



The City Connection

Quarterly Newsletter

January, February, March 2020

Mayor's Message



City Council Officials

Mayor, Carol Benson

Councilmembers:

Tamie Deady

Melissa Oglesbee

Vacant

Erin Stout

Kristiana de Leon

Patrick Nelson

Steven Paige

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City Offices will be closed on the following days:

1/1 ~ New Year's Day

1/20 ~ Martin Luther King Jr. Day

2/17 ~ Presidents' Day

2019 is a wrap and it's time to welcome 2020! For many of us, January seems to be that time when we reassess our busy lives and think about what we want to accomplish or do to balance our lives during the next year. With that in mind, that is exactly what the City Council, myself and staff will be doing for the City as we start 2020.

As we move out of 2019 and into 2020, I want to take this opportunity to share with you the following highlights from last year and share some new information that will be happening in 2020.

Mayor's Proposed 2020 Preliminary Budget – On December 5th the City Council unanimously passed the 2020 proposed budget. This budget reflects our priorities for achieving our desired vision for the future of Black Diamond and I'm proud the city has maintained a level of service which makes Black Diamond a better place to live, work, play and do business. To view the complete document please visit the City's website and click on the Finance page.

Shop with a Cop – Saturday, December 14th, I had the honor to attend the annual "Shop with a Cop" at the Covington Walmart. I joined Black Diamond officers and officers from Seattle, Maple Valley, King County Sheriff and many other jurisdictions in shopping with approximately 300 kids. This number is down from previous years due to the focus of having more meaningful time between the kids and officers. The event is funded and sponsored by the Maple Valley Rotary who provided \$75 tax free for each of the kids participating. Also, in attendance were the "Soup Ladies" who provided breakfast for the many volunteers and kids in attendance.

Welcome Aboard New Councilmember– With the recent election we welcome Kristiana de Leon to position #5. I look forward to working with her and all the Councilmembers to move the City forward in 2020.



Council Vacancy Recruitment - As some of you may have heard the resident elected to Council position #3 resigned and the City is recruiting for that position. Residents interested in applying for this Council position must have resided in the City of Black Diamond for at least one year prior to Council appointment and must be registered to vote. Applications are due to the City Clerk by 4:00 p.m. on January 24, 2020. To download the application packet please visit the City's website www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us and click "Public Notices" on the homepage.

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Hometown Christmas – I also had the honor of making opening remarks at this year's annual Hometown Christmas event. During my remarks I shared being a resident of 40 years and told how this community was formed by immigrants from many countries who learned to live together and respect each other. This event is put on by a large group of resident volunteers who want historic Black Diamond residents, new residents, and visitors to feel welcome in Black Diamond to celebrate the Christmas season. The real meaning of the event is to encourage children to experience the feeling of a real Christmas spirit and knowing that celebrating with families, friends as well as strangers is the real beauty of Christmas. Please know this is a free event for all ages and if you haven't had a chance to join in on the festivities, I encourage you to mark your calendar for next year – you won't be disappointed.

Town Hall Meeting – On March 12, 2020 the City will be holding a Town Hall meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Town Hall meetings are held twice a year on the second Thursdays in the months of March and October. I encourage you to come and talk with your Councilmembers on any concern, issue, or questions you may have.

Welcome New City Staff – I am pleased to introduce new staff members to the City. Darla Clifton, Senior Accountant, Elaina Cote, Police Clerk, and Jill Peterson, Administrative Assistant II. Please join me in welcoming them to our City.



New City Website Coming in 2020 – The City has a tremendous opportunity to increase public information through a new city website and both the IS Manager and City Clerk will be busy working with the vendor on the new design. Websites continue to be a powerful tool to get information out to the public and assist them in paying a bill online, applying for permits, and gaining easy access to other City services. The new website will be vibrant and colorful with improved site navigation, offering easy access to the City information most requested by residents and the public. The new design will also be responsive for mobile and tablet users. Look for the launch of the new website in 2020!

In closing, I continue to be impressed by the hard work and expertise of all staff and the support of Council and our citizens. I urge you to continue to be involved in this wonderful community and should you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me, Councilmembers, or city staff.

Warm regards,

Mayor Carol Benson



Hometown Christmas



Shop with a Cop



Eastside Mayor's Meeting

From the Community Development Department

Comprehensive Plans and land use controls are the heart and soul of planning and community development. Comprehensive Plans are all about the City's policies for land use and development. I like the Merriam-Webster definition that policies represent the "prudence or wisdom in the management of affairs". Comprehensive Plan policies serve as the City's guide for planning community development decisions.



In May, the City Council adopted a major overhaul to the City's Comprehensive Plan. Even though this update was required by the State of Washington under the Growth Management Act, the City embraced an opportunity to adopt goals and policies to better protect the character of the community, its natural environment and promote sensible growth patterns and economic development. These are expressed throughout the Plan in the vision statement, guiding principles, and goals.

The vision, guiding principles, goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan are described by words and a map, called the Future Land Use Map. This map is intended to show a generalized view of how land in the City is intended to be used. It does not necessarily show land use as it exists today, and it does not show zoning information. The updated Comprehensive Plan did make changes to the Future Land Use Map, which were discussed in public meetings during the adoption process.

If you would like more information about them please contact the Community Development Department. The Comprehensive Plan is posted on the City's website at the bottom of the Planning page. <http://www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us/Depts/CommDev/planning.html>

Land use controls are development ordinances which become regulations in the Black Diamond Municipal Code. They include zoning, subdividing land, design and dimensional standards for constructing buildings, and the protection of the City's natural environment. Zoning is shown on an official zoning map.

In October, the Planning Commission held a hearing to recommend changes to the City's zoning map. This hearing was very well attended with many people expressing concern about what were perceived as "up zones". An up zone is when the zoning is changed to allow for a more intensive use. While the proposed zoning change would have allowed for an increase in the number of homes in certain areas, other areas contemplated changing the zoning from business/industrial park to commercial.

The takeaway from this October meeting was to slow down, provide more analysis and have more discussion before recommending City Council make any changes to the zoning map. Please call the Community Development Department at (360)851-4447 to sign up and receive emails for upcoming Planning Commission meetings.



The Black Diamond Police Department participates annually in the 'Shop with a Cop' program, a collaborative effort between the staff of our local Covington Wal-Mart, police agencies from around the State, and the generous citizens and businesses from our area. The program is designed to provide children in need in our community with the opportunity to purchase gifts for themselves and their family during the holiday season.

It also provides these children the opportunity to spend quality time with police officers 'up close and personal' in a positive and non-confrontational environment.



2020 Utility Lifeline Rate Discount Program-Changes Coming

On December 5, 2019 Council adopted Ordinance 19-1133 that included changes to city policy to treat all residential customers the same, regardless of whether they lived in a single-family home, manufactured home, mobile home, apartment, duplex or ADU. This change will allow all residential type customers to be billed similarly and also allow, for the first-time, residents of multi-family type buildings to apply for the city Utility Lifeline

Discount Program. This program has been in place for single family residence for many years, and we are excited to extend this to other Senior (62+) low income residents or low-income disabled residents and/or offer a water discount to low income residents on home dialysis. Applications for multifamily residents will be available at City Hall on January 15, 2020. Watch the City's website for more details about the program in January.

Revised applications will be ready at City Hall on January 15, 2020 for the newly allowed multi-family residents. A multi-family resident is required to have a residential verification form signed by the owner of the apartment, duplex, mobile home or other unit that the owner verifies that the resident lives at the apartment or mobile home and that the owner verifies that they will pass the discount amount, once approved and received, on to the qualifying applicant. A second form will also need to be completed verifying that the resident is 62+ years old, and that they qualify with the official HUD total low-income guidelines for themselves, spouse, and any one else living there, and that they do not have a savings account over \$15,000. Verifications need to be supported by various documents. Disabled low income residents also need to verify their disability and qualify under the same HUD low income guidelines. A utility water 50% discount is also available to a multifamily residence who require in home kidney dialysis with a doctor verification.

Once approved the city utility discount of 50% for each applicant will be applied to the owner of the apartment, duplex, or mobile home residence who pays the city utility bill and then that owner will credit the resident on the following month.

The original single-family Lifeline Utility Discount Program has not changed, and applications are available at City Hall. HUD income guidelines are updated each May and will be posted annually with the applications.

2020 Utility Rate Increase

City of Black Diamond utility customers will see two rate increases effective January 1, 2020. These rate increases will be reflected on the January utility bills that are mailed out at the end of January 2020 with payment due in February 2020.

RATE TYPE	DESCRIPTION	2019	2020	2020 Inc	Ordinance	Percentage
City Sewer	RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL *	\$21.78	\$25.00	\$3.22	19-1328	15.0%
Stormwater	Per ERU (Equiv. Residential Unit)	\$19.00	\$19.50	\$0.50	18-1113	2.70%
	Monthly amount	\$40.78	\$44.50	\$3.72		9.12%
	* Commercial add \$11.50 per unit		Increase of 12 cents a day			

City Sewer Rate Increase

City Council approved Resolution 19-1328 at their December 19, 2019 Council meeting.

The city sewer rates have not been increased since 2015 and the rate analysis provided by Ashley Emery of Peninsula Financial Consulting documented the need of increase of rates to continue to pay for sewer operation and maintenance of city pump stations, lines, cleaning and repairs. The rates for all city sewer customers will increase \$3.22 a month from \$21.78 to \$25.00 a month. Commercial customers with one meter and several units will see the unit charge increase from \$10.00 per unit to \$11.50 per unit.

Stormwater Rate Increase

Customers who receive stormwater charges on their utility bill from the City of Black Diamond will see a 50 cent a month per ERU (Equivalent Residential Unit) increase from \$19.00 per month to \$19.50 per month effective with the January 2020 utility bill mailed out at the end of January 2020. This is an inflationary increase approved by Council with Ordinance 18-1113. Most residential customers however do not receive stormwater charges on their utility bills from the City of Black Diamond, as those charges are billed by King County through their property tax billing system for the city. The 50 cent a month rate increase will be reflected on customers property tax statement as 'surface water charges' each year. An inflationary increase is necessary each year to help pay the costs of keeping our lakes and streams pollutant free per the required State stormwater permit.

Black Diamond offers a Lifeline Utility Discount program for low income seniors 62+ residents and for low income permanently disabled customers. After approval, residents can receive a 50% discount of city billed utilities. For changes to the city Lifeline Utility Discount Program, please see the Lifeline Changes article above.

Public Works Receives Grants

The City's Public Works Department was successful in securing three grants totaling \$601,702 for projects around the City. Two grants, totaling \$243,185 are from the State Transportation Improvement Board (TIB, funded through the fuel tax) for roadway repairs in the City. The other grant, \$358,517 is a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from King County for a water main replacement.

The first TIB road project is \$140,101 for an asphalt overlay of 232nd Ave. SE between SE 288th St. and SE 293rd Pl., as well as an asphalt overlay on SE 312th St. between 224th Ave. SE and the end of the road (at Lake Sawyer Regional Park). The work on these two roads will be combined as one project. Design work will begin in January with construction anticipated this summer.

The other TIB road project is \$103,084 for a chip seal on Lawson St. between Newcastle Dr. and the east City limits. Chip seals utilize rock and sealants to extend the life of a roadway. The City completed a chip seal on 224th Ave. SE between SE 312th St. and SE 296th Street a couple of years ago. The City recently patched some portions of this roadway in preparation of this project. Design work will begin in January with construction anticipated this summer.

The King County CDBG funds of \$358,517 are for the Morganville South Water Main Replacement project. This project will replace existing asbestos concrete water main with ductile iron water main on Morgan Dr. and Union Dr. between Roberts Dr. and Buena Vista Dr. This project will add a fire hydrant on Union Dr., increase fire flows and water pressure, and will include an asphalt overlay of these roads, including Alpine Dr. We expect to have a grant agreement with King County this summer, with design engineering work to begin shortly thereafter. Construction is anticipated to begin in the Spring of 2021.



Administration

Mayor Carol Benson

City Clerk/HR Manager

Brenda L. Martinez, MMC

Community Development

Barbara Kincaid

MDRT/Economic Development

Andrew Williamson

Public Works

Seth Boettcher

Finance

Mayene Miller

Police

Chief Jamey Kiblinger



RECENTLY ADOPTED ORDINANCES

- 19-1128 - Amending the 2019 Salary Schedule to Add an Administrative Assistant II
- 19-1129 - Amending Black Diamond Municipal Code Section 1.20.010 Regarding Designation of Official City Newspaper
- 19-1130 - Regarding the City's Lifeline Program
- 19-1131 - Adopting Percentage Increase in 2020 Property Tax
- 19-1132 - Adopting Total Property Tax Dollars for 2020 Budget
- 19-1133 - Regarding Utility Rate Structure Policy
- 19-1134 - Adopting 2020 Operating Budget

CITY OF BLACK DIAMOND CONTACTS

CITY HALL (Administration, Public Works, Community Development and MDRT/Economic Development)

Physical Address.....24301 Roberts Drive
Mailing Address.....P.O. Box 599

Phone Numbers:

Main Line.....360-851-4500
Community Development.....360-851-4447
MDRT/Economic Development.....360-851-4448
Public Works.....360-851-4446

(Call the main line for any Public Works emergencies and use prompts)

Fax Number (for all departments listed above).....360-851-4501

MUNICIPAL COURT :

Physical Address.....25510 Lawson Street
Mailing AddressP.O. Box 599

Phone Number360-851-4490

Fax Number360-851-4491

POLICE DEPARTMENT :

Physical Address.....25510 Lawson Street
Mailing Address P.O. Box 309

Phone Numbers (non-emergencies)360-851-4450

(EMERGENCIES)911

Fax Number360-851-4451

FIRE DEPARTMENTPhone Number (non-emergencies)253-735-0284
(EMERGENCIES)911

Council/Commission/Committee Meetings

Monthly meetings for City Council are held the first and third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Work Sessions are held the second Thursday of each month starting at 6 p.m. Planning Commission meetings are held on the first Tuesday after the first Council meeting at 6 p.m. of each month. Please contact the Clerk's office for more information 360-851-4564 or check the City Clerks webpage at: www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us/Depts/Clerk

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- * January 6th @ 7 p.m. (Re-scheduled meeting from January 2nd)
- * January 9th @ 6 p.m. (Work Session)
- * January 16th @ 7 p.m. (Regular Meeting)
- * February 6th @ 7 p.m. (Regular Meeting)
- * February 13th @ 6p.m. (Work Session)
- * February 20th @ 7 p.m. (Regular Meeting)
- * March 5th @ 7 p.m. (Regular Meeting)
- * March 12th @ 6 p.m. (Work Session)
- * March 12th @ 7 p.m. (Town Hall Meeting)
- * March 19th @ 7 p.m. (Regular Meeting)

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

- * January 7th @ 6 p.m.
- * February 11th @ 6 p.m.
- * March 10th @ 6 p.m.

Meetings are held in the Council Chambers located at 25510 Lawson Street unless otherwise specified.

If you'd like to be added to the Council Agenda or Planning Commission Agenda Distribution List, please email your request to info@blackdiamondwa.gov.



COMMUNITY CONTACTS

- * **Community Center**
360-886-1011
(Mon. thru Fri. 8-4)
- * **Post Office**
360-886-9429
(Mon. thru Fri. 9-5)
- * **Museum/Historical Society**
360-886-2142
(Thurs. 9-4, Sat and Sun 12-3)
- * **Library**
360-886-1105
(Mon. thru Thurs. 10-9 and Sat. 10-5)