

Looking Forward

with Stigler's City Manager

By Anita Reding

General Manager & Editor

"The City of Stigler had another very, very good year – both financially and physically," Stigler City Manager Bobby Mouser said. "We're very pleased with the financial health and the physical health of the city."

Sales tax

Sales tax has continued to grow for the fourth straight year. This is a result of residents shopping local and efforts of local businesses and the chamber of commerce to share the importance of shopping local.

Businesses

In the past year, Taco Bell has opened for business, construction of True Value is underway and construction of a Dollar Tree will begin soon. Several additional types of businesses are giving Stigler strong looks, and Mouser said he hopes to make announcements about them this year.

Beautification, renewal

"We are working in earnest to beautify and renew the town, especially from a dilapidated residential structure perspective," he said.

A record number of homes were torn down last year, and the police department is assisting in making sure people follow the ordinance regarding yard and home maintenance.

"Most people in town take great pride in their homes and their businesses," he said. The city has a goal to increase the expectations for everyone to take care of their properties.



City vehicles

"We continue to update our fleet of vehicles and machinery and the average age continues to go down," he said. Costs continue to increase significantly, "but we have to do it for reliability and level of service," he said.

Chamber

The city is supporting the Stigler-Haskell County Chamber of Commerce in their search for a new executive director. Janice Williams recently announced her plans to retire at the end of this year. "I will personally and professionally miss Janice very much. We worked together for the past nine years. She has played a vital role in the positive outcomes we have experienced during her tenure," Mouser said.

Water system upgrades

The city has used a grant from the Water Resources Board to rehab the water tower at the Industrial Park and complete a study of the city's water and sewer systems. The city has \$469,000 in ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act), which will be used to make improvements to the manhole and the water recovery systems.

Choctaw Nation

"The Choctaw Nation continues to increase their presence in business development, and we have several people in our area that we count on as resources and they provide valuable services for us," Mouser said.

The Choctaw Nation has invested more than \$6.5 million in Stigler during Mouser's nine years as city manager.

"It's safe to say that all of our recent growth has come about in part as a result of their involvement in the process," he added.

Skatepark

The Cox Family Fun Park opened last summer, thanks to the generous donation of Bill and Janie Cox. It has been rated as one of the best in eastern Oklahoma and approximately 30 percent of the people



who use it travel from outside Haskell County.

Splash pad

A new splash pad is scheduled to open Memorial Day weekend.

"We're very excited about that. It's going to be a new look, with a new design and all new features," he said.

Sports complexes

"We feel it's important to continue to separate ourselves from the competition and improve our offerings," Mouser said, adding that several upgrades and additions are planned at both sports complexes.

At the sports complex, batting cages with concrete and artificial turf bases, plus screening around the cages are new this year.

At the Original Complex, the city plans to re-lamp two of the ballfields with more efficient LED lighting. The city also plans to replace all of the fixtures at the original ballpark over the next three years. Also, wireless LED scoreboards have been installed at all of the fields.