

**WEST FORK, ARKANSAS**  
**STATE OF THE CITY**  
**February 2015**


**2014**

- Personnel, salaries, benefits
  - Full time firefighters – Mark Meyers and Travis Whisenhunt
  - New parks director – Chad Harrison
  - New librarian - John Riley
  - New Police Chief - Bryan Watts
  - New police department secretary - Cheryl Paladino
  - New police officer - James Scanlon
- Finances and Budgets
  - A surplus of \$156,000 and a reserve of \$987,000. The main items under budget were the Streets Department with a \$138,000 surplus and City Administration with \$66,000 under budget.
  - Sales tax revenue had an increase of 3%
- Buildings and Maintenance

**Projects Underway**

- Sidewalks, streets, trails, sewer line to Fayetteville, water and sewer rate increases, parks, streets, ORT, RRC
- Proposals to bring Parks and Water and Sewer Commissions into the city
- School's construction project, ball fields, number of students,

**2015**

- Projected income for 2015. – \$1.5 million
  - Emphasis in 2015 - seeking funding through grants, for building upgrades, equipment, street and sidewalk improvements.
    - Health and well-being (park playground and exercise equipment).
    - Maintenance and upgrading of city buildings – community center, library, fire station, city administration
    - Training for personnel in all departments
    - Controlling overtime costs and improving management.
    - West Fest, Fourth of July Celebration
    - Committees for Economic Development and City Beautification.
- 

## **Our People**

We have seen several changes in City Hall with new members on our City Council, John Collins, Misty Caudle, Jeff Upton, and Kira Hungate. We have two full-time firefighters, Mark Meyers and Travis Whisenhunt. We have a new parks director, Chad Harrison, and a new librarian, John Riley. We have a new Police Chief, Bryan Watts, a new officer, James Scanlon, and a new secretary, Cheryl Paladino.

## **Our Finances**

We ended 2014 over \$156,000 in the black even with large purchases and expensive repairs and replacement of equipment. We replaced the air conditioning unit at city hall and replaced the computer server. We have new signs on our city vehicles and signs pointing to the RRC. We purchased five acres at Riverside Park. We have had a 3 % increase in sales tax and several new businesses have opened in town: a chiropractor, a hippie shop, a health center, a beauty shop, nail salon, and a gift shop. = JD's is not 2014. Our building permits are up for 2014. (Residential – 7 new homes totaling \$855,000; 3 public buildings totaling \$2,640,000; 15 remodels and additions totaling \$191,500. In 2015 we have 4 new housing starts totaling \$480,000.

## **Our Projects**

In our City Administration building, we have removed the columns in the council room, had the floors stripped and polished, carpets cleaned, and some painting done. At the community center, we have cleaned and painted and purchased two round tables and carts for tables and chairs. Grant funds are being sought to do upgrades to the large room and the kitchen.

Our parks are being maintained and upgraded and utilized by hundreds of people. Our library is serving the community and surrounding area, and our school is adding to its facilities.

Highway 71 has been resurfaced, and we have added five acres to the Riverside Park with a grant pending for its improvement and trail construction.

There is a plan to add sidewalks on White Street and, as state funding become available, to re-surface approximately two miles of city streets.

The Razorback Greenway has a plan for connecting trails to Fayetteville and interconnections in West Fork.

Sewer Lines have been evaluated, many of the problems identified, and some repaired.

Water and sewer rates had one increase in 2014 and will have two more in 2015 (February and August).

ORT had an exceptional six months and will continue their service to West Fork

RRC reported 71.1 tons of Mixed Recyclables, Aluminum Cans and Cardboard during 2014. As a comparison, in 2007 RRC had 11.6 tons. This was accomplished with 960 volunteer hours, 295 community service hours and 208 compensated hours, plus the help from our city crew.

## **Our future**

Our projected income for 2015 is \$1.5 million.

In 2015 we will emphasize **maintenance and upgrading of our city buildings** – city administration, community center, library, fire station – by seeking funding through grants. We will also seek grant funding for equipment and street and sidewalk improvements. We will emphasize **health and well-being** through the purchase of park playground and outdoor exercise equipment for our parks. Another emphasis will be **training for personnel** in all departments. We will continue to monitor and control **overtime costs** and **to improve management**. We will establish committees for Economic Development and City Beautification. And we will continue to promote our town through the **July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration** and **West Fest**.

## **Conclusion**

We are not the sum of how other people see us. We are not newspaper headlines trying to create the news, nor folks on social media entertaining themselves. We are in totality overcoming waste water problems, looking for ways to improve our city facilities, listening to the requests of our citizens. I witness community service and involvement and awareness everywhere in our city government and among our staff and citizens. We collect coats for kids and toys for the children's hospital, volunteer at the RRC and the library, welcome a wagon train that visited Riverside Park, plunge into the White River for Special Olympics, serve on the West Fest committee, and work hard to make the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration a success. We volunteer at the senior center and donate to Shop with a Cop. We clean up our neighbors' yards after storms and volunteer to help spruce up our neighbors' property. There are countless good deeds that go unnoticed and unsung. We are a 'small town' like thousands of other small towns who celebrate the good times and work together through the hard times.