

Spotlight On Division Chief Brandon McGarr Sutherlin Fire Department

In his response to the request to be featured in the 'Spotlight On' for the Sutherlin News Bulletin, Division Chief Brandon McGarr expressed his preference for giving the credit to his crew and the department rather than focusing on himself. He is dedicated to his service with the Sutherlin Fire Department and below are the answers given to the questions that share his story.



1. What has been your motivation in pursuing a career within the fire service and with the Sutherlin Fire Department?

The fire service is an amazing place and is by far the best job I have ever had. No two days are identical, and you never know what might happen when you arrive at the firehouse for a shift. The day may bring a house fire, wildland fire, motor vehicle accident with entrapment, a cardiac arrest or maybe just a person who is having a simple medical condition but is scared to death. We have an impact on the community every day and with every person in contact with us. The fire service is about 'Service Before Self' and the Sutherlin Fire Department reflects this credo. Our volunteer firefighters are amazing and do so much with the little time they have to give.

2. Please describe your background, education and how that has influenced your career.

At a young age (under the age of 5, according to my mother), I wanted to become a firefighter. I began my fire service journey at the age of 15 when I started doing ride-alongs through a program between my local fire department and the high school I attended. ~ *Continued on reverse side.*

Volunteer Opportunities

Budget Committee: One vacancy
3-year term ending 12/31/2025

Library Advisory Board: Four vacancies
2: 4-year terms ending 12/31/26
2: 4-year terms ending 12/31/2027

Parks Advisory Board: Two vacancies
2-year terms ending 12/31/2025

Mayor's Message

WELCOME TO 2024!!

Here's to hoping your holiday season was one to remember and that you're starting the new year in the best of health.

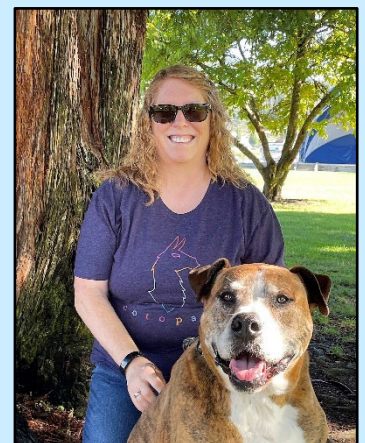
I am so excited for a new year and new beginnings. Sutherlin has become a "go-to" place when it comes to activities and this year will continue to not disappoint! And while we have challenges, I look forward to working with all of you cooperatively so we can continue to make Sutherlin a great place to live, work, and play!

Winter is the time to be prepared for unexpected weather conditions. Please remember to drive with care, keep your gas tank at no less than half full, keep extra food and blankets in the event of power outages, and remember to watch out for each other.

I continue to encourage everyone to come visit me at the monthly "Coffee with the Mayor" the first Saturday each month from 10-11:30 a.m. The location has changed temporarily to Backside Brewery Outpost, 105 W Central Avenue. The next few months dates are:

- February 3rd
- March 2nd
- April 6th

**Be
Safe
And
Have
Fun!!**



Fire Cont...

I completed three years of that program as well as the Weekend Volunteer Firefighter Academy in the spring of my senior year of high school. When I was in my late teens and early 20's, it was rare for me to not be at the fire station at some point throughout the day. I caught the firefighter bug from a very young age and have always loved being in the firehouse. I feel that the family atmosphere commonly found in the firehouse contributed to my desire to remain in the fire service for the past 20 years.

I was hired as a Career Firefighter just after my 20th birthday and 7 years later was promoted to Lieutenant. I served as a Lieutenant until hired by the Sutherlin Fire Department in 2018 as a Battalion Chief. In 2021 I was promoted to my current position of Division Chief. Since February of 2022, I have served on the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Incident Management Team as a trainee in the Planning Section. Since becoming a member of the OSFM Incident Management Team, I have been deployed to a few conflagration fires and to Hurricane Ian in 2022. I love to teach; therefore, I have recently accepted a position with Umpqua Community College as part-time faculty member in their Fire Science program. I currently hold an associate degree in Fire Science. I am a college student myself, working towards my Bachelor of Science in Fire Administration, with the goal of graduating in June 2024. I hold 20 State of Oregon Fire Certifications, I am an Oregon Emergency Medical Technician-Intermediate, a National Advanced EMT and a graduate of the National Emergency Management Basic Academy. The day I stop wanting to learn, is the day I know it is time to permanently hang up my helmet.



3. In your position as Division Chief, do you feel you are a role model/mentor for the incoming firefighters?

Yes and no. I truly believe that the most influential personnel (mentors) across the fire service are the first line fire officers, lieutenants, and battalion chiefs for the Sutherlin Fire Department. The first line fire officers are significantly important in steering the incoming firefighters in the proper direction and teaching them to be good firefighters. These officers are leading our crews, supervising their progress and are therefore more the daily mentors than myself. Since being promoted to Division Chief, I am more of the conductor that keeps our personnel all headed in the same direction as well as the one who is tasked with many support roles. Most of what I do is behind the scenes to pull everything together. Since the Sutherlin Fire Department is a smaller organization, I still frequently get the opportunity to serve as a mentor, including on incident scenes, in the firehouse, alongside our firefighters on the drill ground and in the classroom. However, not as much as I previously did.



4. What do you consider to be the most significant aspects of your position within the fire department?

As one of the Sutherlin Fire Command staff, I accomplish a lot of items that many people don't see outside of the firehouse. We are constantly updating policies and procedures for working on making the Sutherlin Fire Department better in so many ways. My position oversees grants, training management, logistics, fire prevention, communications, volunteer recruitment and many more assigned tasks. Depending on the day, I can turn wrenches on a fire engine, writing a grant, working on training plans, working with a new volunteer firefighter, writing a lesson plan, or so many other responsibilities. I am also very active in responding to larger incidents while on or off duty. I am a proud member of the Sutherlin Fire Department.

Community Calendar

Feb. 13th – Urban Renewal Agency (6:45 p.m.) & City Council Meeting (7:00 p.m.) – Civic Auditorium

Feb. 20th – President's Day – City Offices Closed

Feb. 21st – Planning Commission – Civic Auditorium – 7:00 p.m.

VISIT US AT
WWW.CITYOFSUTHERLIN.COM



'Music Off Central' Summer Concert Series

Music Off Central is off and running, gearing up for another summer of awesome music and delightful artists to help get your groove on!

Music Series kicks off on July 11th.

Other dates as follows:

- July 18th
- July 25th
- August 1st
- August 8th
- August 22nd

Check out www.musicoffcentral.org for more information.

Safe Exchange Location at the Senior Center

Sutherlin has a Safe Exchange location!

Anyone buying or selling items from groups such as: Craigslist, Moms List, Douglas County Buy, Sell, Trade, etc. and looking for a place to carry out the 'cash for property' transaction, can do so under video surveillance in the Senior Center parking lot across the street from the Police Station. This effort is to try and make such exchanges safer.

The cameras cover the entire parking lot with 24-hour coverage.



This photo depicts the old Sutherlin Mansion, long since gone, but remains in the memories and family history of many residents. It has been a catalyst for creating an archive of stories that tell the history of Sutherlin through the voice of its community. To contribute, please contact Nancy Rodriguez, Media and Communications Coordinator, at n.rodriguez@ci.sutherlin.or.us.

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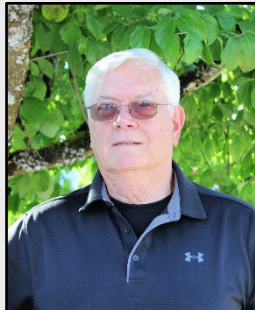
Nancy Rodriguez
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City Council



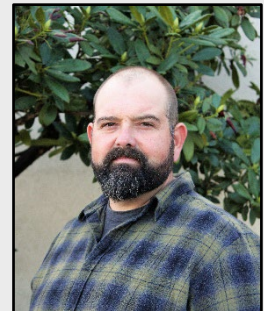
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City Directory

City Manager	541-459-2856 x 223	Fire Dept. / Non-Emergency	541-459-1394
Finance Director	541-459-2856 x 203	Police Dept. / Non-Emergency	541-459-2211
City Recorder	541-459-2856 x 208	Public Works Operations	541-459-3542
Community Development	541-459-2856 x 206, x 219	Public Works Utilities	541-459-5768
City Planner	541-459-2856 x 234	Sutherlin Municipal Court	541-459-4636
Water/Sewer Utility Billing	541-459-2856		