

Vernonia City News...

At the September 15, 2014 City Council Meeting:

City Votes to Forgive School SDC Debt- Council voted 4-1 to forgive the Vernonia School District for the remaining debt of \$103,159 owed to the City for System Development Charges (SDC's) from construction of the new school campus. Superintendent Aaron Miller, along with State Senator Betsy Johnson, County Commissioner Tony Hyde, and others addressed the Council at their July 7, 2014 meeting and requested the debt be forgiven to enhance fundraising efforts for the school. The District is trying to retire approximately \$5 million in debt from construction. The original SDC amount was calculated at \$261,144; the City gave the District credit for \$121,985, leaving a balance of \$139,159. The District had arranged to make annual payments of \$36,000 and made one payment in that amount in 2013. Councilor Donna Webb argued and voted against debt forgiveness for the District, noting concerns about setting a precedence of debt forgiveness, whether this amount will make a difference in the big picture in fundraising for the District, and that she makes decisions based on following rules. Webb suggested additional deferral of the debt instead of forgiveness. Councilor Bruce McNair expressed concerns about the impact of losing SDC funds would have on the City, but ended up voting in favor of forgiveness. Mayor Josette Mitchell and Councilor Kim Tierney expressed disappointment

that Superintendent Miller was not present to answer questions. Arguments for debt forgiveness from Councilors Tierney and Randy Parrow included the importance of the schools success to the overall health of the community, that the request came from politicians who have brought a lot of resources to Vernonia, and confidence in the new leadership at the District.

Hearing on Zone Change Delayed- The Planning Commission hearing to consider a zone change from Residential-R to Commercial-C for the old Lincoln School property at 1462 Bridge Street, was continued to September 18. The Council hearing on the issue, originally scheduled for the September 15 meeting, has been tentatively rescheduled for October 6, 2014.

Council Adopts Utilities Ordinance- Council adopted Ordinance 895, which rewrites and clarifies the rules and regulations for management of the Water Utilities. The new ordinance repeals all previous ordinances.

Topics From the Floor- Burdett Robb spoke against the proposed change in zoning the old Lincoln School property which the Planning Commission is currently considering. Burdett, a neighbor of the property, raised concerns that a zone change would lead to alcohol consumption and other associated issues and increased traffic in the neighborhood.

Ernie Smith, owner of the All In Pub at 733 Bridge Street, told Council that he and other business owners are concerned about the trees that line Bridge Street. Smith said the trees have grown too tall and block visibility of businesses and that they are causing damage to the sidewalks. He suggested something smaller should be planted.

Council Approves Street Closure for Salmon Festival- Council approved a request to close Park Drive from 4:00 PM Friday, October 5 through Sunday, October 7 for Salmon Festival. The vote was 4-0 with Mayor Josette Mitchell, who organizes the event and made the request, abstaining.

Council Hears Presentation About Rose Avenue Project- Jim Tierney, representing the Vernonia Senior Center and Vernonia Cares, updated Council on the Rose Avenue Project. Tierney told Council that a proposal to adapt the Vernonia Community Learning Center (VCLC) for use as the new Senior Center has been rejected. Tierney asked Council if he could pursue a lease agreement for temporary use of the VCLC as the Senior Center Thrift Store. Tierney presented Council with a preliminary budget for the full development of the new Senior Center/Food Bank project; the total budget was just under \$3 million which included \$2 million in CDBG funds and \$700,000 in

private foundation grant funds. Tierney also asked the Council to consider having the City ask Community Action Team and the Johnson Foundation to match a challenge from the City to contribute operating funds to the Senior Center. Tierney suggested a total of \$10,000 to \$12,000 for the challenge.

City Administrator Report- City Administrator Gian Paulo Mammone, who just returned from a week of Flood Plain management training, updated Council on Spencer Park construction, the Community Assistance Visit (CAV) by FEMA, and a project on the old mill site to test clay as a possible material for building the dike elevation at the sewer lagoons. Mammone told Council the CAV identified deficiencies and violations in flood plain management within the City but that FEMA feels the City is making adequate progress towards resolving the issues.

Council Receives Letter of Resignation- Council received a letter of resignation from Carl Holsey, who resigned from the Public Works Committee.

Council Holds Executive Session- Council recessed to Executive Session under ORS 196.660(2)(h) to meet with Legal Council. City attorney Rueben Cleaveland was in attendance. Following the return to regular session, Council took no further action.

Witt Nominated by the Oregon Working Families Party

Representative Brad Witt has received the nomination of the Working Families Party (WFP) in his re-election bid for State Representative of Oregon's House District 31. The WFP is the second party to nominate Witt for a 5th term in the State Legislature, representing Columbia and northern portions of Washington and Multnomah Counties. Witt also received the Democratic Party's nomination to fill the House District 31 seat earlier this year.

Oregon's WFP was established in 2006 in an effort to provide political backing for the working families of our state who may feel under-represented or perhaps even alienated by the sharp political divisions that exist between the Republican and Democratic Parties.

The WFP's priorities include

better and higher paying jobs for Oregonians, improved financial security for workers/retirees and their families and a renewed prosperity across Oregon's rural and urban communities alike.

The WFP has also been a leader in promoting educational and technical training opportunities, affordable housing and sensible foreign trade policies.

Commenting on his latest nomination, Representative Witt said "I am proud and pleased to be the nominee of the Working Families Party of Oregon. Their nomination validates my career-long efforts to support economic and workforce development and the security of our state's middle class working families."

Police Blotter September 1-15, 2014

Arrests/Reports Taken

- September 3, 2014 - Arrest in the 400 Block of Jefferson Ave for Disorderly Conduct.
- September 8, 2014 - Death Investigation in the 600 Block of Madison Ave.
- September 8, 2014 - Informational Report taken on an incident that occurred in the 300 Block of B St.
- September 9, 2014 - Report of Criminal Mischief on E. Bridge St near Lakeview Dr.
- September 13, 2014 - Report of Theft and Unlawful Entry into

- a Motor Vehicle in the 1600 Block of Heather Ln. (Ongoing Investigation)
- September 14, 2014 - Death Investigation in the 1900 Block of Weed Ave.

Traffic Citations

- September 3, 2014 - Issued a traffic citation for Violation of Posted Speed Limit (70/55) on Hwy 47 near Milepost 65.
- September 3, 2014 - Issued a traffic citation for Driving While Suspended and Driving Uninsured on Weed Ave. near Bridge St.

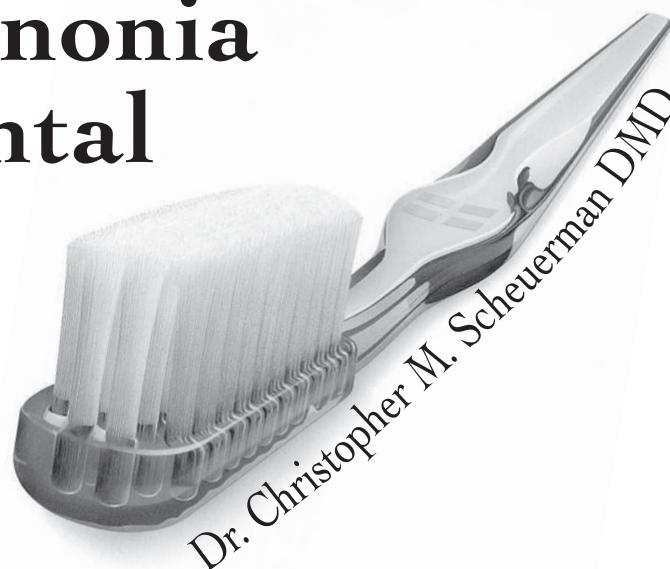
Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

City Council Meetings are scheduled for 7 PM:
Monday, October 6, 2014
Monday, October 20, 2014

City Closures are scheduled for:
Tuesday, November 11, 2014
Veterans Day

Dates and times subject to change due to conflicts of schedules

Vernonia Dental



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