



Ron Jacobson, Mayor, City of Post Falls

City Position

Ron Jacobson was elected Mayor of the City of Post Falls in November 2013 and took office in January 2014. He has served as a Post Falls City Councilmember since 1999.

Early Life

Ron was born in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, to Tom and Catherine Jacobson—who were both also born and raised in Coeur d'Alene. He graduated from Coeur d'Alene High School. He attended North Idaho College and the University of Idaho (UI), receiving a Bachelor's Degree in accounting.

Family Life

Ron has been married to Susan for 34 ½ years. They have four children—Toney, Holly, Lauren, and Steve. Ron and Susan also have one daughter-in-law—Rachel—and one son-in-law—Geno. They also have one grandchild—Hudson, 10 months old.

Personal Mission Statement

“To work in a collaborative manner with leaders and citizens of Post Falls and the surrounding communities to continue and improve economic viability and opportunity while preserving the excellent quality of life we enjoy.”

Other public service positions...

Ron has served on the Post Falls Urban Renewal Agency and the Post Falls Park and Rec Commission. He is a current member and a past president of the Rotary Club of Post Falls, past president of the Post Falls Education Foundation, current Rotaplast Ambassador, past member of the KROC Advisory Board, past member of the North Idaho College Foundation Board, current member of the St. Vincent

DePaul Capital Cabinet, and a past chair of the Holy Family Catholic School Board.

Professional Life/Work Experience

Jacobson has been in banking since he graduated in 1978 and has worked for Inland Northwest Bank for the past 13 years as a Senior Vice President. He is a graduate of the Pacific Coast Banking School and is also a CPA although he has never practiced as an accountant. In banking, he has served as a Controller, Chief Financial Officer and Commercial Lender. He enjoys the lending side as it allows him the opportunity to work with the clients to help them reach their goals. While he deals with all types of commercial customers, his forte is the professional market, which consists of doctors, dentists, attorneys, CPA's etc. He finds it very rewarding to help these clients with their financing needs and to see them enjoy the success of their education and hard work.

Accomplishments/Awards/Honors

Jacobson was named Rotarian of the year for the Rotary Club of Post Falls. He has won numerous awards at Inland Northwest Bank. “While these [awards] are gratifying to receive,” noted Jacobson, “I need to note that any individual award is the result of a team effort. I have had the opportunity to work and serve with some outstanding people. I was honored to be chosen to participate in two Rotaplast Medical missions, one to Banepa, Nepal, and one to Cebu City, the Philippines. These missions are a combined effort of our Rotary district and Rotary clubs in other countries. I helped raise the funds to cover the costs of the medical team and

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supplies. There were nine non-medical volunteers on these missions and we paid our own way. It was an amazing experience to watch and assist the medical staff operate on cleft palates and cleft lips as well as perform surgery on burn victims in these poor countries. It was something I will never forget. Participating in this type of endeavor reminds me of how blessed we truly are.”

How did you get involved in public service?

“Many years ago,” said Jacobson, “Post Falls started a Park and Recreation Commission and I was asked to sit on the commission. I was chosen Chair and served for approximately seven years. After my second term expired, I decided to not seek re-appointment, to let others have a chance to serve. For reasons I won’t go into, my successor as Chairman was dismissed from the Commission. My friend, and then current mayor, Gus Johnson called and asked me to rejoin the commission. I agreed. Shortly thereafter, one of the Post Falls City Councilors was diagnosed with cancer. When it became obvious that she would not be able to complete her term, Mayor Johnson asked me to fill her position. I was confirmed by the council and remained a counselor for almost 15 years. My term as councilor expired last December and I decided to run for Mayor. I have always felt it important to get involved and give back to my communities.”

Hobbies

Ron loves to travel. He loves all sports, especially golf, although he says that he is not very good. He likes to read and wood work. The thing he enjoys most is spending time with his beautiful bride, his wonderful kids and his awesome grandson.

What sets the City of Post Falls apart from other cities?

Post Falls is located in a beautiful setting, with the river on its south side and mere miles from Lake Coeur d’Alene, Hayden Lake, Twin Lakes, Hauser Lake. The city is surrounded by mountains. Residents enjoy four distinct seasons. Outdoor activities abound, including swimming, snow skiing, biking, golf, trails and 24 parks. Just 25 minutes from Spokane International Airport, citizens have easy access to I-90 and are close to several colleges

and universities. Citizens live in a safe environment, protected by a police department that is frequently recognized for its excellence. Post Falls offers its citizens a quality of life that is valued and access to many amenities to be enjoyed. Post Falls is also the most giving and caring city ever. Whenever there is a need, citizens and groups come forward to fill that need. Charity and assistance are synonymous with Post Falls.

Challenges for the City of Post Falls

The biggest challenge is meeting the requirements of the EPA as it pertains to reclaimed water. Post Falls has always been a champion for clean water, and will remain so, but the restrictions being put in place by the EPA have created a herculean obstacle. Estimates are that the City will need to invest upwards of \$70 million in the next 20 years to comply with EPA mandates. The economy, while showing improvement, is still a factor in the City’s financial stability. A very good job has been done in controlling taxes, but as expenses continue to rise, revenue has to be generated to offset the increase. Despite economic development and Post Falls continuing to be considered a good place for businesses to relocate, the State of Idaho does not offer the incentives many neighboring states do, negatively impacting the ability to land these companies. Pending legislation on tax reimbursement incentives will not level the playing field, but it will make the hurdles smaller. Work needs to continue with state legislators as well as neighboring cities to promote the region. If a business locates in Post Falls or Coeur d’Alene or Hayden or Rathdrum, the entire county benefits. Collaboration is critical to success. Good jobs need to be created and KEPT. Another challenge is that Post Falls has no identifiable city center. This topic has been discussed for many years, and there are many different ideas in play. Hopefully, some progress will be made in this area.

Good things happening in the City of Post Falls...

Post Falls continues to draw interest from companies looking to relocate and enjoys an excellent working relationship with the local economic development agency, Jobs Plus. The city also has an active Urban Renewal Agency. In addition, the city is emphasizing economic development. Broadening its tax base will help lessen the tax burden on the citizens. There are

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several infrastructure projects in process which will improve the activity in the city. The medical community is growing and the ribbon cutting at the North Idaho Rehabilitation Hospital was just celebrated. The Chamber of Commerce is vibrant and active and volunteerism continues strong. The city is home to several companies that continue to be successful and help drive commercial growth.

Current City Projects

The city, in conjunction with its Urban Renewal Agency, is in the process of constructing a freeway overpass, which will facilitate traffic flow and better connect the areas north and south of the freeway and will also improve emergency response time. The city is also actively engaged in working to meet reclaimed water mandates of the EPA, which is a huge expense but one that cannot be avoided. There are several other projects in the works, including traffic congestion mitigation, design work on Spokane Street that will help in the development of property in the city center, road extensions and street improvements.

AIC Involvement

“The City of Post Falls has been very active in AIC,” said Jacobson. “Mayor Larkin is a Past President and many of our staff members are actively engaged. I have attended different meetings and as mayor will become more involved myself. I have been appointed to the Legislative Committee. I appreciate all that AIC does for the cities and respect the knowledge and advice available.”

How has AIC helped you in your city position?

“AIC offers cities a direct insight into issues that affect us,” said Ron. “The Association is an excellent resource and they are always available to assist us. Living in North Idaho, we are a bit removed from the day to day activities in Boise. With the involvement of AIC, we do not miss out on important items. AIC offers a forum for our employees to meet and interchange ideas and concerns. With cities united for a common cause, it is a less daunting task to get things done. I feel the AIC facilitates cohesion, understanding and resources to make the cities more successful.”

What is your vision for Post Falls?

“I am a third generation resident of Kootenai County,” said Jacobson. “I love the small town atmosphere and caring nature of our citizens. I value the beauty of the area and the endless recreational opportunities. I want to preserve these amenities while working to strengthen the economic vitality of the City. Good businesses and good jobs are critical to this goal. Continuing to control taxes while maintaining the level of services we offer is another goal. Retaining existing and attracting new businesses to Post Falls will help facilitate financial stability. In summary, I want our residents to be able to earn a good living and to enjoy the beauty of our area while having access to a variety of services and products that are affordable.”

About the City of Post Falls

Post Falls was incorporated in 1891 and was named after Frederick Post, a German immigrant who constructed a lumber mill along the Spokane River in 1871 on land he purchased from Andrew Seltice, Chief of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe. The city is bounded on the south side by the Spokane River and offers the enjoyment of small community living with the advantages of bigger city and resort opportunities. For years, Post Falls has been considered a bedroom community where people who work in Coeur d’Alene and Spokane live. Over the past 10 years, the city has seen rapid growth in both population and services offered. Post Falls has a growing medical community that offers most services the citizens need. While the economy has slowed its growth, the city is still seeing expansion and economic development as a major focus. The excellent and active Chamber of Commerce is indicative of the fact that Post Falls is business friendly and values these businesses.