

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 78

CITY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2008

City seeks and wins \$3 million road grant

STATE MONEY WILL BE USED FOR 244TH AVE.

Facing tough competition for state transportation money, the city's public works staff buckled down and made sure their grant request met all of the funding criteria. Last month, they got the good news: The Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) awarded Sammamish \$3 million for the city's 244th Avenue project.

It wasn't easy. In the Puget Sound Region, only four out of 38 requests in the TIB's "Urban Corridor Program" category received funding.

"All the credit goes to Laura Philpot, Jeff Brauns and Jed Ireland," said Public Works Director John Cunningham. "They put together a great application."

Among other things, the project will build an 800-foot connection between existing segments of 244th Avenue, and add a median strip and turn lanes to the corridor between Southeast Eighth Street and Northeast Eighth Street. Total construction cost: \$13 million.



The new Sammamish Library, to be located on the south side of the City Hall plaza, will look like this artist's rendering when it's completed in 2010.

New library breaks ground

KING COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM INVESTING \$16.9 MILLION IN SAMMAMISH COMMONS

To celebrate the start of construction for the new 19,000-square-foot Sammamish Library, a ceremonial groundbreaking featuring City Council members, officials of the King County Library System, and community residents was held Dec. 4.

The new facility, roughly twice the size of the current library, is expected to be finished in 2010, although an official opening date is not yet available.

"This is another big step forward for the community," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "The library, right across the plaza from City Hall, is going to be a great addition to Sammamish Commons."

The new library, which will include more materials, computers, and space for young people, will also offer a community meeting room. The estimated cost: \$16.9 million.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

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PARKS BOND

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SUB-BASIN OPEN HOUSE

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE



*Lee Felling
Mayor*

The press is full of stories about all levels of government facing major financial problems. We read about a federal deficit that may approach \$1 trillion, a Washington state deficit that will exceed \$4 billion and a King County deficit that may exceed \$90 million. Except for the federal budget, these have to be balanced for 2009. As a representative of the Association of Washington Cities on the finance committee for the National League of Cities, I hear stories about many cities with extremely difficult financial problems.

Even cities and counties that on the surface look to be in great shape can get into serious financial trouble. In almost every case, there were years of warning signals that were ignored. A classic example was California's Orange County, one of wealthiest counties in the country, which was bankrupted by mismanagement of its temporary cash balance investments. Part of my private sector experience was in Treasury man-

agement, and the mistakes of Orange County were obvious to those of us in that business. News reports suggested the governing board had limited financial competence and spent little time on longer term financial planning.

Sammamish, on the other hand, has a balanced budget and a multi-million-dollar reserve fund. There are several reasons for our sound financial condition.

Very importantly, Sammamish has taken a conservative approach. With the exception of very attractive loans, early in our history, to help with 228th Avenue and land for City Hall, we have not built capital projects until we had the cash.

We have also made conservative projections for both revenue and expense, and taken frequent looks at our longer term financial plan, a personal interest of mine. As a result, we already know that a crossover point is approaching in 2015. That's when operational expenses may exceed operational revenues unless we either get new revenue (most likely a tax increase) or reduce spending (which affects services). Fortunately, we have time to plan intelligently because

we are looking ahead and being proactive rather than reactive.

Thanks to an excellent staff and City Manager with conservative financial orientations, we have taken the time to carefully consider and prioritize our capital projects and limit operational expense increases. This methodical approach has also allowed us to aggressively pursue grants and impact fees that reduce the cost to tax payers.

The political process sometimes creates pressure to use gimmicks, provide knee-jerk plan changes, and otherwise make poor long-term choices. So far, we have largely resisted that.

The proof of the pudding is that since incorporation in 1999 we have built and improved roads, parks, and city facilities, greatly expanded city services, and tripled our police force. Despite that, our property tax level is lower than what it would have been if we had never become a city.

We know what it takes to stay financially healthy. We just have to keep doing it.

Lee Felling

56 % approve parks bond measure, but it falls short

A \$19 million parks bond measure fell short of the 60 percent approval threshold needed for passage on Nov. 4. The final tally showed 56.49 percent voted in favor, while 43.51 percent voted against. A related park levy for programming and operations did exceed its 50 percent threshold but will not be implemented because the bond measure didn't pass.

The city parks bond, which would have funded a variety of parks and recreational facilities throughout Sammamish, met the same fate as many other ballot measures in the Puget Sound region. Many observers say the sudden onset of the ongoing national financial crisis hurt the prospects of numerous similar measures.

Public invited to Open House on sub-basin plans

As part of a planning effort to protect the Thompson and Inglewood sub-basins from the negative effects of development, the city is holding an Open House at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 11, at Sammamish City Hall, 801 228th Ave. S.E.

Residents are invited to express concerns, ask questions and offer insights as the city strives to predict impacts and propose solutions. Both the Thompson and Inglewood sub-basins will be affected by the city's proposed Town Center.

For more information on the Open House, please contact Senior Stormwater Program Engineer Eric LeFrance at 425-295-0562 or elefrance@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

CITY OF SAMMAMISH

City staffers hand out goodies on Halloween Day YOUNGSTERS GET A TOUR OF CITY HALL AS THEY TRICK OR TREAT

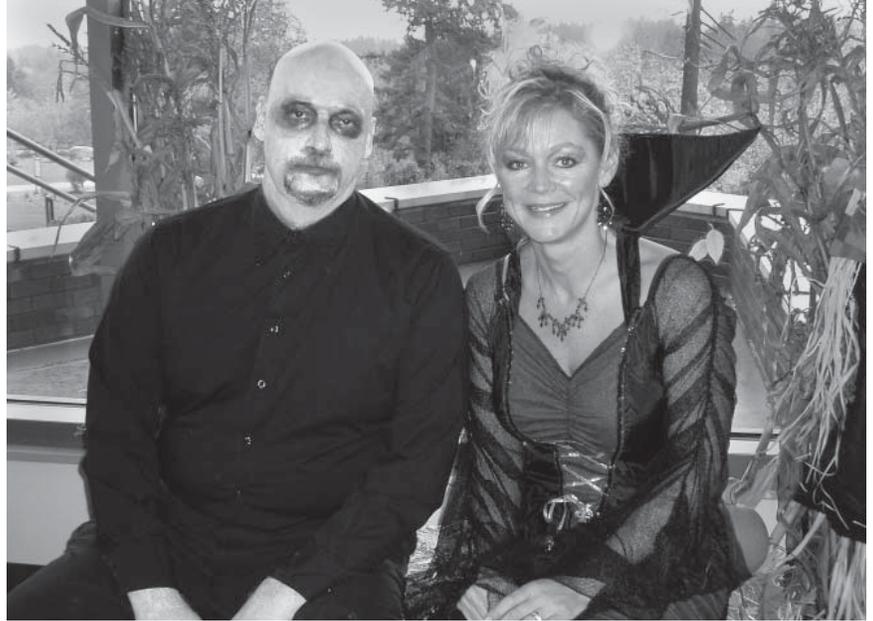
Most people come to City Hall for a permit, a license, or a meeting, but the crowd that showed up Oct. 31 was different.

They wanted CANDY! And lots of it!

"It was a lot of fun," said city staffer Sara Ninteman, who dressed up as a 1920's flapper for the big event she helped organize. "We handed out goodies, talked to the kids, and took a lot of pictures."

The more than 100 kids that came by between 3 and 5 p.m. on Halloween Day found costumed city staffers at numerous locations on the main floor of City Hall.

"We told them to follow the Frankenstein stickers on the floor to find the best stops," Ninteman said. "As they took their tour of City Hall, City Manager Ben Yazici was one of the people handing out candy. It was great."



City staffers Tony Hudson and Darci Donovan get in the Halloween spirit.

CITY CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Tuesday, Dec. 2

City Council Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 4

Planning Commission Meeting
5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 9

Joint Meeting: City Council/Parks & Recreation Commission
6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 11

Sammamish Youth Board Meeting
6 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 15

City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.
Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 16

City Council Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 18

Planning Commission Meeting
5:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 25

Christmas, City offices closed

JANUARY

Tuesday, Jan. 6

City Council Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 8

Planning Commission Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 13

City Council Study Session
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 14

Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 19

Marting Luther King Day
City offices closed

Wednesday, Jan. 21

Sammamish Youth Board Meeting
6 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 22

Planning Commission Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Jan. 22-24

City Council Retreat
Location TBD

PLEASE NOTE:

All meetings at City Hall, unless otherwise noted. Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information.

SAMMAMISH CITY COUNCIL



Lee Felling
Mayor



Don Gerend
Deputy Mayor



Jack Barry
Councilmember



Mark Cross
Councilmember



Kathleen Huckabay
Councilmember



Michele Petitti
Councilmember



Nancy Whitten
Councilmember

Sprucing up Pine Lake Park



The ongoing Phase II improvements to Pine Lake Park have already produced new picnic shelters like the one pictured above. Additional work is now being done on the shoreline and dock area. All improvements are scheduled to be completed before the swimming season starts in 2009.

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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Mike Sauerwein

Melonie Anderson

Brad Thompson

Lee Soptich

Bruce Disend

Tim Larson

City Manager

Deputy City Manager

ComDevDir/AsstCityMgr

FinanceDir/AsstCityMgr

Public Works Director

Parks & Rec Director

Admin Services Director

City Clerk

Police Chief

Fire Chief

City Attorney

Communications Mgr



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