

Mayor's Corner Year-In-Review 2018



Let me start off by wishing you and your family, a “Merry Christmas and Happy New Year”. I hope your holiday is spent enjoying family and friends and filled with happiness.

From the office of City Hall, we have so much to be thankful for in 2018. First off, 2018 has been a very full year with much activity from January all the way through December. The year started with the leadership having a vision and that vision was to create positive sustainable change for our city. This has been focused and driven by our comprehensive plan which was reviewed in January and will again be reviewed early next year to ensure we stay on track and are listening to our citizens of Lawson as to their needs and desires for our city. Our top priorities for 2019 have not changed;

- ✓ Clean-up the city
- ✓ Build more affordable housing
- ✓ Bring in a grocery store
- ✓ Provide additional recreational opportunities for both youth and adults

All while building on our slogan, “Lawson where family values and pride is number one”

I want to also take a moment and remember all those that we lost in 2018 and let everyone know that our hearts and prayers go out to you all. One in particular that was very close to the City and a big supporter of City Hall was Charlie Leibold. “Charlie, we miss you”!

February

- Passed a very important ordinance #10-91 authorizing the purchase of water and sewer assets by Missouri American Water. This was a big move and an opportunity for the city to bring in professionals to take over and run our overwhelmed works department in an area where we did not always have the expertise or equipment to deal with our ever challenging water and sewer issues.
- Developed a plan and a team led by Robert Smith to address vacant and nuisance properties inside the city limits of Lawson. This also is part of our

number one goal to clean up the city. This is ongoing but we will be diligent in our efforts.

- The community center began and upgrade and clean-up to include fresh paint, new fixtures, and lots of pictures led by Shirley Nolker and Steve Sellers. Relentless in their pursuit, it is like a museum inside the community center. We have also added a large flat panel television to show presentations and videos on for city council meetings. More to come in 2019.
- The alderman approved the purchase of 5 acres on the east side of 69 highway next to the Lawson Animal Clinic for commercial development.

March

- The parks & recreation group teamed up with my wife Jacque and I out at the city lake for the annual Easter Egg Hunt. Besides hunting for Easter, we gave away Easter egg baskets and prizes by age group for those who found the most eggs. What a treat that day was to see so many families and young people enjoying the Easter egg hunt out by the city lake.
- The city council approved VF Anderson Builders, LLC for the storm water project at 6th street and Mabel. This was part of the approved bond funding projects from 2016.

April

- April 3rd election results for two year terms;
 - Mayor – Greg Taylor
 - Alderman Ward 1 – Matt Nolker
 - Alderman Ward 2 – Jack Woodring
- Lawson hosted the 1st annual “The Clash” between Excelsior Springs and Lawson with a host of events and games with the overall winner taking the trophy back to their city. This effort and events were chaired by Rick Thomas and Stan Petty who did a wonderful job in putting this event together that had events such as pickle ball, golf, washer’s, free throw contest, and many more. Lawson won the final event to give us the edge for the first year. Great job to all those who participated. Let’s keep the trophy in Lawson again next year and we may even invite another town or two to compete in this coming year’s event.
- Reagan Weber was recognized by the city council for her community service award “Prudential Spirit of Community Service”
- Improvements out at the city lake were in full swing with additions to the RV Park and Disc Golf course being feverously worked on.

- The council approved the purchase of a generator to power both the City Hall and Police department in times where there are power outages of which we all know we get during turbulent times of the year.

May

- The annual Lawson Picnic was held on May 24th – 26th
- CVP Productions was in town to film a video for the use of promoting Lawson during and after the Lawson picnic.
- The city annexed in 111.7 acres occupied by the Lawson city lake shelters and parking areas.
- City Council approved the 2018 and 2019 asphalt and street projects budgeted funding coming from the approved 2016 bond funds.

June

- Matt Nolker resigns from the board of alderman and joins the team at city hall in the role as Assistant City Administrator.
- The storm water project at 6th and Mabel was completed ahead of schedule
- Annual operation budget for 2018 – 2019 was approved
- Jack Woodring, Rick Thomas, and Matt Nolker met with the Ray County Commissioners to discuss replacing the N Raum bridge that goes over the railroad tracks and out to the city lake. This project will be a must in 2019 in order to successfully continue to develop the city lake projects and bring families and guests out to enjoy this outstanding asset that we have in Lawson.
- The city council approved the purchase of 65 acres on the west side of 69 highway at the corner of MM and 69 highway for commercial development.

July

- Patriotic Celebration at Hidden Valley Golf Course
- Donnie Shook sworn in as Alderman Ward 1 for the balance of the current two year term left by Matt Nolker.
- Samantha Ayers was sworn in as a new officer to the Lawson Police Department.
- Bank of Liberty purchased Lawson Bank
- Interim Police Chief, Bruce Summa, was officially appointed Chief of Police

August

- Board discusses plans for a Splash Park to be built in 2019 at either the city park or next to the city pool.

- CVP Productions completes their filming and Lawson has an official video showcasing our wonderful city which can be found on the Lawson City Hall Website.
- City of Lawson and the Chamber of Commerce hosted the 5th annual legislative session/luncheon. This was attended by local and state wide officials such as US Congressman Cleaver.
- The city officially closed on the sale of our water and sewer assets to Missouri American Water.

September

- Sidewalk project, funded by the TAPP Grant, was completed on the north side of D Hwy between Shephard and Pennsylvania.
- A new community center - maintenance building began construction at the city lake.
- The RV Park has the first phase of several pads that have been poured, picnic tables are up, and water, sewer, wifi, and electricity have been ran. A new shower house is under construction to support Phase 1 of our RV Park that will be up and operational in 2019.
- Shannon Glenn promoted to Sergeant of the Lawson Police Department
- Officer Bink was promoted to detective.
- The Assistant City Administrator, Matt Nolker, announced the development of the newly formed 501-C3 corporation to boost opportunities for available funding for Non Profits.
- On 9/11/18 the city and our new partners from Missouri American Water held a town hall meeting open to the public to ask questions regarding the recent purchase by Missouri American Water of Lawson's Water and Sewer assets.

October

- Chamber of Commerce hosted the annual Lawson Chamber of Horrors haunted house in partnership with the VFW who was very gracious to allow the Chamber to use their facility while the VFW provided hot dogs, sodas, and goodies for sale. This was a wonderful event and the Chamber made enough money to support four scholarships for our local students. Thank you to the Chamber of Commerce and following friends who participated in spooking guest; Todd Akey, Lance Berry, Chris Bolinger, Maryanne Bolinger, Heather Busby, Jillian Busby, Dea Craye, John Defries, Harris Family, Anna Harrold, Amy Kanning, Michael Lam, John & Lisa McEntire, Donnie Meyers, Jason and Laura Montone, Rhonda Oulman, Kaylee Payne, Kristy Payne, Claudine Penney, Kira Phipps, Dawn & Roy Pointer, Suzanne Porth Cotton, Mark &

Melissa Porth, Gabriel Schake, Roxann Shook, Darlene Staats, Cristen & Tanner Stark, Dale Stark, Sammie Trawick, Jacque Taylor, and Kathy Welch-Scott, Mesa Welch, Donna Welch, & Jarred Welch. Special thanks to ABS Technologies (Jim & Darlene Staats) for allowing their employees to help Dale put us wall during work time and Peter Oulman, Jim Staats, Rathel Berry, Don Shook and John Craye for cleanup and taking items to storage.

- High speed internet finally arrived in Lawson through Demand Communications (DemandComm.Com).
- Construction was completed on the new police department parking garage.
- Solar panels were installed on the newly built police department parking garage and are up and operational to supply the electricity needs for both the police department and city hall. This will basically supply free electricity for these two buildings in the future.
- The annual city-wide clean-up project was met with limited success in October due to unfriendly weather. However, the city in partnership with Redgate Trash Service, are committed to continuing this service annually to help keep our city clean.
- The city partnering with the Lawson High School student council are researching options to continue the recycling program that was previously provide through Redgate. More to come in Q1, 2019.
- The city council passed a resolution approving Lawson's Economic Development Incentives Policy and Procedures to further attract development in Lawson, both commercial and residential.

November

- Phase II of the sidewalk trail in Lawson was presented via the Tapp Grant Committee by Matt Nolker and our superintendent of schools, Roger Schmitz. They along with several council members successfully presented and we were awarded a Tapp Grant with a 80/20 funding over \$200,000.
- Lawson's rental occupancy codes were updated and amended.
- The city of Lawson entered into an agreement with the Lawson Swim Club, Inc. to purchase the pool. We have already begun work out at the pool and the citizens of Lawson will see significant improvements to the pool, shower house, and concessions in 2019. I want to give a big thank you to those that owned and ran this for so many years. This is yet another asset that we have in Lawson that I do not want to lose.

December

- Mark Bales has resigned as Alderman and the city will be appointing a new member for the interim of Mark's term in December. I want to personally thank Mark for all of his wisdom and support during his term. He is a great asset to the council. Secondly, I am excited to announce that Mark Bales has joined the City of Lawson effective January 1st in a newly created role as Parks & Recreation Director.
- The Chamber of Commerce along with the following guest; our Masons, the Mayor, and other local celebrities such as Miss Ray County, Rebecca Pope, Kylah Newcomer representing Elsa from the movie Frozen, the Grinch played by Todd Akey, and Frosty the Snowman played by Don Shook, Lawson High School Winter sports athletes, cheerleader's and choir all celebrated the annual Lawson lighting ceremony. It was a wonderful evening, though a little cold. I want to personally thank all of you for attending and supporting our lighting ceremony.
- CVP Productions completed our recent homecoming video which can be found on the city's website.
- Matt Nolker and I have recently met with and will be finalizing an agreement with National Realty Advisors to seek out and bring development to the property that the city has purchased such as a grocery store, retail and commercial opportunities as well as residential. This group is very well accredited and has the resources, knowledge, and expertise to take us into the future. More to come in 2019. Be looking for updates regarding the grocery store.

In closing it has been a very eventful year but a very productive year. The groundwork has been laid by so many of you in Lawson, especially the city staff led by our fearless leader Steve Sellers who never seems to understand the words "slow down". When I see the energizer bunny commercial, I think of Steve. He keeps going and going and going. I can't thank him, the city staff, and parks and recreation group enough for all of the tireless hours they all put in to make Lawson a better place. And yes, we are in a better place today because of all you. I appreciate and love all of you for all that you do to make Lawson a place we all call home.

Upcoming Important Dates:

- December 18 26th – 6:30 PM City Council Meeting @ City Hall

Your Mayor,

Greg Taylor