

Readers Lend Their Voices... *continued from page 4*

eight. There is no reason to believe that another new City Administrator can do any better than the others.

Working with the Airport Committee, Bill Haack has been outstanding and very willing to work for the better of the city and the Airport Committee.

We highly recommend that as our elected representatives of the City of Vernonia that you do the right thing on this and hire current Pro tem City Administrator Bill Haack.

Michael Seager
Georgeanna Seager

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

We are aware of the three options before you regarding the position of City Administrator. We as staff would like to voice our opinion on the matter. We would encourage you all to consider what is currently on the plate of the City and if bringing in someone new who will have to spend months getting familiar with everything is the best choice for the City and the community. We feel that expending money and time on searching for someone that may not exist is not the responsible thing to do. What guarantee do we have that someone else would do a better job? How could this person possibly get acclimated to the huge job of managing this City's current list of projects without losing a lot of time in the process? We have been through too many administrators over the past few years and things just aren't moving forward. This needs to stop. Every time a change is made, we have to start over. We currently have a very competent leader who has been involved with the projects either directly or indirectly for the past three years. He has many contacts that a new person won't have. He also has the respect of the staff and a good working relationship with all of us. He also has

the respect of many in the community. With his help things are finally starting to move in a positive direction. Staff is asking that you choose the option to retain Bill Haack as City Administrator.

Thank you,
Angie Handegard
Joann Glass
Ginger Westlake
Jeff Burch
Carole Connell
Micheal Conner
Sean Carnahan
Marjorie Lawrence

To the Editor,

In his rather short employment for the City of Vernonia, Bill Haack seems to be getting his 'bearings'. He is closely involved in many current and future projects that are vital to our City. As a committee member he has worked with our committee and others toward improving Vernonia. Everyone is aware of the construction underway, and these involve close dealings with the City Government.

Bill is working with the State Highway Department, now involved with improvements to the New School Campus access. Currently FEMA land acquisitions of over 40 properties are an active issue, as is the major City wide GIS mapping project. Other important issues are the \$400,000 EPA grant being considered, the Pinchot Institute study, and discussions of the City needs for a Wastewater Facility and the impact.

These along with the host of lesser publicized issues leaves me to wonder if this is a good time to disrupt his employment. What about an employment contract negotiated for a short term, then evaluate and reconsider the current 'call for an Administrator

search' as the term progresses?

I appreciate the volunteers, and I encourage the City Council to keep involved with the progress of the City.

Jerry Keenon
Vernonia

To the Editor,

Bill Haack has been in this City since the flood of 2007 and has shown over and over again the ability to get things done in a professional and calm manner. The City Manager position is not always a popular seat when rules and regulations have to be followed, certainly everyone understands that to be a good leader you have to do what is right not always what is popular. Bill has a proven record of doing what it takes to help the City grow and prosper.

It is very important for the City Council members to remember they are making a decision FOR ALL OF US THAT LIVE IN THE CITY and that they have taken their seats to hear and speak for the majority. I see too often a Council Member let a personal issue get in the way of the important issues our City is faced with and waste everyone's time and energy on petty stuff. Let's look forward and get Bill Haack to work!

Sharon A. Bernal,
Chair of the Vernonia Economic Development Committee
Member of the Vernonia Education Committee
Member of the Downtown Association
Member of the Oregon Solution Steering Committee

Dear Editor,

How many more City Administrators (CA) do we have to get until we get it right? We currently

have an excellent candidate holding the position in a temporary status. Based on recent history, he has been doing a great job and making the city work as it should by keeping employees informed and holding them accountable. An added plus is his integrity and he WANTS to be here.

But three of our councilors, for one reason or another, decide that is not enough. So, what options do we have? We can toss a bucket of bullion to LOC and let them find us a candidate. We can do the search ourselves. It will likely cost us a great deal of time that we do not have to spare with all the current projects on the platter. I'm sure there will also be affiliated costs with a self search.

Maybe we can find a CA locally? Well, if memory serves me correctly (and it does), we tried that a few years ago and the poor lass was completely overwhelmed by the job. Maybe we can go to the CA tree and pick a ripe one or maybe one will fall from the sky. Hey, it could happen.

The first really important decision by the new council and only 2 of 5 get a passing grade. One of the major complaints I've heard is that we have not had continuity at CA for a long time. Either a CA leaves, does a poor job, is already retired or enlivens the community to gather tar and feathers. We have plenty of rails.

Government must work as a team doing the peoples business. Your vote on the CA position shows me and many others that you do not care a wit for the people. However you look at it, your choice is a loss for our city, a loss of time, money and more time in getting the new CA up to speed.

Burt Tschache
Vernonia

An Opinion: Choosing a City Administrator *continued from page 3*

group of city employees, a group of citizens, and the Council. Interview questions were formulated by consultant Jim Johnson. Who will create the questions this time? Will citizens and staff be involved with the search process? Will Haack be fairly scrutinized and given a fair chance by all members of the Council?

Communication Style-- Several Councilors have complained that they don't like Bill Haack's communication style. I have never had any problem getting information from Haack. If I have a question, I pick up the phone and call, send an email, or stop by City Hall. Haack is always accommodating and helpful. Councilors saying they can't get information

is, to me, an excuse. Communications styles go both ways and are something that can be worked on and improved. Is this really a valid reason to hire someone new?

What's Best For Vernonia? In the end, this is the most important question. When this Council was elected, I said I thought it would take six months to a year for the new members to get up to speed on everything that was ongoing. Haack has been on the job eight months, full time, and he is still uncovering new issues that he needs to deal with. All three new members of Council have spent an extra amount of time in study sessions, workshops and meetings,

trying to educate themselves about city business, and I commend them for that. But does this new Council really believe they understand enough to turn our City over to someone new so soon? Will this be in our best interests.

Changing Administrators now is a huge decision for Vernonia. Council has chosen to take it on and I hope, for their sake and ours, they get it right. The citizens voted them into office hoping they would lead our city and represent us. This is their first big test.



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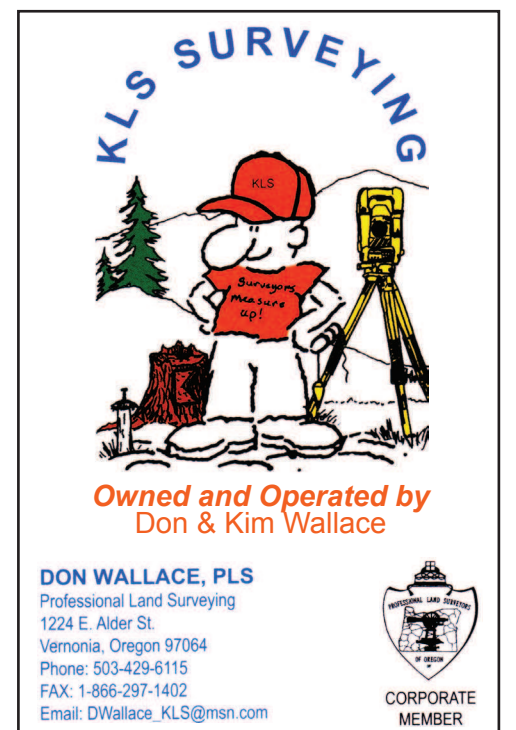


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