

State of the City Address 2017-18

On March 1, of this year I completed my second year as Scio's city manager. Actually, the first 15 months I served as your interim city manager and then in June of 2017 I signed a two-year contract. I cannot believe it's been two years. The time has gone by so fast. There have been times in my life where I wish time would pass quickly, but I can honestly say..... this.... is not one of those times.

I began working on this message over a month ago and it just wasn't jelling. I even spent time reading other city address messages and while they were motivational, they didn't resonate with what I had in mind for tonight.

And then, yesterday while listening to a message at church; it dawned on me.....

What I really want to share with you tonight is this: Being your city manager and being a civil servant is not just a "job", it is a privilege and a responsibility that should not be taken lightly. I will speak more about this in a few minutes but before I get too far I wish to acknowledge the Scio City Council:

Mayor Chadd Weaver, Council President, Debbie Nuber, Councilors Wolfgang Borchard, Karen Eckhart, Tom Gray, Joey Ferguson and Richard Nelson.

Thank you all for your commitment and leadership to me and to Scio, by working together we have and will continue to collectively succeed.

Now let's take a look at this years' accomplishments:

Administration:

- Centerpoint Software – In September of 2017 we installed a new financial software package that now allows us to track revenues and expenditures to a degree of accuracy that was not possible in the past. This software has made balancing funds and checking accounts easier to implement and understand. Had it not been for Cathy Martin's technical skills and her understanding of the city's previous accounting software this upgrade would have taken twice the amount of time to accomplish. Cathy is an important asset to the city's services.
- Pacific Power Grants \$3500.00 and \$500.00. This year we received a total of \$4000.00 from Pacific Power which will go towards the purchasing of new downtown Christmas decorations. The total cost of the downtown decoration improvements is \$6300.00. This dollar amount includes lighting and electrical repairs, along with new pole brackets. The grants will pay for 2/3rds of the project cost with Scio Mutual Telephone Association and the City of Scio picking up the remaining balance. SMTA is a great community partner and easy to work with.
- Great American Eclipse – City staff, with your consent, led the efforts in establishing Scio as one of the best eclipse viewing locations in the Willamette Valley. The combined staff hours that went towards this event were over 139 hours over a seven month period of time.

The final estimated influx of visitors in and around the Scio area (within a 10 mile radius) was 2000+. Scio viewers witness 1:58 seconds of a 2:14 second historical phenomenon.

Many of us will not ever see another event like this in our life time. What an awesome honor to serve our friends, family members and visitors coming to Scio from all parts of the world !!

It would be negligent of me not to mention the tourism dollars raised from this event. Your decision, as Scio's City Council, to donate seed money to the Scio Community Improvement Organization, turned into a \$3000+ profit for S.C.I.O. and the seed money getting returned to the city in full. But what we cannot put a cost to is the "good will" extended to our local citizens and visitors.... Those relationships are priceless!!

Now close your eyes and think of one of hottest days last summer, where were you? Yes, on an unusually hot August night, the Scio Community Improvement Organization brought back Scio's National Night Out. The City, along with other local businesses and civic groups partnered with S.C.I.O. to make this event happen by:

- Serving on the National Night Out Planning Committee
- Mayor Weaver and his family and Councilor Wolfgang Borchard Manned the BBQ
- The City provided trash receptacles and assisted with tent set ups and other seating

But the proudest moment for me was when I saw the entire council serving the citizens and their families!

Reserve Accounts: This year the city succeeded in putting a grand total of \$221,000.00 dollars into our reserve funds:

- a. \$40,000 into Equipment Acquisition
- b. \$48,000 into Sewer Reserve
- c. \$133,000 into Water Reserve Fund

We will continue to add to these funds as the budget allows.

Planning Assistance Grant: The city applied and received a \$1000.00 Technical Assistance Grant. While this grant is small, it helps offset our costs for a Water Study project. We appreciate all grants both large and small and will apply again when the opportunity presents itself.

2nd Annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet: On April 11th, of this year we held our 2nd Annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet. The banquet grew this year from 26 attendees last year to 38 attendees this year. This event is very well received and we are very proud of our Library and Senior Center volunteers. Their combined hours of services saved the city over \$7500 dollars in salaries, taxes, and benefit costs.

And speaking of the Library.....

Library Services

- Library Donations are up!! Thanks to Weaver Seed, who generously commissioned a Scio Solar Eclipse Quilt and donated the proceeds to the Library, along with the fundraising efforts and donations from the Scio Friends of the Library and individual citizen supporters, the library received over \$2300.00 in donations.... And.... The year isn't over yet! These donations contribute greatly to the general fund, which allows us to assign more dollars to our library programs designed to service all age groups in our community.
- In addition, thanks to the grant writing efforts of Scio's Librarian LaVonne Murray, Scio will be beta testing Electronic Books, early next year. LaVonne applied and received the Trust Management Services Grant and received the maximum amount of funding equaling \$9875.00. The grant will pay for:
 - a. Children's seating
 - b. updating of book shelves

c. Electronic Book software system

- Art Exhibits - For the past three years Scio has been selected as a state art exhibitor for the Lake Oswego Reads Program. Artists from all over Oregon design art work associated with a book chosen by Lake Oswego Library. The art exhibit then goes throughout the state of Oregon sharing and selling the wonderful art work stemming from the book selected. This fall will be Scio's fourth year of serving as an art exhibit location.

New in April of this year, Scio was also chosen to serve as an art exhibitor for the Salem's Read Program.

Using these events as inspiration LaVonne with the assistance of Library Board Member Jennifer James, who is also a Scio kindergarten teacher, joined forces and established a Scio Youth Art Exhibit, using the Annual Lamb and Wool Festival as its art theme.

LaVonne's passion for Scio and the library services makes my job easy!!

Senior Services:

- The Scio Senior Services Program has more than tripled in size this past year with more activities being added to enhance senior engagement throughout Scio and the surrounding area. Under the leadership of Liz Tennison and assisted by Shirley Hardy the Senior Center is being used a minimum of three days a week with 15+ attendees. This is such a blessing to the city staff. We love all of our citizens, but to hear the laughter and comradery coming from the senior center just makes you feel good. Scio can be proud of this service and we continue to look for ways to support this program.

Public Works:

- \$50K Special City Allotment Grant: While we have yet to receive the actual cash, the city has been awarded the grant and measures will be taken, through a public bid process to repair and upgrade the following streets:
 - a. Sections on Ash Street
 - b. Sections of Cherry (both N and S)
- Water Master Plan Upgrades: City's across the nation work from documents referred to as "Master Plans". The City of Scio is no different. Due to our size we only need two public works master plans. These plans are very similar in nature to the City's overall Comprehensive Plan, the only difference is that they are specific to "water and sewer" services. In April of 2015, Scio completed the latest Water Master Plan. These plans are the blueprints of Scio's water system today and in the next twenty years. By having a solid Water Master Plan we know what to prepare for and how to manage the city's water services in a proactive manner verses reactive manner. This past year we completed the following tasks outlines in our Water Master Plan:
 - a. Upgrade Water System Telemetry: We purchased a new software monitoring system for the security of our water reservoir and water usage.
 - b. Finalize the water line connections on S.W. 2nd Street
- Parks: Soon to complete the sidewalk and curb at Thomas Creek Park.

Employee Retirement:

Scio has been fortunate to have had long time employee, Robert Waller, serving in the public works department for the past 20+ years. Robert will be stepping down from his position as of May 30, 2018 and as with all good things they must come to an end. Thus, we are aggressively pursuing both formal and informal educational avenues to ensure that our new hire will be DEQ certified within the first 18 months

of employment. I say “aggressively pursuing” because since the new Public Works employee began he has attended 3 out of 4 classes needed to get DEQ Certified and passed his classes with 94% academic score or higher.

While both public works positions have not been certified in the past, it is my intention, to ensure that both positions will be fully certified in the future.

So, besides all of the planning and the day to day workloads what makes all of these accomplishments possible? I believe it is due to our commitment to integrity and partnerships!

Without integrity we cannot trust one another. When I or any other staff member represents the City of Scio we are careful about what we say and what we commit to doing. While we, as staff, would like to help out with all requests, we cannot always provide service due to time and resources.

I strive to lead by example, never asking staff to do something I would not do myself. I try to make all my decisions with the public interests at heart. I tell the staff that our satisfaction comes from knowing that we are doing thing not because we can, but because they are the right things to do.

And while all of my decision may not please everyone, all the time, I can assure you tonight that I have always been in step with both state and federal laws, and doing what is right for Scio, that is what I mean by integrity.

As far as partnerships go, we as staff continue to nurture our existing partnerships and grow new ones. We are nothing without our friends and colleagues. Here is a list of businesses and other governmental agencies that have help make Scio successful this past year:

Linn County Sheriffs Dept.

Lebanon Police Department

River Fusion
Scio Fairgrounds Festival Committee
Council of Governments West – COG
S.C.I.O. Scio Community Improvement Organization
Scio Friends of the Library
Linn County Small Cities Group
Linn County Emergency Management Team
Cascade Collections
Linn County Courts
Linn County Building Department
Willamette Wanders
Scio Mutual Telephone Association
Scio Fire District
Scio Library Advisory Board
Scio Planning Commission
Scio Cares
COG – Meals on Wheels
Scio Youth Club
Lamb and Wool Festival Board
Albany – Millersburg Enterprise Zone
Willamette Valley Visitors Association
Scio Senior Center
Pacific Power
Republic Services

In addition to this list, there are many individuals such as: Dave Kinney, John Erwin, Ryan Quigley and Brian Vandetta, that city staff works along-side of to enhance Scio's live ability. Suffice it to say that city staff works hard to establish and care for all of its relationships because we cannot take care of the community without them!

So.... What lies ahead??

The city will continue to deliver good customer service and make improvements along the way.

Administrative Services

- The year of the “Manuals” – this next year staff will be focusing a vast majority of time on updating and developing city wide operational manuals. This is a very large undertaking and I am hoping to complete at least 50% of this project over the next 12 months.
- A new city website will be launched in late June or early July. This website will have enhanced communication capabilities and allowing online bill pay.
- Record Codification System: The city will be entering into a contract with a Records Codification provider that will maintain and update all important city records and make them readily available to the public.
- A new “electronic board” will be placed in the council chambers and the ability to see overheads will no longer be an issue. This will be a wireless connection.
- As the city council you have given staff permission to begin a Property Acquisition/Building Fund. This next year we will be setting aside dollars to explore the status of our existing city hall building and determine the city’s facility needs into the future.

Library Services

- Electronic Books software will be installed by the first of September.
- Shelving modifications
- New Paint
- New laminate flooring will be laid throughout the library and city hall.

Public Works

- Will be looking to purchase the following:
 - a. Sweeper Truck with vac system
 - b. Curb painter
 - c. Edge cutter
 - d. Replace the current F350 with a more economical vehicle.
- In addition, we will be undergoing a Sewer Master Plan. The current master plan, which is 20 years old, has expired.
- Before summer is over we hope to have the Thomas Creek Park fences and the park leveled with some minimal landscaping added.
- Minor Road Repairs are scheduled for streets throughout Scio.

Conclusion

I am sure that other goals and activities will pop up along the way, but this is a full schedule for next year. At the beginning of my message I stated that being your city manager and being a civil servant is not just a “job”, but it’s a privilege and if you only have one take away from my message tonight let it be this.....What I strive for the most and what I try to instill in the city staff is to be kind, be honest, and be a good citizen, ready to do good for those around us. That is our mission as your public servants!

That concludes my message, thank you all very much and have a good evening.

Ginger Allen, Scio City Manager