



CITY OF KUNA  
**CITY NEWSLETTER**  
JANUARY 30, 2006



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To the Citizens of Kuna,

First of all, I would like to thank those citizens that attended our Town Hall meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January. We had over **180** citizens present who represented a broad spectrum of the community. City Engineer Keven Shreeve presented a historical summary of the sewer system, followed by an open question and answer period. From the positive comments and requests that staff and I have received, I will continue to hold regular town hall meetings quarterly. Watch for dates in upcoming newsletters. For those of you who were unable to attend, I will give you a brief synopsis on the meeting. Also, there are copies of the complete minutes of the meeting available at City Hall.

“Learn the past, watch the present, and create the future”. It was shown that for the past six years, the city has been continually plagued with sewer problems. During four of those years, the city accomplished a much-needed major project to increase the sewer capacity at the treatment lagoons. However, these improvements were only reactive solutions to growth. Also during this time of growth sewer expenses were significantly more than the income being generated from both monthly user fees (from residences) and connection fees (from developments). The city gradually became in debt with no funds available for replacing an old system and a permanent solution in place for dealing with growth.

Monthly user rates were also discussed. The current sewer rate is \$17.50/month. Because of the economic situation of the City and the fact that pipe and other materials and labor have gone up, it was shown that current sewer user rates were not sufficient to cover the day-to-day expenses of the City. The City is once again gradually going into debt in the sewer fund. It has been recommended to the City Council that rates be increased to a minimum of \$23.00 per month.

Although connection fees were increased from \$1,850 to \$2,800 just two years ago, it was determined last year that this increase was not sufficient and in May 2005 the connection fee was again increased to \$4,200. This increase has seen significant income to the City. Currently, the city is out of debt and has funds available to increase the capacity of the lagoons for *one more temporary capacity solution*. The permanent solution is planned as follows:

It has been concluded by a Technical Review Committee (consisting of several governmental and private agencies) and a Citizens Review Committee (consisting of several residences in the Kuna area) that a new treatment plant should be constructed “downhill” to the north. The City is currently pursuing acquiring land for the new treatment plant. The funding will come predominately from a Local Improvement District (LID) consisting of local residences and developers. It may be necessary to have a Bond Election for approximately \$5,000,000 to help finance this treatment plant. Further information will be forthcoming.

Kuna’s identity, as a city, was also discussed. **The rumors that Meridian is looking at extending their city boundaries to Hubbard Road are true.** We are doing what we can to work with Meridian and Ada County in establishing a fair and reasonable boundary between the two cities. The Council and I believe that, at a minimum, the future City Limits should be similar to the school boundaries...which means that we are proposing Lake Hazel as our northerly boundary.

Water and sewer utilities are the lifeblood of any community, and Kuna is no different. Without adequate, environmentally-sound utilities, the lifestyle that we all enjoy would be diminished. We cannot stop growth, whether growth occurs in the County, in Kuna, or in Meridian...yes Meridian growth will occur. The City Council and I hope to manage growth in our area within the guidelines of Kuna standards and having the ability to hear your voices...not voices from some another city. I hope you support our efforts in working toward a permanent solution to the sewer capacity problems and solving the City boundary issues.

For those interested, the Kuna School District will be presenting a one-hour Study Circle informational forum. The same presentation will be held twice to accommodate patrons' schedules:

- Thursday, March 2, 2006, 7:00 pm at the Kuna High School Library or
- Tuesday, March 7, 2006, 7:00 pm at the Kuna High School Commons

This presentation will cover an overview of new elementary attendance zones and the progress made so far in staff placement, school services and programs. Groups will then divide up by zone for a question and answer session with school principals.

We have had a great response from citizens willing to serve on the Kuna Comprehensive Plan Update Committee, which was explained in my last newsletter. Our interim Planning and Zoning Director, Diana Sanders, is still accepting and compiling a list of citizens interested in being involved with Kuna's future. I have asked former Councilmember Zella Johnson to facilitate this plan and work with the committee of citizens and professionals from our community, in addition to outside staff, agencies, and other additional professionals from around the Treasure Valley. Please call Diana if you are interested, 922-5274 by February 15<sup>th</sup>.

Together we can keep Kuna a quality place to live for our families.

O. Dean Obray, Mayor