

About the City
by
Councilman Kingery

The City will have a change in leadership soon and I would like to share some thoughts about our time with City Administrator Tony Tolstedt. These are my opinions. I suspect other council members and the Mayor have opinions that may differ somewhat, as there are four council persons and the Mayor, and four other council persons that have served with Tony over the five years he has been with us. All of us observe from a unique perspective and see things slightly differently. I would be surprised however, if any of us would disagree with each other on the overall outcome for the City while Tony has been in charge.

Tony came at a time when we were financially struggling, with projects that needed done and a shortage of funding to accomplish what we needed to do. Tony has provided the leadership that has helped us be successful. We were fortunate to experience a "boom" economy part of the time Tony was here and he wisely advised the Council and Department heads to take advantage of the extra income without making us dependant upon the larger cash flow.

In addition to the "boom" increase Tony and the department heads have worked together to obtain grants and loan money totaling close to 3.5 Million dollars per year over the five years he has been with us. This is a lot of money he and the department heads have helped us obtain that was free to us or at very low interest rates. We have been able to pay off City debts, set aside a good balance of funds for use during the "down time" of our economy, and to pay for projects that are scheduled in the near future.

We have completed, and paid for, projects that had been awaiting funding, such as the Transfer Station at the landfill, and several street, sewer and water projects. The City purchased and upgraded the former DOT property for badly needed expansion for Public Works. We have funds set aside to complete payment of the City's portion of the New Joint Justice complex. We have money set aside for the new Spring line that we were needing to do when I came to the council back in 2011. The Spring line has been slow to come about and frustrating for all of us, but we believe we will be starting the Spring line replacement very soon.

Tony has consistently improved our leadership in the various City departments. At times some departments struggled with getting things done in a way we might have wanted. Tony found a way of working with and/or replacing department heads to improve our City and make business for the City better. Tony didn't do this all by himself, however without good leadership other employees within the City could not function as efficiently as they do. We are very fortunate to have many excellent employees working for the City; several in leadership positions have worked their way up through the ranks. Tony has helped them do this by providing opportunities for them to advance.

Our City is a better place because of Tony's leadership over the last five years. We will be fortunate indeed if we are able to replace him with a leader as good as he has been for us. I wish him the best in Riverton as he and his family depart Douglas for a new venture in their lives.

The Council will do our best to find the best leader we can to continue the good times for Douglas. Thank you Tony Tolstedt and family for sharing you lives and talents with us.