

Vernonia City News...

At the November 25, 2013 Special City Council Meeting:

Council Discusses Biosolids Plan- Council held a Special Meeting to discuss moving forward with a plan to remove biosolids from the wastewater lagoon system. The meeting followed a joint meeting of the City Council and the Public Works Committee on November 20, in which the City Engineer/Project Manager and other experts were invited to answer questions and concerns about the Wastewater Upgrade project. At the November 25 meeting, Council expressed displeasure with the decision making process on the project and the advice and information they are receiving from their project manager and staff. At the center of the concern is an estimate for the cost for trucking and disposing the biosolids after they have been removed. Council expressed that they believed the estimate was 33% too high and would have cost the City an extra \$250,000. Council voted to have Mayor Mitchell review their contract with Otack, the City Engineering firm, and contact Otack to discuss the current project management situation. Council also decided to generate a new RFP by December 6 which would separate the dredging contract from the hauling and disposal contract.

At the December 2, 2013 City Council Meeting:

Council Hears Presentation on Substantial Damage- Council heard a presentation from Dan Brown on

Oregon Senate Bill 465 which allows the City of Vernonia to record a Notice of Designation of Substantial Damage on properties damaged by flood. The bill helps local governments gain compliance with federal flood insurance laws and puts future property owners on notice that a Notice has been recorded with the County Clerk indicating that the property has not been brought into compliance with local code.

Council Hears Presentation About Emergency Management- Columbia County Commissioner Tony Hyde made a presentation to Council on the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization (RDPO) which he chairs. Hyde introduced the Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) system which is intended to address the need for an agreed upon method for scarce resource allocation, unified policy decision, public messaging, and develop a regional common operating plan during complex, multi-agency/discipline emergencies. The system is designed to support incident management teams during major disasters. A task force has been developed which includes members from Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington Counties and reflects a range of disciplines including fire, public works, emergency management, law enforcement, public health and transportation.

City Authorized to Offer Fifty Year Lease- Mayor Josette Mitchell provided Council with a letter from Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD)

Director Tim Woods, approving the City of Vernonia's request to grant a fifty year lease to the Vernonia Health Board for property to construct a new health clinic. OPRD had previously transferred the property in question to the City with the intent of helping re-establish community services following the 2007 flood. The property will be used to construct a new medical facility out of the flood zone. Some of the grant funding that the Vernonia Health Board has secured for construction is contingent on the Health Board having a lease agreement for at least fifty years. Council also discussed details of the lease and instructed the Health Board to review and report back with any problems they have with the first draft of a lease the City offered.

Topics From the Floor- Heather Lewis representing the Vernonia Health Board informed Council that the Health Board has completed their Emergency Preparedness Plan and have entered into an agreement with West Oregon Electric Cooperative to use space in their facility in the event of a natural disaster that impacted the current medical clinic. Lewis also informed the Council that the Health Board has been awarded two more grants: \$300,000 from the Meyer Memorial Trust and \$35,000 from the Oregon Community Foundation, which leaves the project short just a few thousand dollars.

Council Approves Airport Ground Lease- Council approved a ground lease at the Vernonia Airport which provides for temporary RV living. The lease runs from December 2, 2013 and is valid for four months. Rent is \$450 per month. The space is occupied during the rest of the year by the Airport Park Host. Airport Park will be closed from December through April 1, 2014. Council approved the Lease by a vote of 4-0, although Council agreed that the Lease agreement needs to be revisited after this term to include limits of the number of people living at the site. Councilor Donna Webb, who attended the meeting by conference call, abstained from voting because she did not have a copy of the agreement. Council later approved Resolution 20-13 which authorizes the agreement.

Council Tables Several Items- Council held discussions on several items and chose to table the issues until a later meeting.

Council discussed signing an amended Intergovernmental Agreement with Columbia County for Homeland Security and Emergency Management services. Council delayed a decision until they could look over financial and budget information concerning where the \$3,409 in funding to participate comes from out of the City budget.

Council discussed a recommendation from the Public Works Committee to adopt a three year sewer rate increase. Council delayed a decision until the public could be notified.

Council discussed a Right-of-Way Dedication on Alder Street but delayed a decision until they could get more information from the City Planner.

Council Directs Staff to Record Substantial Damage- Council voted to instruct staff to identify all properties within city limits that have been substantially damaged and to declare those properties with the County Clerk by February 2, 2014.

Council Authorizes Enterprise Zone- Council Passed Resolution 21-13 which changes the boundary of the South Columbia County Enterprise Zone and adds the City of Vernonia as a cosponsor of the zone. Inclusion in the zone is expected to benefit the local economy and provides three to five year property tax exceptions for new investments in plant and equipment for eligible business firms.

Council Meets in Executive Session- Council met in Executive Session under ORS 192.660 (2)(i) *Performance Evaluations of Public Officers and Employees*. Upon returning to regular session Council scheduled a Executive Session on Thursday December 5 at 7:30 under ORS 192.660 (2)(b) *To consider the dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent who does not request an open hearing.*

City Information and Updates Available by Email

Citizens who wish to receive meeting information and updates can request to be placed on an email list at City Hall. Please contact Joann Glass at joann@vernonia-or.gov and asked to be placed on the "Citizen Notification List."

Co-mingle Recycling is Moving!

from Waste Management Transfer Station
to D.A.D.'s Recycling
2024 Mist Drive



Now available
Tue, Thr, Sat
10am-5pm

Terry's Gym



JOIN
THE TEAM!

503-901-1705
16720 Noakes Rd. Vernonia

Vernonia Dental



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

Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

City Council Meetings are
scheduled for 7 PM:
Monday, December 16, 2013

City Closures are scheduled for:
Tuesday, December 24 at Noon
Wednesday, December 25
Christmas Day

*Dates and times subject to change
due to conflicts of schedules*