



## *Around Town*

*November, 2015*

### *From the Mayor's Desk*

I hope you enjoyed the recent Steilacoom Historical Museum Association (SHMA) "2015 Apple Squeeze". It was a great family day about apples and Town history under very bright sunshine. If you are not a member of SHMA, please consider becoming a member! Applications and a list of upcoming events are available on their website at [steilacoomhistorical.org](http://steilacoomhistorical.org).

This month I am writing about two important issues. The **first** is about understanding the Town building code and the homeowner's or business owner's responsibility for obtaining a Town permit for remodeling, roofing, residing, or other construction work. Recently the Town "red tagged" or stopped several projects because the owner or contractor failed to obtain the required permit or the work failed to follow the Town's building codes. It is not unusual for me to hear from residents that the installation of windows,

decks, house siding, electrical work, or room additions are or have been done incorrectly. Mainly this occurs because homeowners hired someone without a Town business license to do the work, without a building permit or approved plans.

The purpose of a Town building code and required building application process is to protect you, the homeowner. The process ensures that the contractor can perform to your desire and the work is completed to the International Building Code (IBC) standard. It also protects the next home owner or business owner or you as a new homeowner ensuring that the house meets the IBC approved code. A myth is that the Town just wants to collect building fees....it is not about collecting fees by the Town ....it's about protecting you and the structure quality. In fact, the fees charged rarely if ever cover the full cost of maintaining the Planning/Building Department.

The best way for residents to improve your home is to start by reviewing the Town building code on line or call and visit our Town building inspector with a potential contractor **PRIOR** to beginning work. This will

protect you and better ensure you receive the quality and safe improvement you desire.

The **second item** is my upcoming recommendations to Council about utility rate increases.

**At the November 3 Council meeting starting at 6:30 PM at Town Hall during the Council meeting, utility rate changes for the electric, water, sewer, and storm drain utilities will be discussed.** *Before you read on.... please turn to the last page and review the Utility Rate Recap history. The chart reflects an "average" Steilacoom home utility rate we use for analysis. Your home/bill may differ based on usage, number in your family, etc.*

I ask you to view the comment notes for past utility decisions and the detail for any rate increase. Years 1999-2000 to 2015 are the best period for review. In the late 1990's, we completed a utility "Cost of Service Analysis" (COSA) to provide information for the best decisions for future expected income, anticipated expenses, and funds for needed improvements for the water and sewer utility system. Additionally, we routinely complete 6-Year Plans for each of the utilities.

This will be my 2016 rate proposal per each utility:

- **Electric**—BPA just imposed a 6% rate charge as of October, 2015, and I am recommending it be passed on. In past years, we didn't pass on BPA increases. In 2005, the Council also correctly approved a decrease in rates by eliminating the seasonal demand charge.
- **Water** --3% increase. In past years, water rate increases have not been needed.
- **Sewer** -- 3% increase. The Pierce County Sewer Utility approved rate increase of 3.3% to be passed on.
- **Storm** -- 3% increase to meet work necessary under the federal NPDS requirements.

I also recommended a 1% property tax increase in the general levy.

Lastly, I will recommend the Council approve the result of the August 2015 voter approved six-year EMS \$.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value be forwarded for collection beginning in 2016. This action continues the current EMS levy.

The Council and I will continue our long standing fiscal goal to "live within our financial means" while implementing the Comprehensive Plan project lists in utilities and roads in a reasonable manner to ensure reliable utilities and a work plan which pays with cash... not by loans/bonds/or debt. Our Town remains debt free!

*Ron Lucas, Mayor*

### **COUNCIL ACTION**

Minutes to the Town Council meetings once approved are on the Town's website at: [townofsteilacoom.org](http://townofsteilacoom.org) and located under:

Town Offices  
Town Council

### **ACTIVITY UPDATES**

The weekly Activity Updates are published at [www.thesubtimes.com](http://www.thesubtimes.com)

### **SCOUTING FOR FOOD**

Boy Scout Troop 71 will be in your neighborhood collecting non-perishable food items on Saturday, November 7th, beginning at 9 am. Please have your donation visible from the street for pickup and delivery to the We Love Steilacoom Food Pantry located at Oberlin Church. Bags will be delivered Oct 31st.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Kiwanis Winefest 2015.**  
**January 22nd at the**  
**McGavick Center.**

### **SCARECROW FEST**

Scarecrows have popped up around Town and the Steilacoom Garden Club is happy to announce the winners of the annual contest. Winners will be awarded a gift certificate from H&L Produce in Lakewood.

### **BEST COMMERCIAL:**

Fortis Spa on Lafayette Street.

### **BEST COMMUNITY ENTRY:**

Steilacoom Junior Explorers on Worthington Street.

### **BEST USE OF THEME:**

Scare "Crows" at 315 Champion Street.

### **MOST CREATIVE:**

Medusa and the Stone Crows at 1002 Rowell Street.

### **BEST USE OF PROPS:**

Horse and Mouse at Afternoon Tea Party 311 Martin Street.

Thank you to all participants who gave our Town a scary autumn feeling.

### **Steilacoom Featured on "Neighborhoods" Show**

The profile on Steilacoom is now online at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39wAkamUaPk&feature=youtu.be>

### ***Message from the Superintendent***

As teachers, we are continually looking for ways to incorporate critical thinking activities into our classroom communities. One exciting example is through our new partnership with two local school districts, Eatonville and Rochester. Together, we received an \$880,000 Math and Science Partnership Grant from the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. This three year grant provides for collaboration with the Boeing Company, Pacific Lutheran University, University of Washington Tacoma, Teacher Development Group, and the Association of Washington School Principals.

Our math and science teachers at Pioneer Middle School and Steilacoom High School have participated in professional learning activities, including a three-day summer institute and most recently, a studio classroom experience. These meaningful collaborations are supporting our teachers' instructional strategies to strengthen students' mathematical and science understanding.

Mathematics and science instruction is dramatically different than when I was in school. Now classrooms are

filled with students interacting with engaging tasks that promote reasoning and problem solving to make sense of the content.

Teachers are extremely excited about this type of instruction as we work to provide the best education for every student

***Kathi Weight,  
Superintendent***

### ***OBERLIN BAZAAR***

1603 Rainier Street  
Steilacoom, WA 98388  
Nov. 7 – 9 AM to 3 PM

The Oberlin Holiday bazaar will be held Saturday, November 7, 9 AM to 3 PM. Once again, they will be having the famous soup and sandwich luncheon available for all hungry shoppers.

Oberlin is proud to carry items that are 99% made in the USA!

Help support your local businesses, artisans, and craftspeople. You will find seasonal decorations, year-round items, many gift opportunities, and you may even find something for the "hard-to-buy-for" person on your list. Don't miss the hard to resit Bake Shop.. There will also be a silent auction and lovely Grand Prize Raffle basket, containing items from our vendors!

If you have any questions or if you are a vendor and would like to reserve a space, please call the Oberlin Church office at 584-4623.

### **Town of Steilacoom Contact Information townofsteilacoom.org**

#### **Mayor**

Ron Lucas.....588-6217  
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#### **Council Members**

Bruce Judson.....753-6527  
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Pete Franklin.....584-0808  
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#### **Town Administrator**

Paul Loveless.....581-1912  
[Paul.loveless@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:Paul.loveless@ci.steilacoom.wa.us)

**Public Works-Administration**  
1030 Roe Street.....581-1912  
Administration

Planning, Building, Permits  
Utility After Hours...620-4123

#### **Public Safety**

601 Main Street.....581-0110  
Emergency.....911  
Non-Emergency .....798-4721  
Animal Control .....830-5010

#### **Community Center**

2301 Worthington St. 581-1076  
Before and After School Prog.  
Meal Site  
Youth and Adult Classes  
Fitness/Exercise Classes

**Chamber of Commerce**  
SteilacoomChamber.org

***Red Ribbon Bazaar –  
December 5<sup>th</sup> at SHS***

**TOWN OF STEILACOOM  
UTILITY RATE RECAP  
JUNE 1993 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2015**

**SAMPLE CUSTOMER  
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENT LIVING IN TOWN  
UTILIZING 1,600 KWH OF ELECTRICITY AND 8 UNITS OF WATER**

	<b>ELECTRIC</b>	<b>WATER</b>	<b>SEWER</b>	<b>STORM</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
June-93	68.06	14.78	25.50	4.50	112.84	
December-93	73.58	14.78	25.50	4.50	118.36	
June-94	84.66	14.78	25.50	4.50	129.44	
February-95	84.66	16.48	26.90	7.00	135.04	
May-95	84.66	16.48	26.90	7.00	135.04	
December-95	86.47	16.48	26.90	7.00	136.85	
February-96	86.47	17.57	30.90	7.00	141.94	
August-97	86.47	20.40	31.47	7.00	145.34	
January-98	86.47	24.36	32.58	7.00	150.41	
January-99	86.47	24.36	32.58	7.00	150.41	
July-99	86.47	24.36	32.72	7.00	150.55	(F)
December-99	86.47	29.83	33.88	10.25	160.43	(E)
December-00	86.47	29.83	33.88	10.25	160.43	
September-01	108.87	29.83	33.88	10.25	182.83	(B)
December-02	108.87	29.83	33.88	10.25	182.83	
January-04	108.87	32.20	33.88	10.25	185.20	(I)
February-04	108.87	32.20	35.50	10.25	186.82	(J)
February-05	108.87	32.20	36.57	13.75	191.39	
November-05	101.55	32.20	36.57	13.75	184.07	(K)
February-06	101.55	32.20	37.21	13.75	184.71	(J)
February-07	101.55	32.20	37.67	13.75	185.17	(J)
February-08	101.55	32.20	38.99	13.75	186.49	(J)
February-09	101.55	32.20	39.77	13.75	187.27	(J)
February-11	101.55	32.20	42.16	14.58	190.49	(J)
February-12	101.55	32.20	44.69	14.58	193.02	(J)
February-13	101.55	32.20	46.48	14.58	194.81	(J)
February-14	101.55	32.20	47.55	14.58	195.88	(J)
February-15	101.55	32.20	48.50	16.00	198.25	(J)

(G)

**COMMENTS:**

- (B) Electric rate change due to BPA 42% increase.
- (E) Second phase of I-695 and COSA rate increases in water and sewer utilities. Storm Drain also increased.
- (F) First phase of COSA rate increases in water and sewer utilities. (8 units of water was the breakeven point between the old and new rate structure.)
- (G) Does NOT include the \$5.16 seasonal demand charge (Oct.-April (7 months)) formally eliminated by Council November, 2000 but per Council, also had not been imposed in 1999.
- (I) Restructuring of water rates increasing base charge and reducing volume charge.
- (J) Reflects pass-thru of increase in Pierce County Sewer charge to Town.
- (K) Reduction of electric utility rates.