

Council Receives Auditors Report: City Budget Committee Begins to Meet

Concerns about the financial situation of the City of Vernonia received some clarification in March with the report from the city audit firm on the status of city finances through fiscal year 2007.

On March 17 the Vernonia City Council received the audit report for the city budget for fiscal year 2006-2007 from Tom Glogau, a representative of Grove, Mueller and Swank. The auditors noted no concerns with the preparation of the budget. They did note concerns for the city with a shortfall of \$113,562 in the City Governmental funds; this means the city did not collect enough revenue through taxes, licenses and permits, or other miscellaneous sources to cover the expenses of general government, community development, public works, and public safety. The audit firm also noted that the amount of debt service that the city has accumulated in its water and sewer operations and shall be responsible for paying in upcoming years will increase. In 2007 the debt service was \$284,200. In fiscal year 2009 the debt service is expected to increase to \$887,610. The auditor suggested this increase leaves the city with two basic options- cut services or increase fees.

The City Budget Committee met in a workshop with City Council on March 18th to begin discussions about the upcoming budget preparation and to set dates for official Budget Committee Meetings and Hearings. During the workshop the Budget Committee members and Council received an update on the current fiscal year financial situation and year to date revenue and expenditures. There were also discussions about upcoming priorities and needs.

Temporary Financial Officer M.R. “Dick” Kline addressed the workshop and explained the financial situation of the city as “tenuous.” Kline explained that the “belt tightening” that city staff was instructed to carry out last year has been effective but that even more will probably be needed again this year. There have been unexpected costs and losses of revenue associated with the flood. There was a discussion about how last year’s budget was balanced through numerous fund transfers and loans. Kline explained that using loans to balance individual funds is not sustainable. He explained that the choices for the budget committee and council will probably be very difficult this year, and citizens should probably expect cuts in services.

The Committee has scheduled the presentation of the 2008-09 budget for May 5, 2008, during the regular City Council meeting. A public hearing is scheduled for May 13, 2008.

Vernonia’s Voice Hosts “Meet the Candidates”

Vernonia’s Voice will be the host for an exciting and informative event we are calling “Meet the Candidates”. The event is a Question and Answer forum with those candidates who have filed to run for the positions of Columbia County Sheriff and for Columbia County Commissioner, Positions One and Three. The event will be held on May 8, and will start at 6:30pm at the Vernonia Scout Cabin.

The format will be questions from a pre-selected panel of Vernonia area residents. There will then be an opportunity for the audience to meet and question the candidates in an open house setting following the panelists’ questions.

The following is a list of the candidates who have filed to run and who have been invited to participate in the candidates’ forum:

Commissioner, Position 1	Democrat	Joe Corsiglia
	Republican	Earl Fisher Glen Dorschler Warren Nakkela
Commissioner, Position 3	Democrat	Pat Zimmerman
	Republican	Tony Hyde
Sheriff		Gerald “Gerry” Simmons
		Robert W. Crain Jr. Jeff Dickerson

Ruth Baker has filed to run for County Treasurer. Wally Thompson has filed to run for Justice of the Peace. Both are running unopposed and were not invited to participate in the panelist question portion of the event, but they were invited to attend and participate in the open house.

Questions about this event should be directed to Scott Laird at 503-367-0098, or by email to scott@vernoniasvoice.com.

In Vernonia – Did You Know...

- True Value Hardware sells home appliances and paint and if you don’t see something you need in the store, they can order it for you.
- Cornerstone Naturals sells vitamins, herbs, and fresh spices. They will special order as well.
- Black Bear Coffee now sells cheeseburgers and fries. Don’t forget the beer and wine.
- You can get a new pair of saddle shoes at Muffy’s, located across from Vernonia Realty.
- West Oregon Electric offers scholarships. Five Sam Hearing scholarships, 2 VOLTA scholarships and 2 YES camp scholarships. See Sara at WOEC. Deadline April 15.

Just a reminder of services offered in Vernonia brought to you by the Vernonia Area Chamber of Commerce 503-429-6081.

Birkenfeld Store and Café

Home of the 1/3lb. hand-pressed burger!

Come and enjoy delicious home-cooked food and old-fashioned milkshakes. Also serving beer & wine.

Now offering a kids menu & “value meals”!

Grocery & Liquor Store:
Mon. - Sat. 8am - 6pm
Sun. 9am - 5pm
Café open daily 9am - 4pm

Mention this ad for 50¢ off a coffee or espresso drink of your choice!

11139 Highway 202
(503) 755-2722

FIRST FRIDAY

APRIL 4

Time for some fun!

FLOOD TALKS..

COME SHARE YOUR INSPIRING STORIES

BRING YOUR PHOTOS, STORIES OR VIDEO. THIS EVENT WILL BE VIDEO TAPED.

QUESTIONS, CALL DONNA WEBB 503-429-5201

Where:
Vernonia Public Library
5-7 pm

PLAYS AT VERNONIA GRANGE:

HEIDI/
THE UGLY DUCKLING

7:30 PM APRIL 4 AND 2:30 PM APRIL 5

FREE, BUT DONATIONS GLADLY ACCEPTED