

THE CAMAS QUARTERLY



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Camas Quarterly



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Hello Camas,

Fall is in the air. After that scorching summer, we are finally experiencing some cooler temperatures, and we're excited for the holiday season that lies ahead. One of my favorite fall activities is enjoying time in our beautiful downtown. Nothing symbolizes fall more than the changing leaves on our magnificent downtown trees.

However, fall is also a busy time for many. School activities and sports fill our evenings and weekends, and the City of Camas is no different. As we transition into the fall season, we have several significant topics on our agenda as a city. One area of focus is our financial forecast, which includes our fall omnibus. This omnibus allows us to make necessary changes and adjustments to our biennial budget. Additionally, we will continue to discuss our Lake Management plan as we approach informing the public about the plan and the steps we plan to take to address the issues.

Another key area of discussion, and one currently at the top of our list, is the situation with our fire department, particularly Station 41. We recognize that this station plays an integral role in our service, and it needs to fulfill that role more effectively. On page 14, we will provide an overview of the facts related to the station, which we hope will offer greater clarity on the direction the City is taking.

As part of the aforementioned project, we will require the expertise of external consultants. While the term "consultants" may sometimes carry negative connotations among the public, the reality is that the City would be hard-pressed to complete the volume of projects we undertake with our current staff size without the assistance of consultants. As you'll see on page 5, consultants are indispensable for a city the size of Camas.



MAYOR
STEVE HOGAN

September also marks the time when the school year gains momentum, shedding the leisurely days of summer. School safety is a perennial concern for parents and the community. In Camas, we are fortunate to collaborate with our schools to provide Student Resource Officers, or SROs. In early 2023, the school district faced financial challenges and considered reducing the number of SROs from two officers to one. Thankfully, our Camas City Council intervened to prevent this, finding a way to offset the costs and allowing the district to retain both officers. I am grateful to our Council for their efforts in making this possible. You can learn more about Officers Mayhugh and Scott, Camas' two SROs, on page 14.

As mentioned, we will soon be entering the holiday season, with Camas' annual Boo Bash taking place in October. I hope to see all of you at this fantastic event next month. Additionally, you can usually find me somewhere around town, and I encourage you to stop and say "hello." Connecting with our residents is always a joy, as you are the reason we work tirelessly for the City.

Thank you
Mayor Steve Hogan



CITY ADMINISTRATOR
DOUG QUINN

Hello Camas,

To say that we were busy this summer would be an understatement. As we transition into fall, I reflect on the work and tasks accomplished by your City staff. Although we may be a small team in terms of numbers, our impact is significant, as evidenced by the numerous projects we completed and the new ones on the horizon.

Work on the library roof is in its final stages, and we appreciate the patience you exhibited throughout that process. The library will soon have a leak-free roof, which is crucial when dealing with books!

The city will soon be kicking off a two-year process to update our citywide comprehensive plan and develop a downtown subarea plan. Our community will have opportunities to engage in this process beginning this fall. Our downtown is the pride of Camas, and we all have a role to play in its future. Please stay tuned to our social media accounts and Engage Camas (EngageCamas.com) for updates, and we hope to have your participation when needed.

We wrapped up another successful summer of Camas Parks and Recreation activities. We celebrated the grand reopening of the Riverside Bowl Skatepark and secured significant grants for improvements to Crown Park. I want to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of Trang Lam, Krista Bashaw, Tammy Connolly, and Susan Palmer.

Whether it's movies, concerts in the park, or a yoga class at the lodge, our Parks and Rec team consistently offers creative activities for our community.

Our public works crews were also hard at work this summer, tackling various construction projects and maintaining our green spaces and buildings. We are making substantial progress on the Everett Corridor Analysis project, with our third open house scheduled for this month. During this open house, we will present corridor concepts that the City has been exploring to ensure safe, efficient passage and access for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists. Additionally, we will share the recommended option that aligns with the above-mentioned goals while accommodating planned growth. Public

Works Director Steve Wall will soon present the official Lakes Management plan, outlining our solutions to the issues and our pursuit of additional funding for the project.

Please note that I have highlighted only a small selection of our numerous projects. As always, you can stay updated with everything happening in the City by following us on social media, subscribing to this newsletter, or, perhaps the best way, by attending City Council workshops and meetings. With that in mind, I hope to see you at our next meeting!

Thank you,

Doug Quinn
City Administrator

Expertise on Demand

Why Camas Uses Consultants



Let's say you're a homeowner and you discover a leak; the natural step is to call a plumber to fix it. If you're also dealing with foundation problems, you wouldn't turn to the plumber for help. Instead, you'd seek out a foundation expert.

Now, let's extend this logic to a city. You wouldn't task a traffic engineer with repairing a library, just as you wouldn't expect your librarian to patch up a roof.

This is where consultants come into play for cities; they serve as experts in highly specialized fields that, depending on your city's size, may or may not be on staff.

"The use of consultant assistance varies from city to city," explained Planning Manager Robert Maul. "Smaller municipal organizations like Camas, Battle Ground, Ridgefield, and Washougal tend to have limited staffing resources compared to larger cities or county organizations, where entire divisions of staff are dedicated to various functions.

For example, the City of Vancouver has a complete division solely dedicated to long-range planning, with seven staff planners, administrative support, and a division manager," he added.

EXPERTISE ON DEMAND

Contrast that with Camas, which employs a planning manager and three planners who handle a wide range of tasks and projects, including development proposal reviews and long-range planning. "They form a versatile team with a broad understanding of land use planning and processes," noted Community Development Director Alan Peters.

"When we engage in significant projects, such as our upcoming downtown subarea plan, we often enlist consultants to augment our in-house team's capacity," Peters said.

"This is a strategic decision that grants us on-demand access to professionals with specialized knowledge when we need it. For instance, the team we've brought in to assist with our downtown plan has extensive experience in downtown planning throughout the northwest. They are experts in downtown development and will collaborate with our staff and community, who are experts on Camas," he said.

The consultants we use are considered qualified by the Association of Washington Cities, the Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington, and are subject to staff reviews," added Steve Hogan, Mayor of Camas. "By employing these types of consultants, we shift a portion of the risk from the taxpayer and the City onto the consulting organization."



Consultants are not limited to the Community Development department. Nearly every infrastructure project involving roads, water, sewer, stormwater, parks, and other infrastructure components involves at least one consultant as part of the team. Currently, the City is employing consultants for our Lake Management Program. These consultants assist in multiple aspects, including lake water-quality sampling and analysis, given that the City lacks the necessary number of employees to handle this task.

The Parks and Recreation (P&R) Department recently engaged a team comprising GreenWorks, PlanIT Geo, and ECONorthwest after an extensive public solicitation process to develop a comprehensive Parks & Open Space Management Plan (POSMP).

EXPERTISE ON DEMAND

This plan serves as an essential management tool for the City, facilitating the efficient and cost-effective maintenance and enhancement of natural resources within our parks and open spaces, including trees, shrubs, and vegetation. Moreover, it will establish service levels and priorities to support a sustainable maintenance program, aligning with the core value of STEWARDSHIP held by the Department.

Delivering this plan requires a team of experts with specialized knowledge in various domains, ranging from urban forestry, horticulture, landscape architecture, Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping, to economic and policy analysis. It's important to note that Camas' Parks and Recreation Department comprises only four full-time members, serving a population of over 27,000 residents. This small team consists of a director and three recreation staff members who oversee a wide array of responsibilities, including coordinating engaging classes, organizing exciting activities, managing special events, and facility rentals.

While the Director possesses a comprehensive understanding of parks and recreation, spanning everything from planning to project management and recreation programming, her role is more that of a generalist.

This is not to say that in-house staff members couldn't possess some of these technical skills, but the current staff's expertise predominantly focuses on implementation, demanding a full-time commitment.

Surprisingly, even the Finance department leverages consultants. "In Finance, several services that we perform annually or periodically necessitate experts in specialized areas," said Camas Finance Director Cathy Huber Nickerson. "Accounting Services – Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP) constantly evolve and become increasingly technical each year. The City utilizes consultants from an accounting firm specializing in local government accounting to ensure compliance with new regulations and to guarantee clean audits," she said.

Ultimately, for a city the size of Camas, consultants are indispensable for smooth operations. Most cities, except the very largest municipalities that can employ and house specialized services, rely on consultants, much like Camas. "In smaller cities, we hire individuals with broader ranges of experience," noted Camas Mayor Steve Hogan. "Generalists do their best, but when the Council decides that we need to tackle more complex projects, we bring in specialized consultants and project managers," he added.

In the end, utilizing consultants isn't solely about "cost savings." It provides additional bandwidth for specific teams and serves as insurance that the City adheres to all processes.

A CHANGE IS IN ORDER

If you've attended City Council meetings, you may have encountered a common term: Change Orders. Change Orders are prevalent in various project types, including construction, professional services, purchased services, and product implementation, to name a few.

For the purposes of this story, our primary focus will be on construction projects, where a Change Order refers to an amendment or alteration to the original construction contract or scope of work. These changes can be initiated either by the City or the contractor. Typically, Change Orders involve the contractor performing additional work, but they can also entail the removal of work from the contract.

Several reasons may necessitate Change Orders, such as:

- Changes in, or unforeseen, jobsite conditions.
- Material substitutions.
- Regulatory issues.
- Alterations in quantities.
- Safety concerns.
- Errors and omissions in the design or ambiguous construction drawings.
- The owner (City) desires project enhancements, or the contractor has a more efficient construction idea.
- Determination that certain work is no longer necessary, resulting in cost reduction.

The need for Change Orders can significantly vary depending on the project type and location. For instance, consider a pipeline project; constructing a new pipeline on vacant farmland for a new subdivision differs greatly from working on a new pipeline downtown on 4th Ave. Farmland projects ideally encounter fewer unforeseen conditions, whereas urban projects like 4th Ave. may involve dealing with utilities, basements, tree roots, and other hidden challenges dating back to the 1950s. Remodeling or maintaining existing buildings can also lead to significant changes, as the original work and hidden issues may be unknown until components are removed.

In the infrastructure industry, a long-standing standard is to anticipate approximately 10% of the construction cost in Change Orders. This allowance acknowledges the unpredictability of various project variables and ensures that the contractor is fairly compensated for their work, while the owner (City) obtains the desired end product.

The City has adopted the 10% threshold through a Council Resolution as an administrative guideline.

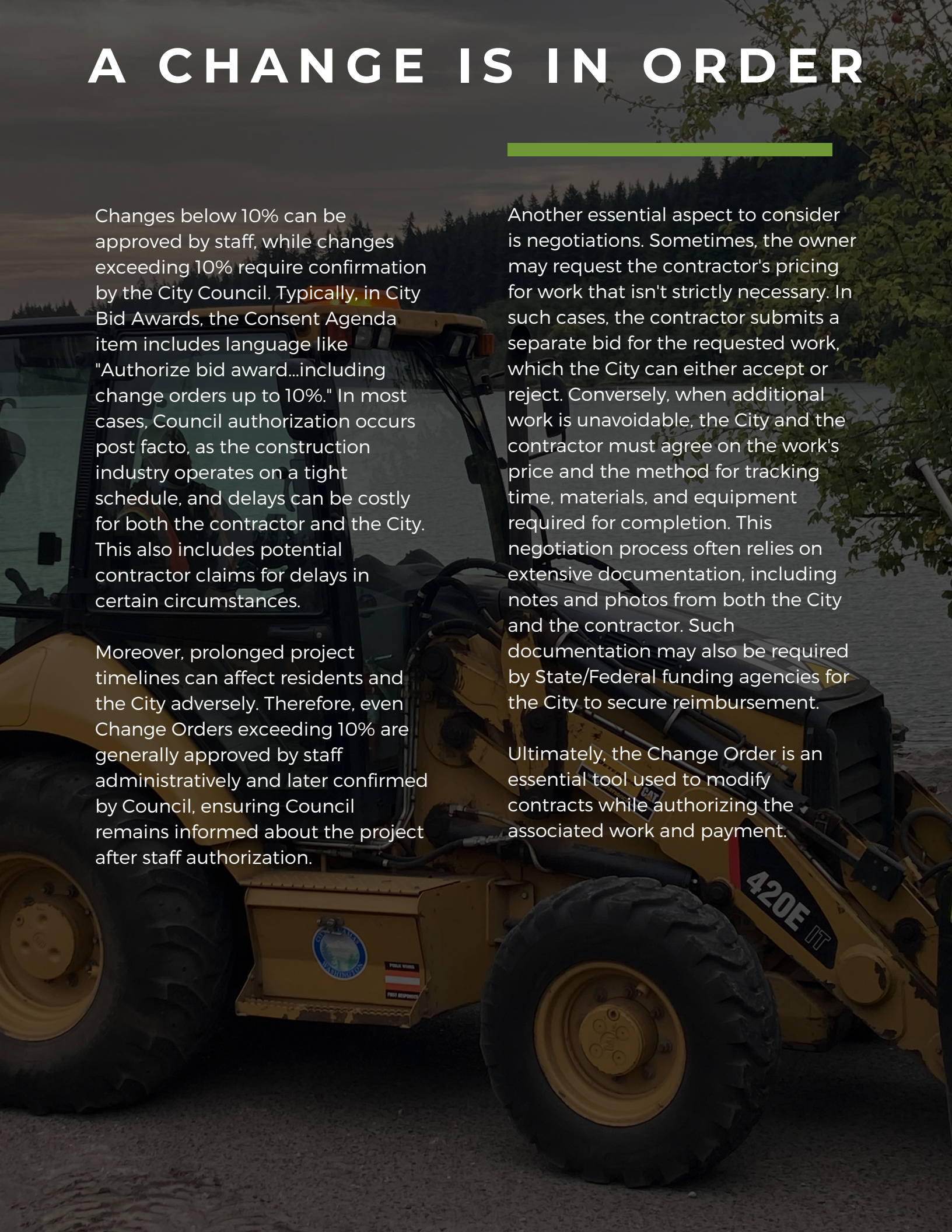
A CHANGE IS IN ORDER

Changes below 10% can be approved by staff, while changes exceeding 10% require confirmation by the City Council. Typically, in City Bid Awards, the Consent Agenda item includes language like "Authorize bid award...including change orders up to 10%." In most cases, Council authorization occurs post facto, as the construction industry operates on a tight schedule, and delays can be costly for both the contractor and the City. This also includes potential contractor claims for delays in certain circumstances.

Moreover, prolonged project timelines can affect residents and the City adversely. Therefore, even Change Orders exceeding 10% are generally approved by staff administratively and later confirmed by Council, ensuring Council remains informed about the project after staff authorization.

Another essential aspect to consider is negotiations. Sometimes, the owner may request the contractor's pricing for work that isn't strictly necessary. In such cases, the contractor submits a separate bid for the requested work, which the City can either accept or reject. Conversely, when additional work is unavoidable, the City and the contractor must agree on the work's price and the method for tracking time, materials, and equipment required for completion. This negotiation process often relies on extensive documentation, including notes and photos from both the City and the contractor. Such documentation may also be required by State/Federal funding agencies for the City to secure reimbursement.

Ultimately, the Change Order is an essential tool used to modify contracts while authorizing the associated work and payment.



DEPARTMENT UPDATES



Alan

Peters

Community
Development
Director

You may have noticed that many changes have occurred in Camas since the City Council adopted the Camas 2035 Comprehensive Plan in 2016. Alternatively, you might be one of the more than 4,000 new residents who have relocated to Camas over the past seven years. Our city has experienced substantial growth, and now it is time for us to reevaluate our 20-year vision as a community. We need to gain a fresh perspective on how we perceive ourselves today and what we envision the City of Camas to become by 2045.

This fall, we're beginning a two-year planning process to update the City's Comprehensive Plan.

This plan will establish a vision for growth and development while outlining specific goals, objectives, policies, and actions to steer our future. Additionally, the plan will address recent amendments to Washington's Growth Management Act concerning housing and climate change. Concurrently, we will develop a subarea plan for Downtown Camas. This subarea plan will offer a more detailed vision and action blueprint, aiming to stimulate both public and private investments in our historic downtown area, preserving and enhancing its unique character.

Visit www.engagecamas.com to stay up to date

DEPT. UPDATES - CONT.

PFAS and our Water System

The City has been working hard to stay on top of the emerging and technically complex PFAS contamination issue. We have been listening to the public's input and questions and want to assure everyone that providing safe and effective services - of all types - to our customers is our highest priority. Many of us at the City live in this community and use the same source of water every day. We're aware this is an uncomfortable topic for many as there is still a lot that is unknown by the experts. Resident health is paramount, and we are being proactive on this topic. We're working to understand both the current situation that recent State regulations and testing of the system have brought to light, and any potential future impacts to our water. PFAS in general, and the potential impacts to water sources is an ever-evolving discussion. Additionally, as with every project or expense the City takes on, we want to take prudent, measured actions that use your money wisely, while also working to leverage state and Federal sources when possible.

Is the City going to do anything about PFAS in Well 13?

Current and Past Actions

- Department of Health (DOH) Coordination: The City has been working closely with the DOH and has met all required sampling and monitoring. This information provided a baseline to assess potential risks to the system.



Steve
Wall
Public Works
Director

- The City has also been completing investigative sampling beyond that required by DOH. We are currently sampling multiple locations within the water system.
 - For example, Well 13 does not “directly feed” our customers. It’s blended with water from other wells, then travels through miles of pipeline, pump stations and reservoirs before reaching the first customer. This is why it’s almost impossible to pinpoint who is getting that water. Further testing within the system should provide additional information on potential PFAS levels making it to our customers, which we’ll then share with the public and use in the planning process.
- Even though treatment or removal of PFAS is not currently required by DOH or the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the City has been, and continues speaking with industry experts and reviewing potential options for treatment of Well 13 (and other wells, if necessary). However, because the EPA has yet to adopt any PFAS thresholds, the City is waiting to see the new rules to ensure any treatment method will meet both State and Federal requirements.



Connie
Urquhart
Library
Director

DEPT. UPDATES - CONT.

Scary Story Writing Contest

The Library's Scary Story Writing Contest is back! This beloved tradition takes place every October, where students in grades 3-12 can submit stories of 500 words or less based on prompts provided by the Library. Three winners will be selected to receive prizes and have the opportunity to read their stories at the Saturday Spooktacular Oct. 21.

Students can choose from the following prompts:

1. Walking alone in a graveyard at night.
2. Making the mistake of stealing from the town witches.

Submitting a story is simple: visit CamasPL.org/ScaryStory2023 to submit your entry, or bring your story to the Library by Saturday, Oct. 14, at 5 p.m.

Saturday Spooktacular

The Library's Annual Saturday Spooktacular is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 21, from 6-8 p.m. The event will feature a Haunted Library, family bingo, a costume contest, readings by the winners of the Scary Story Writing Contest, prizes, and other eerie surprises.

The Holocaust: Lessons for a Broken World

Hannelore Tweed, a retired Camas High School teacher and current Holocaust studies educator, will present a 3-part lecture series on the Holocaust starting Oct. 16. The series will have three sessions:

- Monday, Oct. 16, 1:30-3 p.m. — Session I
- Monday, Oct. 23, 1:30-3 p.m. — Session II
- Monday, Oct. 30, 1:30-3 p.m. — Session III

In the Gallery

As we approach the end of our Centennial year, it's time to prepare some of our most iconic items for inclusion in a Library time capsule. However, before we do that, we'll have the opportunity to display these items in the Gallery! The exhibit for November, titled "Preserving the Present: A Camas Public Library Time Capsule," will showcase all the realia that will go into the Library's Centennial Time Capsule. The exhibit runs from Nov. 1- Nov. 25, with a reception on First Friday, Nov. 3, from 5-8 p.m.



FACTS ABOUT FIRE STATION 41



Camas Washougal Fire Department (CWFD) is developing plans to replace the existing Fire Station 41 to ensure adequate fire and emergency medical services as our community continues to grow.

This new station will serve as the headquarters for CWFD and will be located in downtown Camas, in the core of the department's response area. As the headquarters facility, the downtown Camas station will house response personnel, apparatuses, administrative staff and the Fire Marshal's Office (FMO). Currently, the downtown Camas emergency response personnel, the FMO's office and the administrative staff are all decentralized and operating out of separate buildings and remote to each other.

The current Fire Station 41 facility has outlived its useful life and cannot be increased in size to accommodate the needs required of a modern fire station, including:

- Ability to withstand a significant earthquake.
- Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Space for additional firefighters/EMS personnel to serve a growing community.
- Crucial, up-to-date decontamination facilities and separation to limit firefighters' carcinogen exposure.
- Elimination of apparatus exhaust from entering City Hall's interior office spaces

- Space for fire apparatus
- Increasing safety clearances around apparatuses and equipment
- Provide public access to Fire Department staff
- Provide proximal parking for public medical emergency drive-ins.
- Provide private medical screening and treatment area for public walk-ins or drive-ins.
- Facilities for a changing workforce (male/female changing rooms) that are consistent with the accommodating principles of diversity, equity and inclusion.

A location hasn't been determined yet for the downtown station. However, a process to select a site has begun and the most promising option will be shared with the community later this fall. Funding for a new station will come from the sale of voter-approved bonds expected to be on the August 2024 ballot. If the bond passes, construction could begin as early as 2025.

Learn more and talk with fire department staff at our Fire Department Open House, Health and Safety Fair from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 24 at Station 42, 4321 NW Parker Street in Camas. For more information, contact us at 360-834-2262 or fire@cityofcamas.us.

A RESOURCE LIKE NO OTHER

Last year, during a period of financial crisis, the Camas School District faced a challenging decision: reducing the number of Student Resource Officers (SROs) from two to one. Fortunately, upon learning of this situation, members of the Camas City Council collaborated with the Camas School District to ensure that these vital roles continued with two officers. SROs play a role far beyond school policing, and to shed light on their responsibilities, we had a conversation with Officers Henry Scott and Brent Mayhugh.

Q. What made you want to go the SRO route?



A. Officer Mayhugh: I have a history of working with kids and had even considered going into child psychology coming out of college. I wanted to change the idea that cops are scary and bad, as some kids may see us. I wanted to show kids that I'm a regular guy in a uniform just trying to make a difference in their lives every day.



Officer Scott: I have worked at Camas PD for over 18 years as a patrol officer. I've worked all the various shifts and handled about every type of call a patrol officer can get. When the SRO spot became available, I saw it as an opportunity for a nice change of pace and a chance to keep our Camas kids safe. I have kids in the district and have coached many others over the years, so the opportunity to do what I can to keep them safe has been rewarding so far.

Q. Is there additional training for this position?

Certain laws under the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) mandate specific training for each SRO. Most of these topics are covered in the National Association of School Resource Officers training, which Camas' SROs attend. However, recent legislative changes have allowed for online training to cover all the required topics as mandated by law.

A RESOURCE LIKE NO OTHER

Per legal requirements, officers have six months to complete this training, a deadline that Camas PD ensures they meet. Additionally, each SRO attends Child Interview Training, a legal requirement in Washington state for interviewing children under 12.

Q. Are there any skills that are essential to this specific position?

Officer Mayhugh: Being patient, listening, being attentive and being able to work with a variety of needs, such as special needs or mental health issues is key. In addition, being able to work with all sorts of school personnel makes a big difference. Finally, you really need a desire to build relationships with the kids. Oh, and there's a lot of walking!

Officer Scott: It is important to be a well-rounded patrol officer who can handle any type of call or situation that may arise. Not only do all sorts of issues pop up at the schools, but often students will report a serious situation that is happening or has happened at home to the schools.

Q. What are the goals for a position like this?

Officer Mayhugh: Just continue to build relations with the schools and kids. I want the schools to want us there, so anything that helps with that is important.

Officer Scott: Obviously one of the main goals of the SRO position is to keep our campuses a safe place to learn and develop social skills. We also want to develop the relationship with the kids where they know we are approachable. We want them to feel comfortable approaching us about any concern they may have at school, or home.

Q. How are you received by the different age groups?

Officer Mayhugh: Overall, very appreciative we are there. The elementary age kids are happy to see us and always are wanting stickers and to ask questions about our gear and our job. The middle school age kids want stickers too, but are generally asking questions about our job, like how many people have we arrested. High school age kids generally are more mature and engage in all sorts of conversation with us.

A RESOURCE LIKE NO OTHER

Officer Scott: Most of the kids in the different age groups seem comfortable approaching us. Sometimes we encounter kids who, for various reasons, are intimidated by our presence. We understand that everyone has different life experiences and there could be reasons why a student is intimidated or not fond of law enforcement. My goal is to over time let these kids know that I am here for them, and that they can trust me and approach me with anything.

Q. Is there a memory or an event when you were basically like this is why SROs are so important?

Officer Mayhugh: When I walk into a special education classroom and the kids come up to hug us and call us by name, that in my opinion makes it all worth it to me. Building those relationships with those kids is a blast, and they make my day!

Officer Scott: I wouldn't say there is one specific memory that established the need for SROs in my mind. However, over time I have learned that dangerous situations can unfold very quickly.

If I can be on campus as an SRO, I have a better chance to intervene and stop something unsafe, than I do if I'm minutes away as a patrol officer, and possibly having to fight my way through traffic to get there.

Ultimately, both officers agree that their role in schools goes beyond ensuring security and safety—it's about forging relationships with students, families, and staff.

And perhaps Officer Mayhugh put it best, "the kids are our future, why not build those tight bonds with them at an early age so that when they become adults, they will remember the positive contact they had with officers," he said. "I often hear stories about kids remembering an officer they dealt with at an early age. They usually still remember the name and what the contact was like. I try to remember that every day working with these kids."

CAMAS CITY COUNCIL



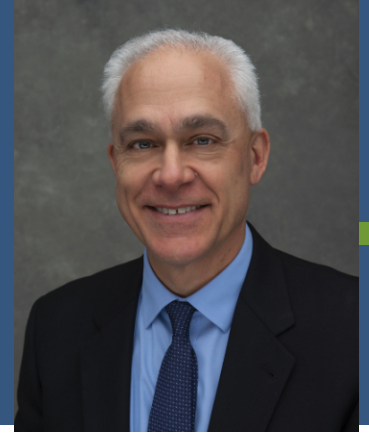
Marilyn Boerke
Ward 1



John Nohr
Ward 1



Bonnie Carter
Ward 2



Tim Hein
Ward 2



Jennifer Senescu
Ward 3



Leslie Lewallen
Ward 3



Don Chaney
At Large

The City Council is an elected group of individuals tasked with creating policy for a City. They represent certain wards. The City of Camas has three wards. Of the seven elected Council members, there is one elected at-large and six elected within wards. The wards are established based on population estimates within the City's boundaries and are reviewed and modified periodically by Council.

<https://www.cityofcamas.us/citycouncil/page/city-council-members>

CAMAS CITY COUNCIL



**Bonnie
Carter
Ward 2**



**Tim
Hein
Ward 2**

Bonnie Carter

Please join us **Saturday, Sept. 23, in the boardroom at the Camas School District Zellerbach Administrative Center from 4 - 5:30 p.m., for the Ward 2 Town Hall** with Council Members Bonnie Carter, Tim Hein, and Don Chaney. This event provides an opportunity for citizens to interact with council members and exchange information regarding community concerns.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for an open house to explore improvement options for the **Everett Corridor Wednesday, Sept. 20, at Lacamas Lodge, starting at 6 p.m.** Additionally, I invite you to a **Special Council Meeting Thursday, Sept. 28, at 5:30 p.m.**, where the council will discuss the latest information and recommendations concerning the Lake Management Plan.

Creating opportunities for citizens to engage in discussions about city projects remains an ongoing priority. If you are unable to attend these events, you can still email your concerns and suggestions to the appropriate city staff member and city council members. Information gathering will extend into the new year as we initiate discussions on the governance of the fire department and the replacement of our aging fire department headquarters.

Tim Hein

I echo Council Member Carter's message above and encourage you to join us for the **Ward 2 Town Hall Saturday, Sept. 23, from 4 - 5:30 p.m., at the JDZ Administrative Center.**