

City of Florence
Progress on
2013 City Council Goals
Half Year Report – July 15, 2013
Year End Report – December 14, 2013

Key

◆ = Funding Sources Required

■ = High Priority Item

● = Goal continued from previous year. *(As a general rule, goals that have been continued are a higher priority than new goals.)*

1. Research permanent funding and make recommendations to Council on sustainability of the Florence Event Center (FEC).◆■
(Assigned to City Manager and Florence Event Center Manager).

July 15, 2013 Update:

City staff has established a special advisory committee to research funding options with the goal of finding permanent sustainable funding for the FEC. The meetings began in May with the committee gathering twice per month with the objective of bringing a recommendation to the City Council by September. The May and June meetings have included gathering information from local and non-local user groups. The July meetings will consist of gathering additional input from an online survey and various key individuals with the goal of giving the community multiple opportunities to offer input. The FEC staff will also be presenting an in-depth report on current FEC operations and marketing strategies. The committee itself is in the early stages of the process but the meetings have been very productive. We look forward to seeing the most feasible options rise to the top for the Councils' consideration.

December 14, 2013 Update:

The FEC sustainable funding goal has been completed. On September 16th the City Council approved the following recommendations established by the FEC Sustainable Funding Committee:

1. Use property tax funds to subsidize the operations of the FEC
2. Discontinue charging the FEC for city administrative services
3. Transform the part-time contracted office position to a full time position

4. Continue the use of RTMP funds for marketing the FEC
5. Allocate 60% of the TRT funds towards the FEC and 40% for marketing services.

City Staff members, City Manager Jacque Betz, Finance Director Erin Reynolds, FEC Director Kevin Rhodes and Executive Assistant Megan Messmer continue to meet on a monthly basis to monitor the progress of additional operational recommendations that surfaced from the sustainable funding committee process. Further updates will be provided for council in the FEC monthly staff reports.

2. Continuation of strategic plan for records management●◆ *(Assigned to City Recorder)*

July 15, 2013 Update:

Staff has continued to make strides on scanning and indexing projects in both the City Recorder and Planning Departments during this time of transition. With the help of temporary cardinal employees staff has worked backwards chronologically scanning and indexing City Council Ordinances, Resolutions, and Minutes back to 1990, and have done the same for Planning Commission / Administrative Review Land Use Decisions back to 2005.

As predicted, with the various staffing changes over the course of the first half of 2013, and the split of duties for the City Recorder, drafting the strategic plan for records management has been put on hold until late 2013 or early 2014 when additional Planning Staff will allow for more time to be allotted to creation of the strategic plan.

December 14, 2013 Update:

With the help of contract employees, staff has been able to scan and index a number of documents since mid-year, with a particular focus on Planning / Land Use Files. Files that have been scanned include Planning Commission minutes from 1997 to present, Planning Commission packet files & agendas from 2002 to present, and building permit files with particular attention to subdivision files, of which Staff is approximately ½ way through.

In 2014, Staff will pick up where we left off in 2012 with the creation of a records management program and strategic plan, as well as continuing to make progress on file management projects including finishing scanning & indexing building permit files, cleaning out the attic and basement at City Hall, organization of City Council packet and election files, and scanning & indexing land use project files.

3. Assess Florence utility code and fees (bring it into the 21st century). ●
Assess business licenses, special events process, and city dog license fees. ◆
(Assigned to City Manager, Finance Director, Public Works Director, and City Recorder).

July 15, 2013 Update:

Utility Code and Fees Review: Assessing the Florence Utility Code and related fees is a project in process. The purpose of this goal status update is to draw attention to the difficulties we encounter in our attempt to provide utility services in an efficient and self-sustaining way. This status update is our way of providing advance notice that we will be bringing options and seeking direction from the City Council at a later date this year. Areas of concern can be summarized as follows:

- Current utility service and billing policies and fees that do not recover the cost of the service being provided.
- Inadequate policies and procedures currently exist that are unable to address the establishment, discontinuation, and temporary suspension in service.
- Possible revision of the Utility Code to implement policy decisions regarding vacancy and other issues that may arise through this process.

A little more about bullet point #1 above: For the last 12 months the Finance Department has been tracking transactions that create additional work for staff. Utility customers are not paying for this additional service because there is currently not a fee in place. To provide a little background information on our monthly operations I will provide you with some statistics. On average we have 3,900 utility customers. Each month we mail approximately 500 or to 13% of our customers a “reminder notice” to remind our customers of their delinquent balance. Bills are due on the 15th, but we do not mail the reminder notice until the 25th. The customer has 10 days from the date of the reminder notice to pay the delinquent balance. If not paid within the stated timeframe a customer is given one more notice by way of a door-hanger warning of impending discontinuation of service. Public works crew members hang on average 120 door hangers a month. On average we only turn-off about 13-15 customers a month. Only at time of shut-off is a customer charged a fee of \$25. In order to be turned back on, they must pay the delinquent balance and the \$25 fee. The following table provides information by month on the number of delinquent customers, door hangers hung, and the number of accounts being shut-off for non-payment:

Calendar Month	Service Month	Reminder Notices	Door Hangers	Promise to Pays	Shut-Off's
Jul 2012	May	498	105	52	11
Aug 2012	Jun	482	114	55	10
Sep 2012	Jul	420	97	47	14
Oct 2012	Aug	611	118	65	16
Nov 2012	Sep	473	123	67	17
Dec 2012	Oct	471	93	59	14
Jan 2013	Nov	545	102	88	4
Feb 2013	Dec	477	146	70	15
Mar 2013	Jan	677	95	45	17
Apr 2013	Feb	538	108	68	7
May 2013	Mar	446	99	53	14
Jun 2013	Apr	453	164	63	19

Other efforts to help reduce the number of notices for non-payment (we had 160 in June) is to establish nominal fees for non-payment 'door hanger' notices. The fee, once Council approves, would be added to the utility bill. If the customer actually goes to shut-off for non-payment, a meter disconnect fee would be applied to the utility bill. All charges, including the door hanger fee and meter disconnect fee, would need to be paid in full prior to re-establishment of service. Another area would be to stream line our extended vacation policy, setting fees to turn-off service during extended periods and to turn the service back on when the customer returns.

It is our goal to provide the Council with further information and options regarding the utility billing code and fees so that in the coming months policy decisions can be made so that we can keep customers accountable for paying their bill on time and in full. Up until this point it has been the City's policy to not over-burden the customer with what has been believed to be an excessive amount of fees. Unfortunately this policy increases the City's loss on uncollectible revenue and leaves staff with the inability to enforce consequences for customers who have delinquent paying behaviors. The reason this is being brought to your attention is the changes we will propose will affect citizen's lives. The utility funds are self-supporting funds; however we are not charging fees for all of the services we are providing due to the delinquent behaviors of a small percentage of our customers. It is the Council's purview to make such policy and fee decisions and City Staff

plans to provide you in the last half of 2013 the information and options to help you make informed decisions.

With the deployment of the new accounting system software, Clarity, the City will be able to take advantage of this new tool to further its efforts in billing equities. For instance, when the utility bill is in the tenant’s name (responsible party for payment of the utility bill) that customer will continue to be responsible for delinquent utility charges until paid in full regardless of relocation to a premises different from the premises at which the delinquent charges were accrued.

Another area where the power of ‘Clarity’ will be an advantage is tracking customers and not just service addresses. The ability to track customers provides an equitable means to require deposits for service. The deposit, after keeping the account in satisfactory standing for a period of one year, would be returned to the customer.

Business License Program Review: On May 20, 2013 the City Council held their first discussion on the overall direction of the business license program including a comprehensive review of current processes, a cost/benefit analysis of the business license program, and high level options for change. The City Council will continue their discussions on the topic at their August 5, 2013 meeting in order to review more specific program options and in particular discuss the viability of requiring that criminal background checks be performed.

Dog License Fee Review: The City of Florence has not reviewed its Dog License fees for 18 years. They were last adjusted in 1994. With the opening of the Singing Pines Dog Park in October 2012 the City is looking at additional funding sources for park maintenance and Code Enforcement of the park. The City will also be reviewing its contract with the Florence Area Humane Society to see if there needs to be an adjustment in the amount contracted to them for Animal Shelter Services.

An assessment from Dog License programs in 17 other Oregon jurisdictions (9 cities and 8 counties) shows that fees vary considerably. The City of Florence has the second lowest fees.

City/County	1yr Sterile	1yr Fertile	2yr Sterile	2yr Fertile	3yr Sterile	3yr Fertile
Irrigon	\$5	\$10				
Lincoln City	\$5	\$35	\$10	\$65	\$15	\$90
Florence	\$7	\$15	\$14	\$30	\$18	\$35
Springfield	\$10	\$20				

Coos County	\$10	\$35				
St. Helens	\$12	\$30	\$24	\$60	\$36	\$90
Ontario	\$12	\$18				
Yachats	\$15	\$25				
Independence	\$15	\$30			\$35	\$90
Coburg	\$15	\$20			\$40	\$50
Eugene	\$15	\$35	\$25	\$55	\$35	\$70
Lane County	\$15	\$35	\$25	\$55	\$35	\$75
Linn County	\$15	\$25				
Benton County	\$17	\$25	\$27	\$45	\$37	\$65
Jackson County	\$20	\$30	\$35	\$53	\$35	\$49
Washington County	\$21	\$39	\$38	\$76	\$54	\$108
Multnomah County	\$25	\$30	\$40	\$50	\$50	\$65

The table below summarizes the above data by showing the lowest and highest fees charged for sterile and fertile dogs for a 1, 2 or 3 year license.

City/County	1yr Sterile	1yr Fertile	2yr Sterile	2yr Fertile	3yr Sterile	3yr Fertile
Lowest	\$5	\$10	\$10	\$30	\$15	\$35
Highest	\$25	\$39	\$30	\$76	\$54	\$108

A reasonable increase could be, to set fees which are comparable to those of our neighbors. These include Lane County, Coos County and Linn County. Dunes City, Yachats, and North Bend have their Dog License programs managed by their county. Only Lane County offers the 1, 2, or 3 year license option.

City/County	1yr Sterile	1yr Fertile	2yr Sterile	2yr Fertile	3yr Sterile	3yr Fertile
Yachats (Linn Co.)	\$15	\$25				
North Bend (Coos Co)	\$10	\$35				
Lane County	\$15	\$35				

Matching the Lane County Fees appears to be a good option. The table below shows a comparison of fees in Florence and in Lane County.

	1yr Sterile	1yr Fertile	2yr Sterile	2yr Fertile	3yr Sterile	3yr Fertile
Florence Cost Per Year	\$7	\$15	\$14	\$30	\$18	\$35
Lane County Cost Per Year	\$15	\$35	\$25	\$55	\$35	\$75

The Lane County fee structure and three option appears well designed as it provides an incentive for dog owners to purchase the longer license options, thus also reducing administrative costs. It takes approximately 15 minutes of staff time to issue a license. The above suggests that adjusting our fees to be closer to those of our neighboring jurisdictions could potentially double our Dog License income. Current annual receipts average about \$2,000 (note the drop in 2012 – see below).

If Council agrees to a review of the fees it could be a good opportunity to review the program as a whole.

Annual license fee income seems to have dropped in 2012. This could be related to the decision by the City a couple years ago not to allow Veterinary practices to issue licenses or just the mere fact that people aren't getting their dog's licensed. Income in the last three years has been:

2010 - \$2,242
2011 - \$2,114
2012 - \$1,359

Of the 17 jurisdictions researched:

- All have lower fees for spayed/neutered animals
- 12 offer the option of purchasing a 1, 2, or 3 year license
- 12 offer a reduction to senior citizens
- 4 impose a "late fee" typically when the license is more than 30-60 days overdue of \$5 - \$25.
- 3 impose fines if an officer has to issue a reminder or a citation. Fines range from \$50 - \$250.
- 1 offers a discount of \$5 for micro-chipped dogs

Before staff comes back with a recommendation on whether or not to increase fees, the City Manager and Police Chief will be meeting with the Manager of the Florence Area Humane Society at the end of the year to discuss the current animal shelter agreement. The City Manager would also like time to meet with Finance staff that administers the program to have a better understanding on how the program operates.

December 14, 2013 Update:

Business License Program Review: On August 5th, the City Council reviewed the benefits of a registration vs. a licensing program and decided that a licensing program better fit the needs of Florence because it would continue to allow the City to regulate businesses to ensure public health and safety, primarily through the continuation of criminal history checks. On December 9, 2013 the City Council reviewed proposed code language that would make amendments to the current code to avoid potential liabilities, remove old code provisions, and make the code more understandable. During that meeting the Council elected to initiate the code amendments and an ordinance will be brought before the Council at their meeting on January 6th.

Utility Code and Policies & Procedures: The Utility Code and the policies and procedures related to the Utility Billing process have been proposed to be continued into the new year as a 2014 Council Goal. A brief review of the issues we hope to resolve are listed below:

- Current utility service and billing policies and fees that do not recover the cost of the service being provided.
- Inadequate policies and procedures currently exist that are unable to address the establishment, discontinuation, and temporary suspension in service.
- Possible revision of the Utility Code to implement policy decisions regarding vacancy, tenant/landlords, and other issues that may arise through this process.

In the Finance Department Monthly report I have been providing a table of information regarding the Utility Bill Collection process. In the previous Council Goal Update Report we provided a July 2012 – June 2013 activity schedule. As an update I have provided the first six months of the fiscal year's activity in the schedule below:

Calendar Month	Service Month	Reminder Notices	Door Hangers	Payment Arrangements	Shut-Off's
Jul 2013	May	461	122	55	20
Aug 2013	Jun	454	121	50	10
Sep 2013	Jul	477	142	56	20
Oct 2013	Aug	431	103	64	13
Nov 2013	Sep	462	158	75	16
Dec 2013	Oct	540	132	52	16

As mentioned in the Finance Department November monthly report we have completed the accounting software *Clarity* upgrade. With the deployment of *Clarity*, we plan to utilize the improved reporting features and make good use of the increased connectivity between the finance and public works departments. The new software functionalities will help us improve our processes and procedures. Finally, it is our intention to provide the Council with further information and options regarding the utility billing code and procedures so that in the first few months of 2014 the council can begin the process of making policy decisions related to this goal.

Dog License Fee: The City Manager and Police Chief have not met with the manager of the Florence Area Humane Society to discuss the current animal shelter agreement. This will be done once a new permanent Police Chief is hired. Because of the sensitivity the City has in relations to raising fees, the City Manager would also like to wait until a full time Code Enforcement Officer is hired so that that person can evaluate the dog license program and perhaps suggest that an educational campaign be put together so that people know that animals within the city are to be licensed. At this time, this item will no longer be a Council Goal, but updates on the program will be provided to Council in the Code Enforcement Officer's monthly reports when deemed warranted.

4. Assess the amount of police officer's time spent in the jail, on transports, court days, and arraignments for justification of an additional officer. ♦
(Assigned to Police Chief)

July 15, 2013 Update:

An assessment of time spent in the jail by individual officers was conducted for the period of January 1, 2013 - March 31st, 2013. The results of this assessment were itemized in the attached memorandum prepared by Lt. Pitcher and addressed to the Chief of Police titled *Jail Duties*. Overall, in the first three months of 2013, our officers spent approximately 731.07 hours performing tasks in the jail. Also attached is a memorandum prepared by the Chief of Police to City Manager Jacque Betz, titled *Correction's Officer Justification*. This memorandum summarizes the Chief's belief that the statistics support hiring a Correction's Officer, enabling our police officers to spend more time patrolling the city streets. The Chief of Police and the City Manager will be coming to Council in October asking for direction to proceed with the recruitment.

December 14, 2013 Update:

The corrections officer position was presented to Council on October 7th. The position was being advertised and written and oral interviews were conducted on December 9th and 10th. Lieutenant Pitcher will make a recommendation on the top two candidates and the City Manager and Lieutenant will make a decision by the end of December. Once the position is filled, the duties will be monitored for a six month period to assess its effectiveness in the police department and court system.

5. Research locations and funding sources for a new public works facility for 2015. ♦
(Assigned to City Manager and Public Works Director)

July 15, 2013 Update:

One of the properties that may be suitable for a new public works operations center is the semi-vacant commercial building just west of the Florence Justice Center on 9th Street. Staff toured the 15,000 square foot building earlier this year.

The layout of the building works well for multiple tenants with central corridors and individual office spaces. There have been some tenant improvements (Oregon Pacific Bank had its financial center in the building) and a medical office with a reception/waiting room and examination rooms. The second floor is approximately 75% incomplete with one half of the second floor having no improvements (no sheet rock or insulation) at all. In order to make the building functional for a public works operation, the building's first floor would need to be totally gutted. Without reviewing the floor plans, it appears that the walls of the central corridors are load bearing and would need to be taken into account as remodeling plans are developed. The building has three main entrances, one from 9th Street which would not serve the building well, one on the east side and the third entry point from the north side of the building.

In discussions with a local realtor, although the property is listed, the price tag is over \$1 million. The owner's representative indicated that they are more interested in a lease option and that they currently have a couple of spaces leased. The building site itself is not suitable for equipment and material storage due to lack of area. We had assumed that the neighboring property to the north was under City ownership, however after reviewing the property records, the City property is further to the north with a parcel under separate ownership in-between the two properties. Additional contact from the owner's representative indicated that they

own the property directly across the street (on the south side of 9th) that may be suitable for equipment and material storage. The owner would be interested in selling the property to the City if the City was willing/interested in leasing the building. This option would be problematic for easy access from the operations center to the equipment and materials.

Due to costs involved in acquiring the property, extensive remodeling, purchasing another parcel for equipment and material storage, at this time the building would not be in consideration for a public works operations center.

Other locations/options: The old Rite Aid building (located on Hwy 101); Lane County Public Works (co-location); and airport lease properties.

The old Rite Aid building is of significant size (both building and property). The building could provide some interesting opportunities for inside equipment storage along with providing office and secure small material storage. Since the property is considered prime Hwy 101 commercial property, the cost to acquire the property and remodeling costs drive the project out of the reach of the City.

Co-location at the Lane County Public Works facility on 20th Street is an interesting proposition. Economies of scale and the ability to share resources/equipment is compelling. Early contact with Lane County Public Works was favorable, however, more information and dialog needs to be completed before this option can be fully analyzed.

The airport lease properties are proving to be a more desirable option. There are several sites to be considered. Lot 20 is 4.96 acres and bordered by the airport on the west, major drainage ditch to the south and a large sand dune to the north and west. Due to the sand dune, the buildable area may be greatly reduced (due to having enough room to properly stabilize the dune) or building costs may increase exponentially to include extensive retaining walls.

Another option is to lease multiple lots (three lots) south of 27th Street that would provide a site large enough to contain the necessary equipment, material and operational needs of public works. Because both of these airport property lease options would be 'leases' the lease would be revenue to the airport which may help stabilize the airport fund, provide more of a presence at the airport and provide the funds for routine and preventative maintenance at the airport. This option, if Council concurs, may be the best option for siting a public works facility.

December 14, 2013 Update:

Staff has narrowed down the future location of a new PW operations center to either Parcel 20, Tax Lot 100 in the Airport Industrial Park (4.96 acres) or the three lots south of 27th Street (Parcels 13, 14 and 15) which combined will provide 2.78 acres to site a new facility. Public Works is currently utilizing approximately 1.6 acres of inefficient space (which, in the opinion of the City Manager, should be condemned) on Spruce Street.

One of the many advantages of siting the new Public Works operations center on the industrial lots along Kingwood is that the monthly lease payment would go back into the airport operations fund since these lots are considered airport property. The lease would be revenue to the airport which may help stabilize the airport fund, provide more of a presence at the airport and provide the funds for routine and preventative maintenance at the airport. Our utilities (water, wastewater and stormwater) along with streets would be responsible for making those payments along with paying for the improvements. This option, if Council concurs, may be the best option for siting a public works facility.

Next steps: Staff will be bringing back to Council a final location and outline funding scenarios in March 2014. Funding for the construction and outfitting of a new operations center would be achieved through a combination of leveraging the water General Obligation (GO) Bond (which is currently being repaid by water rates and not property taxes), potential grants and a possible new revenue bond. Funding for the new facility would be part of an integrated fund management plan approach.

6. **Revise Old Town parking requirements.**
(Assigned to Interim Planning Director).

July 15, 2013 Update:

At the July 1, 2013 City Council meeting the Council held their first meeting concerning the Old Town Parking regulations with regard to development within the zoning codes. The dialogue included discussion of three different scenarios for amending parking regulations in the Old Town District including fee in-lieu, lowering current restrictions, and waiving parking restrictions entirely. At that meeting the Council directed staff to research in more detail the option of waiving off-street parking requirements.

In the next two months staff will be researching different variations of this proposal, including areas of Old Town to include, and if parameters or conditions to the waiver of parking regulations should be set including the possibilities of setting a maximum number of parking spaces to be waived. Staff will seek input from the public prior to the next Council meeting on the topic through public service announcements, the city newsletter and website, and through direct mailings to old town business owners, managers, property owners, and residents.

December 14, 2013 Update:

On October 7th, the City Council continued discussions on the Old Town Parking Requirements and held a public hearing on the subject. The City Council considered the current requirements and their implications on growth in Old Town, and possibilities for where to waive parking requirements, and the type of developments that should have their parking regulations waived. The City Council tentatively decided to research the possibility of allowing for the waiver of up to 50% of the required parking for all new developments, and to waive requirements for all existing structures. The Council wished to look at various alternatives for geographic locations of the amendments by considering establishing an old town parking district separate from the old town zones.

The meeting on October 7th was highly publicized with notices sent to business owners & managers, property owners, and residents in the Old Town zones. However, the hearing resulted in only a small amount of public feedback concerning the proposed amendments. Given this, Council will need to consider whether to continue with the Council goal to waive and/or reduce parking requirements in the Old Town Area, or to address Old Town Parking with changes to parking enforcement protocols, or other methods.

7. Prepare annual budget report to the community. ♦
(Assigned to the Finance Director)

July 15, 2013 Update:

The annual budget report to the community was released on June 30, 2013, titled "Budget Report to Citizens". (A copy is included in your agenda packet) It was a group effort that brought Mayor Nola Xavier's goal to a reality. Developed under the direction of City Manager Jacque Betz, Finance Director Erin Reynolds drafted the narrative that accompanied the detail numbers of the City's 2013-14 Adopted Budget. Megan Messmer, Executive Assistant to the City Manager, executed the vision by designing the report layout and facilitated the publishing and mailing of

the document. Sections of the report include a message from the City Manager, information regarding property taxes, a focus on sources and uses of City funds, a financial summary for significant programs, and ends with a look at capital projects and utility fee rates for the upcoming year. It is our hope that citizens can read the document and understand the finances and services of their City.

December 14, 2013 Update:

This goal was completed in June.