

EARLY BIRD WEEKLY



NewbergRotaryEarlybirds.org

October 1, 2020

We had two speakers join us last week. Newberg's mayor, Rick Rogers, and Elise Yarnell from Providence.

Rick stepped into an eventful first term with Newberg's staff "troubles" and turnover, then his second year opened with a pandemic and social justice protests and the recent fires ... "and, I don't know, sharks falling from the sky, or whatever's next, right?" [hey, you gotta find some humor in all the madness, right?].

This year we filled the position of city manager with Dan Weinheimer who joined us about two weeks before COVID.

We set five goals at the time that we envisioned as a focus for Dan and his city staff.

The first was customer service and addressing problems of previous years. Second was a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. Third was sustainability, then urban renewal. Last, and speaking from 21 years of service with Habitat for Humanity, is a focus on housing affordability. And this was Elise's segue.



Elise Yarnell (photo: newbergoregon.gov) is the Clinic Manager at Providence here in Newberg.

"Housing, for me, and social determinants of health, are near and dear to my heart."

Elise worked seven years in recovery. If you wonder what recovery and housing have in common, a great deal of people struggling with houselessness also struggle with addiction and mental health.

Another barrier to finding housing is emotional with shame and guilt preventing some from asking for help.

"It has been a privilege for me, in my professional life, to ... bridge some of those gaps to housing for these individuals."

"Population health" is why housing and food insecurity is being addressed by Providence.

"Being true to Providence form, we always begin with reflection. So I am going to start with the Smith family" (photo and story used with permission).



"The Smiths came to us a couple years ago." We got connected through a collective partnership with outreach specialists at Newberg High School, funded by the Austin Family Foundation, at the Behavioral Health Department.

It turns out the kids were staying with family but were distraught because they couldn't be with their parents who were living out of their car. A week after accepting permission to car-camp at the hospital the father had a heart attack in the hospital parking lot.

"Talk about divine intervention! They were able to walk to the emergency room and get taken care of." Within three weeks, working with them, we found out, via YCAP, that they qualified for local housing assistance.

The Outreach Specialists (2 at the Medical Center, 2 serving Newberg's schools) using the Community Wellness Collective's tools to provide that connection point to different services in our community. We don't need a new service, just a way to connect need to services that exist.

If we are going to offer housing then we also need support services in place to maintain the success of those individuals. It's easier to hand someone a flier than to walk them through the process.

What we're doing with housing. Since her prior CEO, Lori Bergen, Elise has been working on a project utilizing the vacant parcel across Providence Dr.

A local farm needed a permanent home for five tiny homes. Free is a great price, but... By the time you have built out the site land to support dwellings to code and all the red tape we create as an affluent society those free homes cost \$1.2 million.

We tried to quickly pivot toward another solution because people were in love with the idea of affordable housing on our property for which we could provide access to primary health and services.

Walking through the site plan project, we're still a million dollar project but contracting with Sherwood's TechDwell we can have 15 dwellings instead of 5.

The project is being led by new CEO Joe Yoder and Fr. Chris Fabre (Chief Mission Officer) with potential for a permanent long term housing structure.

Now we are dreaming big and were connected with Providence's Supportive

Housing Director that is guiding us through Phases I and II of temporary, life-changing housing opportunities.

Next up, garnering support from us, Providence's community partners.

Mayor Rogers, back customer service and the City. We are in the process of hiring an assistant city manager, slash, human resource director and director of public works. And we expect the police chief position to be made permanent in January.



We are exploring, with a municipal judge, the concept of Community Court. The idea behind community court is that the same "customers" over and over again. Police are spending inordinate time on people on the streets, trespass, etc. Rather than having folk with underlying issues moved straight into criminal system they can be diverted into services by bringing those service providers to the court monthly to connect need to provider.

On topic of diversity and inclusion (with an apology for insensitivity), if anyone believes that implicit bias and institutional racism don't exist in our town or state, then you're probably not brown or black faced. And we don't have to look too far into our local past. Back in 2009 a cutout of Obama was suspended by fishing line at GFU with a sign reading "Act Six Reject." A couple years ago the "n word" was carved in the snow of NHS' football field. Recently, the City was found by jury to have discriminated against the hiring of a black man.

The City is performing an equity audit on its hiring practices and how we're reaching out to the community. In the community is an equity task force bringing people of color together on the topic of "how do we make the community better for people of color?"

More on customer service is [SeeClickFix](#), a site and mobile app letting the City know when and where problems exist, like a down stop sign or dead street light.

On affordable housing, Crestview Crossing, the project across 99W from Providence, will be 18 single family, 230 cottage and 51 multi-family homes.

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