

City assumes medical duties

By RICHARD WAGONER
Of the Emerald

The City of Eugene probably will be in the ambulance business for at least six months, City Manager Mike Gleason told the city council Monday night.

Gleason said the city should continue to provide ambulance service through the fire department for a few months until a well-informed decision can be made on whether it should stay in the business permanently.

The cities of Eugene and Springfield took over ambulance service in the metropolitan area last week when Medical Services, Inc., succumbed to a long financial crisis and abruptly shut down its emergency service.

It went very, very smoothly, Gleason said.

"A lot of people have been asking me, 'Are we in the business?'" Gleason said. "That was answered about five days ago — we are in the business."

"The question now is 'Are we going to stay in the business?' We'll have to decide that sometime down the road."

Councilors praised Gleason and the ambulance task force that put together in less than two hours the city-sponsored ambulance service that covers 1,000 square miles after MSI's demise.

"It went very, very smoothly," Gleason said.

The service the city provides is the same and in some cases even better than that previously provided by MSI, Gleason said. Because the city has fire stations located throughout the city, response time in many areas is less now than when MSI was in business, he said.

Councilors agreed to operate the service at least six months before deciding to continue city ambulances or allow another private company to take over. The council will hold a public hearing on the matter before that decision is made.

In other business, the council tabled a request to expand the Westside Neighborhood Quality Project until a compromise can be worked out between businessmen and residents.

Councilors heard more than two hours of public testimony on the pros and cons of expanding the neighborhood borders into areas of mixed business and residential property.

The neighborhood now includes the area bounded by 13th Avenue on the south, Chambers Street on the west, Washington Street on the east and Seventh Avenue on the north.

The expansion would move the eastern boundary to Charnelton Street — an area that seceded from the neighborhood eight years ago.

Businessmen in the area said expanding the neighborhood would mean more residential development and less concern with business.

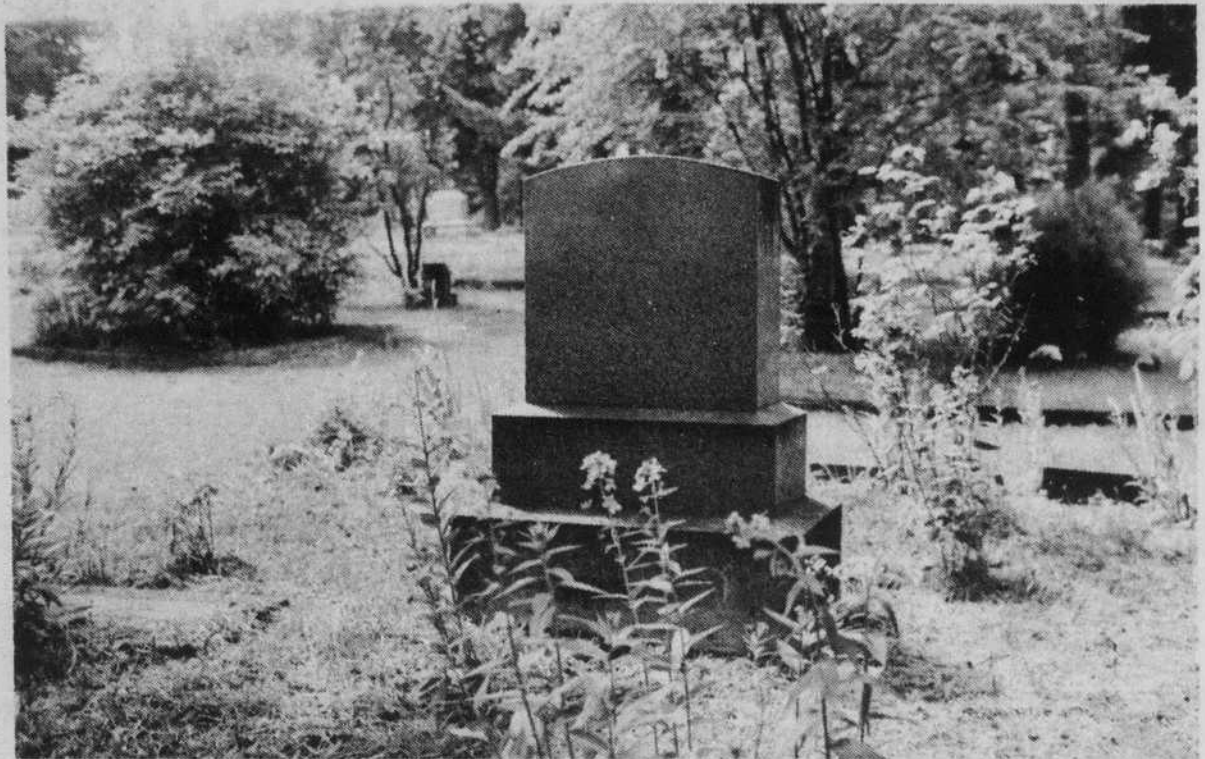


Photo by Dennis Tachibana

Bureaucracy prevents cemetery maintenance

It isn't the cleanest place to spend forever. That's because the Pioneer Cemetery, located across from McArthur Court, suffers an identity crisis — it's all messed up, literally and figuratively.

The almost 700 people buried in the cemetery may deserve better than to lie among the roots, but their salvation is caught up in a tangled bureaucracy.

Problem is, three groups control the cemetery.

Topping the list is the Pioneer Memorial Park Association, responsible for burial records and other cemetery business.

But Lane County, by virtue of a deed granted it from the original owners in 1943, owns all roadways and pathways within the cemetery.

To complicate matters further, the individual plots within the cemetery are owned by the 700 families that originally purchased them.

So who is supposed to keep up the grounds? W.N. McLaughlin, the secretary-treasurer for the park association, says that responsibility

falls on the families of the buried. The association can't afford it.

The families have their own group, the Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Association. Member Ruth Holmes says the families do the best they can to keep up the grounds, but she complains they have very limited funds to do so.

Taking up the slack are volunteers, such as fraternities and scout troops.

But back to the bureaucracy.

To clear up the mess, Holmes petitioned Eugene's Historic Review Board in 1978 to declare the cemetery a historic monument. That would make it eligible for funds to help in grounds maintenance, says board member Judy Rees.

Fine enough, but the petition died when the park association protested.

And although Rees says the cemetery certainly merits historic consideration, the review board was unable to decide who the rightful owners were — even with an investigation made by the city attorney.

Budget draws varied opinion from faculty

By GREG WASSON
Of the Emerald

SALEM — Faculty of the state system of higher education had a chance Monday to tell the Legislature how the higher education budget could possibly be cut.

However, members of the education subcommittee of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, which is considering the budget, received little direction.

Typical of the testimony was the exchange between University political science Prof. Larry Pierce and Sen. Ed Fadeley, D-Eugene. Pierce outlined the disproportionate support the state has given other areas of education in the past decade and said priorities ought to be reexamined.

"The thing you seem to say with the most force is that you want us to support the governor's revenue package and cut back on the property relief program," said an exasperated Fadeley, co-chairer of the committee.

"I want you to support the governor's revenue package and cut back the property tax relief program," Fadeley said. "There, we both said the same thing with some force. Now, assuming that that doesn't happen, the committee would like to know if you have any guidance to offer."

You should cut the weakest programs in the system



rather than cutting all programs by a proportional amount, responded Pierce. But he didn't list the programs he thinks are weakest.

Few subsequent witnesses were any more specific. The head of the University's economics department, Jim Tattersall, said he opposed cutting faculty salaries by 4 percent, a proposal that would generate \$7 million.

Okay, said subcommittee head Sen. Jim Gardner, D-Portland, but what if you had to choose between the 4 percent cut and the alternative of terminating 107 academic and 77 classified positions?

"I can't answer precisely yes or no because our association has taken the position that if such a

financial situation should come about, we will consult with the appropriate administrators," replied Tattersall, president of the Association of Oregon Faculties.

At this, an irritated Sen. Frank Roberts, D-Portland, said that perhaps lawmakers should become the appropriate administrators.

"In the past," said Roberts, "the state board was in charge, and the Legislature didn't interfere. But your own lobbyists indicated that in that period, higher education had been led down the garden path with the board constantly adding programs without sufficient funds."

Most witnesses who addressed the subject agreed with Bob Davis, lobbyist for the AOF. Davis reiterated that any cuts should come from specific programs rather than across the board.

"Let me hasten to add that we recognize that this would mean fewer students and fewer faculty members. But those faculty members who are left will be paid adequately, and those students who remain will be receiving a quality education with sufficient libraries and books."

Davis emphasized that the Legislature shouldn't make the cuts itself.

"It is essential that the decisions on minute specifics be made at the institutional level."