

Grassland Oregon Blog

October 30, 2019

Post fire update on the GO Office. Overcoming Tragedy Update- The Rebuild By Jerry Hall



August 2018



October 2019

So it has now been a little over a year since our office fire, and you are probably wondering how things are coming along.

To put it bluntly the whole thing has been a giant pain in the ass that I wouldn't wish on anybody. Well maybe a few people, but they aren't going to read this...

We hired an architectural firm back in 2018 but it took until late March for them to draw up the plans. We then submitted them to the county for approval and had to do the back and forth of re-drawing and re-submitting the plans until they finally were approved by the county in August. We had already hired a construction firm so they were able to get started with the build in early September. They told us it would be 90 days, we shall see.

The biggest challenge has been all the extra costs that we have had to incur to bring the building up to code for earthquake standards, and ADA accessibility. Our policy allowed for \$10,000 to bring up to code, but that probably won't even cover the wheelchair ramp that we are required to install. The ramp needs to be a hard, permanent surface but the placement requires changes to drainage, etc. These are costs that we didn't properly budget for when we purchased our insurance policy and are probably something that you should consider when renewing your policy.

My biggest nemesis is the dreaded change order. Simple things can add up, especially if it involves several nested subcontractors. For example, the sink that we were putting in the utility room was too far from the septic system to get proper drain flow so it had to be moved to the other side of the room. To move it required a plumbing change, a new cabinet, and a new countertop. The countertop guy was a sub-contractor for the cabinet guy. So the cabinet guy took the countertop cost and added 20% for his “profit & overhead”. Our building contractor took the cabinet contractor’s bid and add 20% for their “profit & overhead”. So a simple 3 foot cabinet with a quartz countertop comes in at slightly over \$1600. Too many change orders and costs get away from you very quickly. So if you have to go thru this process, think it through very carefully and eliminate as many surprises as possible.

Seeing the building come together is exciting but also very terrifying as we will soon be moving back. I hate moving! We also need to think about furnishings as we are pretty much starting from scratch. We will soon have a new “home” but we need to bring back the touches that make it feel homey without breaking the bank. Once it is finally over I am sure we will look back and appreciate once again the workplace that we will have built.



Front of the GO building



Front of the GO building



The new addition



Large, new conference room



New staff breakroom



The kitchen



Back office



Large front office area



A look from the driveway