thanks to Lyndsay Peterson, Mayor of North Logan, for leading this effort. The group has put out an informal request for proposal (RFP) to private companies, and responses are due back on 9 June 2022. After that, the work will be to create a Special Service District that empowers the group to engage in contracts with private companies and to collect fees.

As the mayors discussed the details of the new service district in a recent meeting, a sticking point became clear. How do cities opt in to be members of the service district, and more importantly, how do cities get out if they decide to do their own thing? The problem is that we are battling two issues on two different time scales. To efficiently provide for garbage service in the long term (30+ years), it will likely be advantageous to develop capital assets. After all, Logan managed to buy trucks, build a transfer station, and develop a new landfill from the fees they collected from all of us. (No, a legal review shows that we don't own any of those assets.) In the long term, our new service district would likely want to do similar things. However, developing capital assets typically involves taking on debt. Taking on long-term debt requires a long-term commitment, and many Mayors were hesitant to do that. I don't blame them. I suggested to the group that we worry about the short-term problem of 1 July 2023 first and the long-term problem next. That means writing initial bylaws for the service district that would not allow

incurring debt. That seemed to alleviate the concerns. It's like renting a house until we are comfortable with it, and then eventually deciding to buy it – including taking out a mortgage.

There are a couple of reasons why we need the Cache County Council involved with the Group of Mayors. I was encouraged to see a couple of County Councilmembers take an interest in working on this issue. David Zook, Cache County Executive, has been actively working with the group from the beginning, but we haven't seen as much interest from County Council before our meeting last week. I appreciate their involvement.

2600 South

Yeah, still working on it. Question: Why hasn't Nibley City opened the road? Answer: Because it is not Nibley's road to open. The road is privately owned, and to avoid private liability, the landowner does not want to open the road until Nibley accepts ownership of it. I'm ok with that. However, the road isn't finished, and accepting ownership of the road before the road is finished presents a risk that Nibley tax revenues would have pay to finish it. This week, we continued to work on modifying the existing road agreement so Nibley City can accept ownership but guarantee the road will be finished by either the landowner or by a future developer. Until then, it's a private road, and not Nibley's to open.

Among other things, Levi, Justin, and I had a very optimistic discussion with a potential commercial developer in the area. Although it's way too early to share any details, and I look forward to someday being able to do so. Fingers crossed.

USU Beaver Ecology and Relocation Program

Here is your reward for sticking with me on this status report. This beaver relocation program (<https://beaver.restoration.usu.edu/>) has nothing to do with Nibley governance, but it is a really great example of what a couple of Nibley citizens are doing to turn a wildlife nuisance into an environmental opportunity. Nate Norman and Becky Yeager are featured in these two clips. Full disclosure, I am Becky's proud husband.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/california-utah-scientists-beavers-fight-climate-change/>

<https://www.usu.edu/today/story/usu-center-relocates-beaver-as-land-managers-see-benefits-of-rodents-residence>

They aren't done with the media yet. Mike Rowe with Dirty Jobs recorded a piece describing this relocation program, and that episode should air sometime around the first of the year.

It's interesting to see what Becky chose for a retirement job compared to what I chose for a retirement job. Maybe she will consider hiring me when this mayor thing is over.

Thanks for reading, boss. Please call, text, or write anytime.

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