Hahn (center) speaks with Chico City Attorney Vince Ewing and Deputy City Manager Jennifer Macarthy as City Clerk Debbie Presson prepares for the April 19 City Council meeting—his first as interim city manager.

for the last couple years, Cathi and I have been under an arrangement with the California Department of Social Services to help with Disaster CalFresh.

So I basically have worked three to four months a year, just to kind of keep my hands in it, since I retired.

**In your first week, the fence comes off City Plaza and the Pallet shelter opens. Is this a coincidence or causality?**

It's more coincidence. These things were in the planning process. I cannot take credit for either one of those things. Certainly, the Pallet shelter opening has taken up a great deal of my time in the first week, but the plans were being implemented before I came here. Coincidence on both.

**What are your priorities?**

My priorities in the time that I am here are, one, to make sure that the continued opening goes as smooth as possible—to work with the Jesus Center, to work with the community, to make sure that the opening is a success. Two, [following sign-off April 28 from the magistrate judge overseeing the Warren v. City of Chico settlement] to begin implementing enforcement of the anti-camping ordinances and hopefully do that in a systematic, organized, humane-as-possible way to move the camps and get people into better housing—then repair and renew the sites and open them up so citizens can use them.

That's one priority.

Budget—we've got to get a budget by June 30. Again, that's

in good shape, it's been well on its way. But getting it passed, getting it through council, is a critical priority.

The council has to decide [how] they want to put a sales tax before the voters. Probably grant some cannabis licenses—that's coming down the pike and will probably happen during my time here. And then there are some internal things that need to be done [such as] labor negotiations.

**Because of your distinct position as a short-timer who's local, with your experience, do you feel a degree of independence to lead, to push back on the council if you have a strong opinion?**

In a limited time, I'm going to be realistic about what I can accomplish. I can't change an organization or an organization's culture in two-and-a-half or three or four months, or whatever it's going to be. At the same time, I don't have to worry about this being my career, that if I insult somebody that it's going to hurt my career.

I'm going to say and do what I think is the right thing to do, and I'm going to make recommendations to the council of what I think are the right things to do. I told them that, and I think that's what they want me

> **"I'm not just going to be sitting here waiting for my time to end."**
> —Paul Hahn

to do.

I'm not just going to be sitting here waiting for my time to end. Some of these priorities are pretty significant things, with the homeless issue in general and the budget and the sales tax and cannabis, so I will provide whatever leadership is necessary to make these things happen in my time here. But I'm also not going to take up a whole bunch of new initiatives with a new person coming in, in a short time frame.

I hesitate to say caretaker, because it's not my style to come here and do nothing. If I'm here, I'm going to be as involved as I possibly can—at the same time, not upset the apple cart because I'm the city manager and can do that. If I see something that's absolutely not working, I might address something.

**Your tenure in this role will be a success if …**

I think if I am able to get through some of these priorities. Certainly, the organization has a lot of anxiety now just because of change. The previous city manager left; there's an uncertainty as to who the new permanent person is going to be … and election season is coming up soon; that's always a potential change for everybody. So I just want everybody to try to relax, do their jobs, and if everybody is doing that and we get a new city manager in a timely way, I'll be quite happy.  □