

# LEBANON EXPRESS

## From the Mayor's desk: Mayor looks forward to work

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We have our first meeting as a new city council under our belts and I am very positive and encouraged.

The tone and energy from the whole council and staff was different and it helped move the lengthy meeting along.

One of my top priorities is finding the city manager replacement, and we are working on that.

In the meantime, I am pleased that John Hitt has agreed to stay on staff until we hire a new city manager and help with that transition.

I think having that overlap period is critical for our city.

The council and I will have our goal setting session in February.

After that, in March, we will have our work session on the new city manager recruitment.

I plan to get public input on both of these important issues, including online input from citizens.

There were a few budget amendments that were presented and passed. Speaking of budgets, we discussed a city of Lebanon audit committee that would be composed of one member of the city council, the mayor, one accounting professional from the community, and one budget committee member.

The committee will be responsible for oversight of the budget and the audit of the city books.

This is a great step toward better accountability.

This will be discussed further and possibly voted on in our next meeting.

Also, the council approved a Request for Proposals for the audit process, thus making it a choice for the council, and not just an automatic decision each year.

I was very excited to get full council support on the video recording of city council meetings, starting with the February meeting.

In the next couple of weeks, I will be working out the details with the information technology manager.

The city will have a YouTube channel, and all council meetings will be posted within 48 hours.

The council also agreed to have a debate-style light timer so we can keep accurate time when the public is speaking.

Citizens who come to speak at the meetings have five minutes each to address the council.

I want to make sure everyone gets their turn to talk and to be fair to everyone speaking.

The timer will be set for five minutes and have a visible green light when the speaker starts.

With one minute left, the light will turn yellow, then red at the five-minute mark.

Our first meeting went almost three-and-one-half hours, but we moved along really well for the packed agenda.

Looking to the future, one project that I am working on is developing a Mayor's Youth Council.

My goal is to get the youth (high school junior/senior age) more involved and invested in our community, teaching them how the local government works and how they can make a difference in their community.

You will hear more about this as I work on the details of the project.

I have been busy meeting with city staff to get up to speed on projects and insight on how each department of the city functions.

I have also been meeting with leaders of organizations and business leaders to learn what projects they are working on and how the city can partner with them better.

I have met several times with John Hitt and have been discussing a renewed push on economic development early this year.

We really need to start getting some new projects in the queue this year, and we will be working on that.

There are a lot of exciting things going on, and I will be keeping you up to date here, on my website at [www.mayorpaul.com](http://www.mayorpaul.com), and on my Facebook page LebanonMayor.

If you have any questions or comments, you can email me at [paziz@ci.lebanon.or.us](mailto:paziz@ci.lebanon.or.us).

Mayor Paul Aziz