

State of the City of Montpelier, Idaho

Dear Fellow Citizens of Montpelier,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you for the last four years. This experience has been humbling for me. I'm thankful for the City Council that supports me and for each Department Head that has followed the direction of the City Council as they implement the budget.

My over-riding goal when I took over the reins was to control the spending and put the financial books in order. From the City's audit dated September 2013, the City's General Fund cash position was a negative (\$33,902). Three budget cycles later, in the City's most recent audit, dated September 2016, the City's cash position is a positive \$550,765. Not only did the City Council support me in this endeavor, but each department head and each employee took the initiative to be careful and conservative in the implementation of the budget.

During the current budget cycle, we've been able to buy a new police car with cash, a new computer system for the clerk's office, and over \$20k in well, pump and equipment repair with cash. We're currently looking at a used (but new to us) street sweeper, also with cash. Even our Fire Department bought a used (new to us) fire engine, with cash! Each budget has now been tweaked to invest for future capital expenditures or emergencies so that they're purchased with cash rather than financed. No more looming, interest heavy annual payments! This gives our City employees more flexibility. This year, our parks and rec department donated over \$20,000 in new equipment and capital improvements for our kids.

During the budget discussions, we have been discussing hiring summertime help to put hours into the roads. In order to accomplish this, we're increasing the road budget by 60% to help fix what Mother Nature did to our roads last winter. We've also budgeted money to begin preparing another section of the cemetery so we can expand and cover those needs. All of this would be from cash savings or budgeted revenue.

We've instituted new programs where employees that reach certain certifications now receive compensation for extra work done on their personal time. For our street department, those who have to re-certify on an annual or bi-annual basis receive bonuses each time they re-certify, with one employee receiving over \$1,000 annually because of his valuable qualifications. This has helped us move from one certified water/sewer employee to four! Our police department is also compensated for extra work getting additional certifications.

Rick Roberts, our City Superintendent, has managed the sewer project so well that we were able to fix one of the sewer lagoons, repair the sewer line in both places where it goes under the railroad tracks, replace all the line on 4th Street, and fix two other lines in the City. The cost of all these additional improvements is \$394,219! All this work was not previously on the bid for

work done by the bond. This was all done within the same budgeted bond money allocation. Lots of extra improvement, no extra cost.

We've gone through a lot together these past 4 years: a 2-year sewer project, the 4th Street renovation, and looking ahead, let's not forget next year's Washington Street renovation. Each of those projects has inconvenienced us a little, but we're a better City for it.

During these last 4 years, I have been a witness to great acts of volunteerism and donations. It has literally amazed me to see what people are willing to do with their own free time to help our wonderful City. From the Chamber of Commerce, to the Rotary Club, to the Arts Council, to all the organizations in between, I have seen thousands of hours donated to improve our City and everything that we do. I'm grateful for those who saw things they would like to see improved or changed in our community, and worked towards productive solutions, volunteering their time and talents to do so!

There is still much to do. Each of us can go the extra mile to pick up trash or do a little more clean up where we live. Each of us has an area of the City that we call home, let's make it the best looking place we can. It doesn't have to be all out, thousands of dollars spent, but a little improvement goes a long way. If you can, help your neighbor. If we ALL do that, imagine how our City would look. There are great things ahead for us.

Sincerely,
Jared Sharp