

FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

OCTOBER 2021

Hello Everyone

There have been some beautiful days in September, some hot, but not many rainy. Things look remarkably green considering the lack of rain. I had to clean the cobwebs off my mower, and I'm conflicted about that: On one hand, things look better; on the other, there are just more things on the To-Do list.

It seems the longer I serve as mayor, the more complicated it gets. We must replace the box culvert on Jones Street. We tried to get it done last fall, but the bids were way, way too high. The timing for bidding was off so the contractors that bid padded the price. We wanted to try again this fall, but the timing for the best bids isn't until December. So, we will be trying to get it done sometime next year between August and December. With all the legal, engineering and timing situations, a fairly simple project gets blown out of proportion. It used to be you could call some local contractors and say "How much will this cost?", and they would give you their best price because it is for everyone's benefit. Then you would ask, "When can you get it done?" They would give you a date and then they would *actually show up* and do it. But... not anymore! No wonder we never get anything finished.

Federal Emergency Management Agency? Really? So, you might remember just over a year ago, on August 10, we had a little windstorm. With direction from the Federal EMERGENCY Management Agency, we started down the never-ending paperwork path. After almost a year of continual requests for the same information over and over, conference call after conference call, repeated emails with the same information, and documentation of the documents we already sent, our Federal EMERGENCY Management Agency specialist quit and left us with a new specialist. Guess what she wanted Barb to send her, yup the same information. Unbelievable. This new specialist was on the fast track to get our file closed. Oh, could this be true? Yes, it was, and on August 30 we received the denial email from the Federal EMERGENCY Management Agency, one year and 20 days after the storm. I am sorry for the thick coating of sarcasm dripping all over this paragraph, but if they can use EMERGENCY in their name, I think I should be allowed. Now we are working with our state representative and hopefully we can get some emergency help.

I hope you went to the public meeting about the new bridge project. Of course, we have to work with the DNR, FEMA and all the flood mitigation rules. Guess where this is going. So, if we build a new bridge, between two existing bridges, and if one of the existing bridges holds back water that could flood a property, we, the City of Shellsburg, must fix it. Does that make any sense? You know when you tell your kids "Because I said so!"... Well, those words will probably come back to bite you like they have me. It really ticks me off when these entities use them on me! But what do you do when they make the rules? Did I ever mention this job seems to get more complicated and nothing ever seems to get finished? Ok I'm finished whining... *for now*.

Thank you for your time.

Lonnie