

Vernonia City News...

At the November 1, 2010, City Council Meeting:

City Cleared of Flood Recovery Monitoring Findings-- The City of Vernonia and Community Action Team (CAT) have received a letter which stated that the Notice of Findings for The Community Development Block Grant for Flood Recovery Housing Elevation and Rehabilitation has been cleared. The letter stated: "The Infrastructure Finance Authority has received and reviewed the submission(s) of the information necessary to clear the Monitoring Finding. We have determined that the information satisfies the requirement and the Finding is now cleared." Jim Tierney of CAT had previously presented to Council the Findings that had been noted during a routine monitoring visit and CAT's prepared response they would be submitting on behalf of the City of Vernonia. The letter, signed by Louise Birk, Regional Coordinator, Infrastructure Finance Authority, later stated: "I want to commend your efforts to comply with federal and state requirements."

Council Discusses, Authorizes Renewal of Police K9 Officer Lease--

On Friday, October 29th, Interim City

Administrator Bill Haack removed Vernonia Police K9 Officer "Krueger" from duty. At the November 1st City Council meeting, Councilor Kevin Hudson asked that this issue be added to the agenda and asked for an explanation. Sergeant Mike Kay, Krueger's handler, stated that a lease between himself and the City has been in place since 2006 for use of Krueger. Kay stated that he and city staff were unaware that the automatically-renewed lease could only be renewed for three one-year terms and that the lease had expired on June 30, 2010. Kay also stated that Krueger is nationally certified as a patrol dog and a narcotics dog, that those certifications are on record and that Krueger was covered by city insurance even though the lease had been expired. Interim City Administrator Haack explained that he was unable to extend the lease late on the afternoon of October 29, 2010, when he was made aware that it may have expired, and in order to protect the city's liability, he removed Krueger from service. After the discussion, Council authorized Haack to renew a contract with Kay to get Krueger back in service and Haack stated that would it be done as soon as possible.

City Selects Attorney--

City Council

selected Alexandra E. Sosnkowski, PC, as the new City Attorney for the City of Vernonia and directed Interim City Administrator Bill Haack to negotiate a contract for professional services for three years. The vote was three to one in favor of the selection, with Randy Parrow dissenting and Cindy Ball abstaining.

City To Change Utility Delinquent Notices-- Interim City Administrator Bill Haack informed Council that staff is working to change the wording and look of City utility billing notices to make it more clear when customer accounts are delinquent and when service is going to be shut off.

Council Approves Two More Flood Acquisition Projects-- Council approved the signing of purchase and sale agreements for two more properties and authorized the use of CDBG and HMGP funds in relation to the 2007 FEMA Flood Event. The two properties that the city will be acquiring are at 960 Mist Drive and 1193 Knott Street.

Vernonia Schools Receive Donation from City of Maupin-- Mayor Harrison announced that the City of Maupin has joined the City of Nehalem

in contributing to the construction of the new Vernonia school project with a donation of \$1,000. Nehalem Mayor Shirley Kalkhoven has publicly challenged all Oregon cities to consider assisting Vernonia with the rebuilding of the schools. Harrison expressed thanks to the 414 citizens of Maupin for their generous support.

Mayor Proclaims October 29, 2010, Banks-Vernonia State Trail Appreciation Day-- Vernonia Mayor Sally Harrison read a proclamation, which she had previously read at the grand opening of the new trailhead in Banks for the Banks-Vernonia State Linear Trail, proclaiming October 29th, 2010, as Banks-Vernonia State Trail Appreciation Day in the City of Vernonia to recognize the ongoing and superlative achievements of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, especially those of the Banks-Vernonia Trail rangers and staff.

Council Approves Two IGA's-- Council approved two Intergovernmental Agreements with Columbia County; one involving coordination of activities relating to Emergency Management services and the other pertaining to solid waste flow control.

How to Detect a Water Leak

In recent months on more than one occasion the City of Vernonia Public Works Department has suspected that high water consumption may be a signal that a household or commercial water customer may have a leak.

How to Find Your Leak

Undetected leaks can be costly. If you think you may have a water leak, your water meter is your best detective to help you find it:

- Turn off all faucets and water-using appliances, such as the dish and clothes washers.
- Locate your water meter and lift the cover to see the meter dial.
- Note the position of the sweep hand, or use a marker on the lens cover.
- Wait 20-30 minutes and check the sweep hand location again. If the sweep hand has moved, you possibly could have a leak somewhere in your system.
- Most meters have a red "telltale" indicator. If you see it moving when all water is off, you possibly could have a leak.

Looking For Leaks

- Your toilet may have a silent leak. Drop a little food coloring into the tank. Wait about 10 minutes without flushing. If color appears in the bowl, you have a leak.
- Check for moist spots around and under the house plumbing and around outdoor plumbing.
- Replace worn washers in faucets and showerheads. Even a small drip can waste as much as 170 gallons of water each day, or 5,000 gallons per month.

Winter Preparedness Forum November 13

The City of Vernonia invites all citizens to attend a Public Forum on Winter Preparedness and Community Action Requirements on Saturday November 13, 2010 at 12:00 PM at the Vernonia Community Learning Center, 939 Bridge Street.

This event has been scheduled to discuss emergency preparedness and storm response before, during and after inclement weather. City and County staff will address the responsibility of the

City, the responsibility of land/home owners, and the responsibility of the general public.

It is critical that we all work together to minimize the potential negative impacts inclement weather can have on our community. Please plan to attend this forum.

If you are unable to attend but have questions you would like answered, please feel forward them to Joann Glass, 503-429-5291 x104 or email joann@vernonia-or.gov.

Come Celebrate "The Spirit of Christmas in Vernonia"

Come to the beautiful town of Vernonia on Saturday, December 4 and celebrate the First Annual, The Spirit of Christmas in Vernonia Celebration. All of Vernonia have come together to create a nostalgic day that is reminiscent of Christmas's long ago. Our celebration will run from 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM and will take place throughout downtown (Bridge Street) Vernonia.

Events of the family-friendly day include; a live Nativity, traveling carolers, hot cider, music, a choir performance, hot chocolate, period costumes, Christmas storytelling, Vernonia Coffee, and a holiday baked goods competition. Stop by and see the Christmas Bazaar at Vernonia Middle School. Pictures with Santa and Mrs. Clause will be available in the downtown-area. Our local businesses

will be offering special discounts to assist with your holiday shopping. In addition to these events, we will be conducting two fundraisers; collecting non-perishable food for Vernonia Cares food bank and cash donations for our Community Closet.

At 6:00 PM you will be treated to a lighted parade. Kicking it off will be our local pets followed by decorated floats and finishing with our favorite, lighted log trucks. A tree lighting ceremony will complete the day's events. Programs will be available at the downtown businesses or our local papers.

We look forward to sharing the wonders of our town with you!

For more information check us out on Facebook or contact Marilyn Nicks at 503-429-0335.

Calling All Holiday Bakers and Gingerbread House Makers!

As you may have heard, a group of downtown business owners and other local citizens have banded together to organize the 1st annual *The Spirit of Christmas in Vernonia*. A family-friendly celebration, to be held on Saturday, December 4 from 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM.

As part of the festivities we are going to have a holiday baked goods and gingerbread house competition.

If you love to bake and/or build gingerbread houses and would like to be a part of this fun event, please contact the competition organizer, Catherine Helmer, at 503-914-9525 or catherine.helmer@yahoo.com

All ages are welcome to participate!