

CityNews...

Staff Article

City Council November 5, 2007

Council Passes Adult Entertainment Ordinances...

City Council unanimously passed the second reading of the Adult Entertainment Ordinances that had been working it's way through the system this fall. This was the final step in the process, putting into place limitation on how and where an adult entertainment business can operate within the city limits of Vernonia. The city Planning Commission had drafted the ordinance with the idea of protecting local residents, and crafted the ordinance to withstand challenges in court.

City Receives and Accepts Offer on 20 Acre Property...

Chris and Lisa Balmes of Chris Balmes Properties informed the council that they had received an offer of \$450,00 for the 20 acre property that the city owns and has offered for sale. The offer includes \$10,000 earnest money, and is subject to the purchaser receiving preliminary plat approval with conditions acceptable within one year, and includes a sixty day feasibility period. Chris Balmes, the real estate agent handling the property for the city, recommended that the city seriously consider the offer, and council agreed to proceed with the sale at the November 19th council meeting. Closing would be within thirty days of the purchaser receiving preliminary plat approval with acceptable conditions.

Council Approves New Vernonia Police Department Manual...

Police Chief Mathew Workman presented council with the new Department Manual, which was purchased through Lexipol with funds budgeted in 2006. Chief Workman explained that the Vernonia officers will be required to read and be tested on the manual and that the department will receive automatic updates from Lexipol. Council approved the new manual to replace the existing manual.

Vernonia Police Department Joins "A Child is Missing" program...

Chief Workman presented a short video presentation and informed council that his department is now part of a nationwide alert system that can be activated when any child, or at-risk adult goes missing. The system makes automatic phone calls to alert a community that someone is missing and asking for help or information in locating the missing person. The system generates up to 1,000 calls in sixty seconds, and is free of charge to the city.

City Council November 19, 2007

Mayor Harrison Announces New Topics from the Floor Policy...

Mayor Sally Harrison announced that the city is implementing a new policy regarding how citizens will be able to make statements from the floor during council meetings. Beginning December 2nd citizens wishing to make statements during the Topics from the Floor portion of the agenda will be required to fill out a file card with their name, address, and question/comment ahead of the start of the meeting and submit them to the Mayor. Citizen Mike Seeger went on record as opposed to this new policy, stating he felt it limited the public's ability to be heard by local government. Mayor Harrison assured the audience that this is only to enhance record keeping, and that the council continues to maintain an open policy at their meetings.

Airport Committee Appointment Made...

Mayor Harrison appointed Bud Dow to the open spot on the Airport Committee. Committee member Mike Seeger expressed dissatisfaction that the Mayor chose to disregard the recommendation that the committee had made for the appointment. The Mayor reminded the audience that committee appointments are at her discretion and she is under no obligation to follow the committee's suggestions.

Council Hears Proposal for Assistance in Search for New City Manager...

Jenny Mesner, Member Services Director from the League of Oregon Cities, presented the council with a proposal to assist the city in it's search for a new City Manager. The League of Oregon Cities would help with developing a profile, advertising, provide summaries of applicants, help with the interview process, provide four background checks, offer technical review of applicants, help narrow the field, and provide sample contracts for negotiation purposes. Cost for the League's services to the city of Vernonia would be \$5,500. The city would be responsible for any additional advertising, and travel expenses for applicants if necessary. Mesner explained that the pool of potential applicants is currently somewhat limited and recommended waiting, due to the holiday season, until January 1st to begin the search. Current City Manager, M.R. "Dick" Kline, has expressed his intention to resign his position when the city has located a suitable replacement, although Mr. Kline has not formally tendered his resignation in writing.

Council Approves Signing of Law Enforcement Intergovernmental Agreement for Motor Vehicle Pursuits...

Council gave approval for Mayor Harrison to sign an agreement between law enforcement agencies in Columbia County establishing updated protocols for any agency involved in a multi-agency vehicle pursuits.

City Retains Consulting Firm...

Council approved the retention of R. Brown Consulting for a fee of \$5,000.

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