



HSVPOA Public Services Director Addresses Board at Retreat

Description

The Hot Springs Village Public Services Division Updated the Board Directors at the 2021 Board Retreat on 5-12-21

Jason Temple, Director of Public Works, is a licensed and practicing professional engineer. Temple's eight-year anniversary will be this June (2021). Temple said, "this is one of the best jobs I've ever had. I have had more fun working here than anywhere else I worked in my entire career. I wake up every morning, looking forward to taking on all the challenges here and solving them."

Overall, Temple is responsible for 72 full-time employees and one half-time

Hot Springs Village has all the infrastructure of a typical city which includes, water, sewer, roads, culverts, etc.

Temple oversees the Public Services Department which consists of:

- Public Utilities
- Public Works
- Lakes

Public Utilities

The departments in Public Utilities include administration, the water treatment plant, and two wastewater treatment plants and sanitation.

The HSV Water Treatment Plant rivals that of one in any city of our size (14,000) in Arkansas. The plant processes 16 million gallons of water every day. The operators are licensed.

Sanitation

Another component of Jason's job is Village sanitation.

The Village is in the process of transitioning into a more labor-efficient sanitation program with side-loading garbage trucks. A survey will come out shortly as to what size can you prefer. If the POA does not hear back from you, you will be provided the largest container.

Temple says it has been a big struggle to keep our trash trucks staffed. In the past, staff from other departments have been pulled to man the trash trucks. This means that other departments don't accomplish other necessary tasks in as timely a manner.

There are other opportunities in the future to improve the solid waste management.

Public Works

Street Maintenance

The Village has over 500 miles of cleared right-of-ways and 380 miles of paved roads. Not all of them are active. We also have 30 plus miles of gravel roads where the right-of-ways must be kept clear. Keeping the right-of-ways clear is a challenge because we are in the middle of a national forest.

Temple says our geographical size is like that of a giant city, but with a small population.

Building Maintenance

The POA has over 160 buildings, from small to large. Temple is responsible for all components of the POA-owned buildings from air conditioners, paint, carpeting, lighting, air filters, etc. The Building Maintenance Department manages this.

Lakes Management

The Lakes Management Department cleans the lakes, manages the vegetation and fish population. Temple said, "we have highly educated staff."

Biggest Need

Temple said, "our biggest need in utilities is that we need more customers to help spread out the financial burden of maintaining that infrastructure as well as more residents that help fund the maintenance and operation of the other infrastructure components in our area. Just like golf, the weather affects utilities.

Public Services Budget

When it rains, people buy less water." This results in lower water and sewer revenues. In our budget,

we plan on losing revenue to weather conditions.

“The Public Services budget is around ten and a half million dollars in revenue,” stated Jason. Currently, expenses are eight and a half million dollars. Capital is three point two million.

“There is a need to increase the capital. We have difficulty coming up with funds to replace capital,” stated Temple.

“The Village has been around for 50 years and is an amazing place. A lot of the infrastructure is out of sight and out of mind. Some needs to be replaced,” explained Temple. “All of the water and wastewater treatment plant components are running, but over half of the components need to be replaced...motors, pumps. And that is no cheap ticket. And somebody has to pay for it. So the more people we have, the more we can spread that financial burden out, the better off we are. Those are some of the goals we are trying to work with, to help promote those things.”

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Public Service Department is to lead and manage public service divisions to accomplish the mission of Hot Springs Village. That mission from the Public Service point of view is, “to be America’s Premier Community for recreation, retirement, remote [working from home] and security. We want to be the best out of all places in America at doing those four things.”

The Public Service staff’s job is to help residents live their dream in Hot Springs Village.

Public Service Committees

There are three Property Owner Committees for Public Services. These are:

- Public Services
- Common Property, Forestry and Wildlife (Chair, Bruce Calverly)
- Lakes (Chair, Alan Wesley)

The CPFW Committee handles the Urban Deer Hunt, helps with wildlife management, permitting, communication to the public and staff advisement on pertinent issues.

The Lakes Committee does a lot of work including, compiling a tremendous amount of data to help watch the biology, clarity of the lakes, fish counts., etc.

The Public Services Committee covers the entire diversity of what Public Services does. This includes, “everything from utilities, to street maintenance, to odor control at our lift stations, etc. This committee is comprised of engineers and other experts, including previous public servants.

Capital Projects

Temple stated he has never seen the capital projects funding level this low. “That is just a testimony of where we are at. A lot of different areas need replacement. Everything you can think of, something out

there has to be replaced – water lines, culverts. We are going as far as we can to think of how we can do it most efficiently as possible.”

We don't always have to open cut culverts and when we don't, that saves money. When we do open cut, it creates inconvenience and the cost goes up tremendously.

Obstacles

Our biggest obstacle is we have to get the Village more developed. We are underdeveloped in a lot of areas and need more homes. “That creates a lot of challenges to govern as a Board because there is limited funding in a lot of areas. It is also a challenge to the POA to squeeze the turnip and do as much as they can with what we have to work with,” explained Temple.

“Insufficient revenues and assessments and everything that we work with leads to insufficient amounts of field staffing. I think we have a great and very efficient management level right now, but we need more field staff people,” stated Temple. This must be done in an affordable way we can get more done and catch things up.

John Paul hit the nail on the head when he said we need staffing stability. Temple said, “if you can go ten years with a consistent team in one solid direction and one General Manager, you would do a tremendous service to this community.”

Temple said, “there are tremendous opportunities here that we are poised to pursue. One of the greatest things is, our residents can work from home. That is what I call, ‘remoting’ and that is a big, big thing.” With improved internet service here, it is possible to live here and work from home.

Temple, enthused, “Every day, 10,000 people turn 65. We need to reach those folks and get them here. If you get them through the doors, they are going to live here, like Bob [McLeod] did. We need to sell more. We are a service provider out the wazoo. We need to sell those services and get cash so we take that cash and fix what we need to fix.”

“I think we are in a position right now where we can work with CCI and have mutual benefit. Where they win and we win. I think the relationships there are open to do that. We have a great opportunity to have a focused financial strategic plan to obtain that financial stability within ten years. I think the information you will get from the F and P [Finance and Planning] and the FRATF [Future Revenue Analysis Task Force]...you are the Board that is going to set that pace to obtain financial stability – hopefully in less than ten years. I think what is key to that is being strategic in hiring your long-term, stable GM and all working together to provide that stability as a community – rock solid community – great place to live.”

Corry said that Jason conducted a field trip for the Board Members. The members attending were Gary Belair, Bob McLeod and JoAnne Corry. The thing that surprised Corry the most was the wastewater treatment plant. It is incredible.

Avila gave a shoutout to Rolland White for the information he provided to the community for Public Services. Click [here](#) to see the FRATF publications on the Explore the Village website.

First Electric Is Bringing Fiber Optics to Every Saline County Home in the Village

John Paul said that First Electric will be bringing fiber optic to every home in Saline County in the Village and they will be an internet provider, moving forward. This will be as early as September of next year. (2022) There will be a website in approximately 30 days. You can plug in your address on the site to find out when you'll be able to get the service from First Electric. Their upload and download speeds will be identical.

New Sanitation System Update

The new sanitation system is expected to begin early next year. (2022)

There will be a form to fill out in order to request either the 64-gallon or 96-gallon trash can. If you don't choose, you will be given the 96-gallon trash can. Curbside rates are \$16.40 (currently). If you need a second can, you will be charged an additional \$16.40.

Ultimately the residents are responsible for discarding their old cans (if they choose to discard), but Temple is trying to come up with some creative ideas for repurposing or getting rid of our old cans.

By Cheryl Dowden, May 14, 2021

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