



Sharing

City of Sparks

DECEMBER 2010

Meet Councilman Ed Lawson

Inside this issue:

<i>Sewer Rates Increase</i>	2
<i>City reports track progress</i>	3
<i>Sparks Centennial Channel 215</i>	4



Ed Lawson was elected to the City Council in November, 2010. He was born in Sunnyside, WA, and grew up in Las Vegas, NV. He attended Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CO. Today, Mr. Lawson works for Young Electric Sign Company (YESCO) as an Account Executive. During his time with YESCO, he has held positions in sales and management and served on the organization's government relations committee. Councilman Lawson is active in the Sparks Rotary Club and is an active member volunteering his time to the community. He plays a significant leadership role with the annual Kid's Free Fishing Day which attracts more than 3,000 kids and their families at the Sparks Marina.

Mr. Lawson and his wife Dianne have two sons who currently attend the University of Nevada, Reno.

Sparks City Council

Mayor

Geno Martini

Ward One

Julia Ratti

Ward Two

Ed Lawson

Ward Three

Ron Smith

Ward Four

Mike Carrigan

Ward Five

Ron Schmitt

City Attorney

Chet Adams

Municipal Judges

Judge Barbara McCarthy

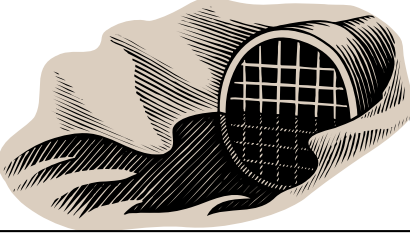
Judge Jim Spoo



Ed Lawson & Mike Carrigan are sworn in by Judge McCarthy on November 8, 2010.



City of Sparks Sewer Rate Increase Goes into effect January 1, 2011



On January 1, 2011, City of Sparks residents will see a \$3.72 increase in their sewer bills to help cover the increasing costs related to sewer and storm drain systems.

The new rate will be \$84.81 per residential unit per quarter, up from \$81.10 per residential unit per quarter in 2010. This is part of the rate increase approved by the Sparks City Council on February 25, 2008 and implemented April 1, 2008. This rate increase is the fourth will be followed

by a final rate increase in 2012. The rate increase was phased in over a five-year period to minimize the impact on ratepayers.

“The increase will fund capital projects that will replace old pipes and prolong the lifespan of the city’s sewer and storm drain systems,” City of Sparks Utility Manager Joann Meacham said.

More than 50 percent of the city’s sewer and storm pipelines are at least 30 years old, and 26 miles of pipe are more than 100 years old.

The life expectancy of a sewer/drain system is 50 years. The City’s goal is to rebuild two percent of the system per year, which is a proactive approach in maintaining and replacing pipes before they fail.

Sewer fees also fund the operation and maintenance of the sewer plant, Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility, which is used by both Sparks and Reno residents.

The facility was constructed 40 years ago, and a significant amount of the funds used to build this plant came from the federal government. The city received no federal funds to assist with the recent rehabilitation of portions of the TMWRF facility.

The City has worked hard to keep any rate increase minimal. Even with this increase and with the river flood component which will help prevent flooding the City, rates in Sparks are still at least 5 percent per month lower than the rates in the City of Reno or unincorporated Washoe County.

Rake, Bag Leaves to Prevent Clogging Drain System

The bright yellow and red leaves of fall are the colorful flags of a new season. Eventually, these leaves drop to the ground as cold weather creeps closer, and folks begin to reach for their rakes. Bagging and removing dead leaves is crucial when it comes to preventing floods and other hazards.

“When you find your leaves around the lawn and covering everything up, it’s time to get them picked up so they don’t go into the drain systems,” said Dan Hamlin, maintenance operations manager for the City of Sparks.

According to Hamlin, when leaves are allowed to pile up and drift, inevitably they make their way into grates and storm drains throughout Sparks, where they can create blockages that hold up even bigger debris.

“It’s important to rake, bag and remove dead leaves, so when it rains our streets and intersections won’t flood,” Hamlin said. Sparks residents are advised to bag dead leaves to be picked up on trash day, or to take the yard waste to a composting center or local landfill, such as Lockwood Regional Landfill in Sparks.

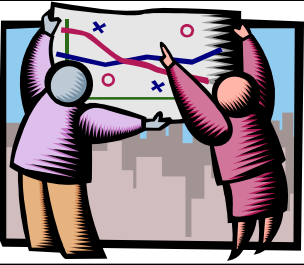
“Please don’t put loose leaves out in the street, because if the wind gets hold of them, they’ll go right into the drains,” Hamlin said. “Bag them and dispose of them properly.”

After you enjoy the changing colors of fall leaves, be a responsible Sparks resident, and clean up the dead leaves. By keeping them out of storm grates and drains, you can help keep the streets of Sparks free from flooding and other unsafe scenarios.

On top of this key benefit, getting out in the yard to rake leaves is a wonderful way to combine fresh air and exercise this fall, and it also should improve the appearance of your yard.



Two reports track the City of Sparks' Progress



In recent months, two documents have been released that help highlight and clarify goals, challenges and accomplishments within the City of Sparks. The first is the Fiscal Year 2009/2010 Annual Report, and the second is the Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011 to 2016.

"The strategic plan provides guidance to the city manager and staff for the future direction of the city," said Teresa Gardner, senior administrative analyst for the City of Sparks, who served as project manager on both documents. "The annual report summarizes the accomplishments and challenges of the city during the fiscal year."

According to Gardner, the annual fiscal report revealed the significant challenges Sparks has faced in terms of economic decline and employee reductions. However, it also showed the city's commitment to providing efficient and responsive service to residents, businesses and visitors.

As for the Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011 to 2016, Gardner said it gives detailed direction for prioritizing the services provided by the city and supporting Sparks' vision and goals for the future. The Sparks City Council worked on compiling this five-year fiscal plan during a July retreat.

"The strategic plan emphasizes the city's commitment to achieve financial stability and have a successful and effective work environment," she said. "Building on those two core goals, the city will promote the safety of our residents, businesses and visitors; explore and promote opportunities for economic development and special events; manage resources to keep pace with technology, infrastructure and sustainability needs; and encourage citizens to interact with their city government and build strong alliances with other government entities."

Both the Fiscal Year 2009/2010 Annual Report and the Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011 to 2016 can be found at the City of Sparks website, www.cityofsparks.us.



Residents throughout Sparks and the Truckee Meadows can participate in the City's fourth annual "Can the Mayor" food drive to benefit the Food Bank of Northern Nevada by donating canned goods and other non-perishable food items for those who are less fortunate this holiday season.

"In the spirit of giving, the City of Sparks has partnered with the Food Bank of Northern Nevada to help those who are in need this holiday season," said Mayor Geno Martini. "This is a wonderful opportunity for our community to make a difference in the lives of so many of our citizens right here at home, particularly during this tough economic time," he said. "I encourage getting canned!"

Items can be dropped off Monday through Friday at Sparks City Hall through December 10, (431 Prater Way) during normal business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

PLEASE CAN THE MAYOR!

Stay informed with Sparks Centennial Channel 215



Sparks citizens are encouraged to stay on top of community issues, events and programs, and there are two easy ways to ensure you have all the latest information. Check out Sparks Centennial Channel 215, available through Charter Communications cable television, or go online to watch the same programs any time on your computer.

"Sparks Centennial Channel 215 is another way for us to reach out to our residents so they can be aware of what's happening," said Adam Mayberry, Sparks Community Relations Manager. "It helps the city provide the public information necessary to create a transparent government, keeping all the issues out in the open."

Coming soon, residents can find past and current city council meetings and the Planning Commission Meeting in the archive section of SCTV 215.

For example, Sparks Centennial Channel 215 broadcasts each meeting of the Sparks City Council, so those folks who are interested but unable to attend still can stay informed.

"The mayor and city council members count on this channel as another avenue for relaying important information to the public," Mayberry said.

In addition to Sparks City Council meetings, Sparks Centennial Channel 215 features other programming as well, such as "Spotlight on Sparks," a news magazine program that airs in a fun and fast-paced format. Hosted by Mayberry, the program shines a spotlight on the people, places and events that make Sparks a stand-out community. Past episodes have focused on the Sparks Hometowne Farmer's Market, the Whitewater Park at Rock Park, the Legends at Sparks Marina and much more.

By turning on Sparks Centennial Channel 215, residents also can catch the Community Bulletin Board feature, which airs upcoming events, programs and activities slated to take place throughout the City of Sparks.

For those Sparks citizens who subscribe to Charter Communications cable TV, simply turn on channel 215 and get the latest look at what's happening in your community. For the online version of the Sparks Centennial Channel, go to www.cityofsparks.us and click on "SCTV."



City of
Sparks
Happy
Holidays

A small, simple illustration of a snowman wearing a green hat and scarf, positioned at the bottom left of the holiday text.