

Rumor Control: City Administrator Gabriel addresses rumors (from City Clerk's rough draft of minutes from 6.5.12 council meeting:

Mrs. Gabriel presented the following items: Rumor Control: Rumor - that the City is going to sneak around and sneak in some dollars to pay for the McEuen Park projects. The truth is that the funding will not come from new tax dollars. Rumor - that the City is sneaking in overlay dollars into this McEuen Project. The truth is that on March 6th, the Council approved funding for the Front Avenue improvements using Overlay funds and this has never been a secret and that the use of the overlay funds will be for the reconstruction of Front Street and none of the overlay fund will be used to improve McEuen Park. This will be the only project for this year's overlay fund.

Councilman Edinger asked what the vote was on the March 6th meeting for the funding of Front Street Improvement Project. Mrs. Gabriel responded that it was a motion that was carried. Councilman Edinger asked if the Front Avenue improvement project benefits McEuen Park. Mrs. Gabriel responded that the Front Avenue project has been planned for several years but this is the time to do the project to make sure it blends with the McEuen Park design. Councilman Goodlander commented that over the years the Front Avenue Improvement project has been on the City's overlay plan and when we didn't use the funding for Front Avenue in the past we used that funding to complete other overlay projects. Mayor Bloem noted that when the City adopted the Complete Street Project for Sherman Avenue several years ago that the City extended the improvements to Lakeside and it was always planned for Front Avenue and that this project is now planned for this year. Councilman Gookin commented that when the City purchased Cherry Hill property that part of the improvement was to install sidewalks so the improvements to 15th Street will be delayed til next year. Mrs. Gabriel commented that is correct. He then asked if the \$14.2 million was the amount given for the McEuen Park Project, why is the City "shoveling" \$600,000 from the Overlay fund to redo Front Avenue. Mrs. Gabriel responded that the \$600,000 was included in the overall McEuen Park Improvement Project which includes the park proper, the parking facility, and the Front Avenue Improvements. Councilman Kennedy noted that it was clearly stated that the Front Avenue project would be included in the overall park improvement project as an economy of scale and that it was made clear at the March 6th Council meeting. Councilman Goodlander also noted that by doing the projects together the city is actually saving costs. Councilman Gookin commented that he found it curious that the City's Chief Engineer commented that he was surprised that the 15th Street overlay project was being delayed for the Front Avenue Improvement Project. Councilman Edinger also commented that he was told that the City Engineer was "shocked" that the Front Avenue Improvement Project was going to take all the overlay money for this year. Councilman Goodlander is surprised that the City Engineer is "shocked" in that he has sat through several of the meetings regarding the Front Avenue project. Mayor Bloem noted that in defense of the City Engineer, she believes that he did not realize that Front Avenue was using the entire overlay fund this year.

Mrs. Gabriel continued with rumor control RUMOR- Recall Cd'A put a flyer out stating that the design team was given a \$1.9 million dollar contract without a bid process. FACT - Professional services by state law do not follow the bidding process but rather the process by law is completed by a "Request for Qualifications" which the City did complete and had a selection committee review the proposals received from four different firms. RUMOR - The same postcard stated that the Team McEuen owns the two tower condominiums. FACT - The majority of the buildings owned by private owners. RUMOR - The City's Department Heads make more money than Caldwell and Twin Falls. FACT - She cautioned citizens to compare the job descriptions and years of service of the employees not just job titles. She noted that our City Finance Director takes on the responsibilities of three different departments in Twin Falls. Additionally our Finance Director has been working for the City for 12 years and the Finance Director in Twin Falls has been employed for 2 years. She noted that the City did a survey of 10 North Idaho Cities, which showed that the City's Department Heads do not have the highest wage scale out of the 10 cities compared. She compared other Cities that have Public Works Directors and Growth Services Directors to our City which does not have that layer of management

Councilman Adams commented that the Street Overlay budget includes various other city streets and tonight he learned that the Overlay budget will be all going to the Front Avenue Project. Mrs. Gabriel explained that the budget is an estimate and direction from Council moves the proposed projects.