

Vernonia City News...

At the September 3, 2013 City Council Meeting

Topics From the Floor-Several members of the Vernonia Parks Committee spoke and raised concerns about the quality of the construction by the Vernonia School District at the new Spencer Park sports complex. The School District is responsible for constructing two replacement soccer fields and one baseball field. The construction is at the site of the old school campus and is part of the land swap that took place for the new school campus. When construction is complete the new sports fields will be turned over to, and owned by the City of Vernonia. Scott Laird, Jerry Keenon, Casey Mitchell, and Katie Poetter all spoke and asked City Council to monitor the construction closely and make sure that the project is constructed correctly and that the RFP is followed to ensure that the City receive, a quality product that meets industry standards. Council discussed the issue later in the meeting in more detail.

Nicholas Welch reported that the Summer Meals Program served over 3,000 meals to children, adults and volunteers. The program recorded over 350 volunteer hours.

Council Discusses Spencer Park Construction-City Administrator Bill Haack updated Council on details of the development at the new Spencer Park. Haack told Council that gravel from the old school site was moved to a location near Vernonia Lake where it will be stored temporarily. The storage area is in the 500 year flood plain but did not flood in 2007. The gravel will be used for various City projects over the next year, primarily for the wastewater dike elevation project. Haack also told Council that the Parks Committee has identified a location on the site of the new park for the new rest room and picnic shelter. Council also discussed concerns raised by members of the Parks Committee about the quality of the construction at the new Spencer Park. Specifically, concerns were raised about the need for placement of fabric over the Washington Grade School footprint, the quality of the topsoil that was being imported and placed on the site, the ability of the contractor to remove debris larger than 1" in diameter, the quality of the fill that would be placed on the infield of the baseball diamond and the compaction of the fill over the entire site. Council determined that they would immediately draft and send a letter to the Columbia County Board of Commissioners, asking that they hold all monies until the replacement park is accepted by the City and completed to specifications in the RFP. The City also asked that the City Engineer be allowed to inspect the project to ensure that all requirements are being met. Columbia County is part of a joint agreement between the City of Vernonia and the Vernonia School District. Columbia County is ultimately responsible for accepting the final park product and releasing funds to the School District for the construction.

At a special meeting on Monday September 9 the City Council met with the Parks Committee, Vernonia School District Superintendent Ken Cox and members of the School Board. At that meeting it was

determined that a professional, third-party consultant, Damon Richardson from Pacific Sport Turf, would act as an independent reviewer for the replacement park construction. The consultant reviewed plans and specifications, a soil report, geo technical report, the RFP, and project architect Kurt Lango's site report. The consultant also did a site visit on Thursday September 12 and was expected to deliver a written report of his findings concerning the project.

Council held an additional special meeting on Friday September 13 and agreed with a suggestion made by Richardson that no more fabric should be placed on the site and that water should be forced into the areas over the Washington Grade School footprint to fill the gaps and assist the settling process.

Council Denies Trailer Permit-Council rejected an application for Inhabiting a Travel Trailer from Stuart Potter. The application was for temporary and periodic habitation at 658 Weed Avenue. Council determined that the applicant was not the executor of the estate.

Council Approves Intrafunds Transfer-Council approved Resolution 16-13 making two adjustments to the General Fund budget for fiscal year 2013 -14. The transfers moved \$1600 from Contingency and increased the Library Grant Expense by \$1000 because of funds that were not spent in the previous year and had been absorbed into Contingency, and increased Vehicle Lease to \$600 to pay for lease payments for the vehicle used by the Buildings and Ground Maintenance employee.

Council Approves Fee Schedule Adjustment-Council approved Resolution 17-13 amending the Master Fee Schedule and reflecting changes suggested by the Cemetery Committee. The change in fees include an increase from \$450 to \$500 for Cremation Internment, and slight increases for overtime charges for ground burial services.

Council Meets in Executive Session-Council recessed to meet in Executive Session under ORS 192.660 (2) (h) *Legal Council*. City Attorney Ruben Cleaveland was on hand for the session. Following the Executive Session Council took no further action.

At the September 16, 2013 City Council Meeting

Council Discusses Spencer Park Construction-Council once again discussed concerns about the construction of the new Spencer Park at the old school site. Vernonia School District Superintendent Dr. Ken Cox and School Board President Bill Langmaid were both in attendance and answered questions from the Council. Council was given a report written by Damon Richardson, a consultant from Pacific Sports Turf, who has been engaged by the School District and the City of Vernonia to act as a third party inspector of the construction project. Council was also given the Observation Report written by Project Architect Kurt Lango of Lango Hansen. Richardson's report, written

on September 16, following a site visit on September 12, noted several deficiencies in the quality of the soil being imported from the new school construction site, the safety of the finished playing surface given the large amount and size of debris in the imported topsoil, the ability of fields to be maintained and grow grass and several other concerns. Lango's report, written on September 2, notes concerns about the quality of the topsoil that was imported to the site and recommended that any more topsoil that comes from the new school construction site should be screened prior to being placed at the new park.

Councilor Kim Tierney, along with several other Councilors were visibly upset and critical of the School District for ignoring the concerns raised by the report from Lango Hansen and allowing the poor quality soil to continue to be moved onto the park site. Superintendent Cox stated that the School District's Project Manager, Rod McDowell, failed to deal with the issue when it was raised by Lango Hansen.

The School District and City were waiting for results from soil testing that Richardson suggested, which would help determine what amendments would be needed to bring the soil up to the specifications in the original RFP for the project. All parties agreed to follow the intent of the recommendations made by Richardson. Cox stated that School District intended to complete the project to the specifications and would work to find solutions for the City's concerns.

A follow-up meeting to review the soil testing results and develop an action plan for completion of the construction was tentatively scheduled for September 23 at 7:00 PM.

Police Department Update-Council heard an update from Police Chief Michael Conner. Conner informed Council that his department has received an automatic policy update which has been implemented. He also informed Council that he has applied for three grants that cover seat belt enforcement, DUI enforcement and speed enforcement. Conner also told Council that the VPD has received a donation from Intel for \$1800 that he would like to use to make a bid on a used police vehicle that the City of Culver is putting up for auction. The vehicle is a 2005 Crown Victoria. Conner told Council the rest of the funds for the purchase would come from selling an older vehicle in his fleet. Council gave consensus approval.

Council Approves Travel Trailer Permit-Council approved an application for an Inhabiting a Travel Trailer Permit for 658 Weed Avenue. Council had rejected the application at their last meeting and requested that additional signatures be submitted on the application. Stuart Potter re-submitted the application with the needed signatures, which Council approved.

Cedergreen to Continue on Library Board-Council approved a request from Janelle Cedergreen and the Library Board for Cedergreen to continue to serve on the Library Board for another four year term.



Hello Friends & Neighbors,

I am writing to let you know that I am now located at a new address. Vernonia Realty 953 Bridge St. in Vernonia. I am a Real Estate Broker and I really like this office, as we have a group of friendly experienced professionals who work together as a team to meet the needs of both buyers and seller.

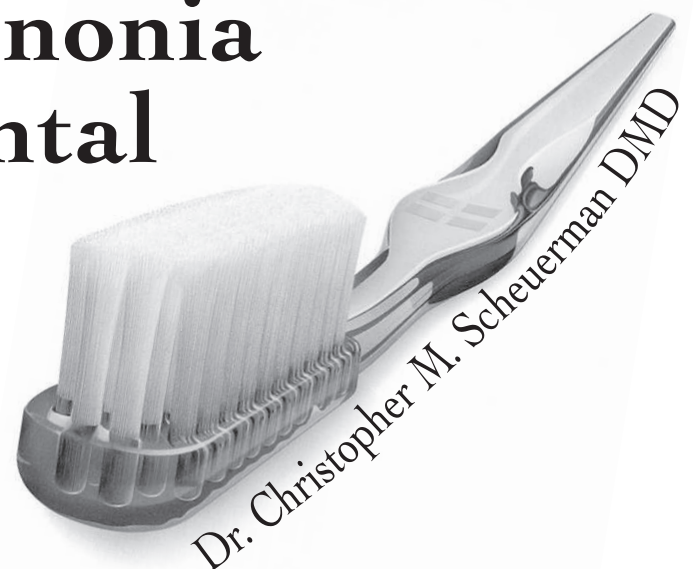
Vernonia Realty has been in business for over 50 years. I have had my license for 10 years and I am prepared to professionally help you meet all your real estate needs.

Come and see me, I would be delighted to answer any of your questions regarding real estate. You may contact me at Vernonia Realty's office or call 503-429-6203. I am looking forward to meeting with you.

Robin Murphy
Vernonia Realty
953 Bridge St.
Vernonia, Oregon 97064
503-429-6203



Vernonia Dental



622 Bridge Street Vernonia, OR 97064
phone (503) 429-0880 -- fax (503) 429-0881