

Vernonia City News...

At the May 2, 2011 Vernonia City Council Meeting:

Council Votes to Terminate Contract with Haack—In a 3-2 vote Council voted to terminate the Personal Services Contract with ColPac for the services of Bill Haack as Interim City Administrator. Voting in favor were Councilors Willow Burch, who brought the motion forward, Kevin Hudson and Marilyn Nicks. (See full story on front page)

Council Removes Item From Agenda—At the request of Councilor Kevin Hudson, and with support from Councilors Willow Burch and Marilyn Nicks, report on the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) investigation into Vernonia Police Officer Mike Kay was removed from the agenda. (See full story on front page)

Metro West Ambulance Declares EMS Week—Jeremy Raymond, an employee of Metro West Ambulance, was present to declare May 15-21 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week.

Sheriff Dickerson Gives Information About Measure 5-210—Columbia County Sheriff Jeff Dickerson presented Council and the audience information about the campaign for Measure 5-210, a property tax levy that would raise funds for the Sheriff's Office and provide additional patrol officers, including one dedicated to the Nehalem Valley, and investigators to follow up on criminal activities.

Mayor Appoints Lindsley to Public Works Committee—Mayor Josette Mitchell, with the approval of Council, appointed Roger Lindsley to the Public Works Committee.

Council Approves Support of CCET—Council approved an expenditure of \$2500 to help support the Columbia County Economic Development Team which was launched in October 2010.

Council Approves Rule Change—Council approved a change to Section 26 of the Vernonia City Council Rules, adding the statement: "Councilor wishing to move for a reconsideration should notify

City Staff and Council of said action by the Monday following the Council meeting in which the original vote was taken, allowing seven (7) days prior to the Council meeting in which the reconsideration will take place to give fellow Councilors and Staff time to deliberate on the matter."

Council Approves Contract Amendment—By a 4-1 vote, Council approved an amended version of the Flood Mitigation Contract between the City of Vernonia and Custom Excavation by Dean Larson Inc. Councilor Willow Burch voted against this.

Council Approves Engineering for Wastewater Facility Plan—By a 4-1 vote, Council approved a Motion to authorize the City Administrator to direct the City Engineer to complete certain engineering assignments associated with the Wastewater Facility Plan including a geotechnical analysis of the proposed project site, a dye study of the Lake and a complete chemical analysis of the Lake. Councilor Willow Burch voted against this.

Council Authorized Exchange Agreement for Rose Avenue Property—Council authorized the Interim City Administrator to sign the Exchange Agreement for real property, the Public Easement, and the Accepted Deed offered through an agreement with Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for the Rose Avenue Property in exchange for an easement along the extension of the Banks--Vernonia Linear Trail from the Trailhead at Anderson Park to and around Vernonia Lake.

Council Approves Parks Maintenance Position—Council approved the hiring of one or two seasonal workers to provide services to the City Parks Department in accordance with the approved budget.

Council Approves School Site Sale Agreement and Ground Lease—Council authorized the Interim City Administrator to sign the existing School Site Sale Agreement and the Ground Lease with Vernonia School District 47J as approved by the City Attorney.

State Outlines Allegations Against Kay *continued from front page*

misrepresented his current certifications.

8) In 2004 Kay was dishonest during his pre-employment interview with Vernonia Police Chief Matt Workman when asked to explain the circumstances surrounding his affirmative response to having been the subject of a restraining order.

In addition, the letter dated April 26 states that during its investigation DPSST has identified another issue which will be reviewed by the Police Policy Committee—that in the 2004 pre-employment application and questionnaire for the Vernonia Police Department, it appears Kay was untruthful when he responded "No" to the following questions: Been the suspect in any police investigation?; Been charged with a crime?; Been detained, questioned, held on suspicion, fingerprinted or taken into custody by law enforcement officers for any reason other than minor traffic violations?; Been placed in a diversion program resulting of any arrest?; Been or are you currently under investigation by any law enforcement agency concerning alleged violation of law?.

The City of Vernonia made those letters public on Tuesday April 26, and they were included as an agenda topic at the May 2, 2011, Vernonia City Council meeting. Council voted 3-2 at the start of the meeting to remove that item from that agenda, based on Councilor Kevin Hudson's request that it not be discussed until after the officer in question had had his due process.

At that same May 2, 2011, City Council Meeting, Council also added a last minute item to its agenda—a review of the Personal Services Contract with ColPac for Interim City Administrator Haack's services. When this item came up, Council voted 3-2 to terminate the contract without cause, effective immediately. According to the contract, the city is required to give ColPac two weeks' notice in this situation.

In addition to the release of the three letters, Interim City Administrator Bill Haack sent out a press release on Monday April 25th stating that the DPSST

proceedings are separate from any employment-related proceedings and that DPSST does not have the authority to make decisions regarding Kay's employment. According to Haack, the City of Vernonia has been advised by outside legal counsel as well as its insurance carrier that it has an obligation to conduct its own investigation.

The City additionally made public an email dated April 26, 2011, sent from City Attorney Alex Sosnkowski to the City Council and signed by both Interim City Administrator Bill Haack and Sosnkowski. In that email Council is informed that, "...waiting for the conclusion of the DPSST process to take any action could stretch this matter into 2012—which the City cannot fiscally afford to do."

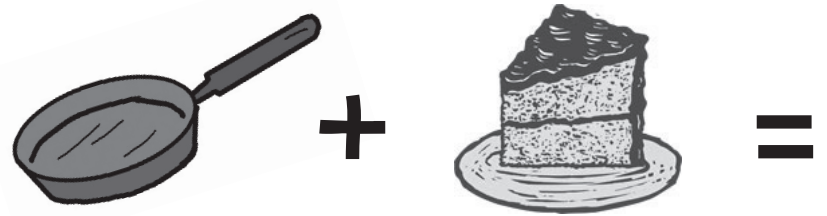
In that same email, Haack and Sosnkowski remind Council that Haack's position as Interim City Administrator does not give him the authority to hire and terminate employees—that authority is retained by the City Council. "This pending personnel matter requires decision makers to be as fully informed as possible, unbiased, and free from conflict of interest. Because you may be the decision maker, and we are aware of preexisting personal relationships between Council members, their families, and Sgt. Kay, we have advised you to refrain from discussing the matter or forming an opinion not based on the record," states

the email.

The email states: "We are deeply concerned that the City take legal and appropriate action on the Kay personnel matter and believe that perhaps we have been less than clear on what the City and City Council is facing in this matter."

The email goes on to state other ramifications of Council not taking the time to complete their own review of the record and to act legally and appropriately, including reviews of the process in court, by other public agencies, and the "court of public opinion;" the loss of the City's ability to be supported by CityCounty Insurance Services, and the loss of post-flood good will.

Vernonia Volunteer Firefighter's 4th Annual



Pancake Feed!

Sunday, May 22nd
8:00am ~ 1:00pm
School Cafeteria

Pancakes, Biscuits & Gravy, Ham, Eggs, Fruit & More!
Coffee provided by Vernonia Coffee Roasters

Blood pressure checks & fire truck rides!

Adult Plate \$6 Kid Plate (12 & under) \$4
Seniors (62+) \$5 Family (max 6) \$25

someone told me I couldn't be myself

your an artist right?

makes me want to prove them wrong?

Peak the Dyslexic Bird