

Vernonia City News...

At the November 17, 2014 City Council Meeting:

Council Appoints and Accepts Resignation for Committees- Based on a recommendation from the Airport Committee and with consensus from Council, Mayor Josette Mitchell appointed Georgeanna Seager to the Airport Committee, beginning January 1, 2015.

Council also accepted the resignation of Barbara Ward from the Library Committee.

Topics From the Floor- Bill Sword explained some of the history of the road through his property and told Council he is tired of the City telling him what he can do with regards to traveling through

City owned Anderson Park.

Sword also complained about the garbage containers on Bridge Street at the corners which block drivers view and should be moved to the middle of the block.

Paula Hanson updated Council on her "Walk Your Wheels" project and told them the Lions Club has agreed to pay for eight signs at a cost of \$414.72. Hanson said she has an agreement with four businesses, Black Iron Grill, All In Pub, Vernonia Florist and Galorist and True Value Hardware to place signs on their buildings. Hanson is working with city staff to place the other signs.

Council Discusses Inter Governmental Agreement (IGA) Amendment-

Council discussed an amendment to the IGA between the City of Vernonia and the Vernonia School District for the construction of Spencer Park. Through the construction process several agreements were made for changes to the original agreement, but were not officially documented. The amendment to the IGA updates the final work and documents the District's compliance with the park construction. Council agreed with the amendment and asked that it be sent to School Superintendent Aaron Miller for approval. The School District and City are attempting to close out the project and have final funds (approximately \$500,000) for the construction released from escrow.

Inactive Account Adjustment- Council approved a request from staff to waive fees that were inadvertently charged to a water/sewer account during the process of changing how Inactive Accounts are handled by the City.

Council Tables WWTP Timeline Decision- Council tabled a discussion and made no decision on a timeline they were presented for the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade project. Councilor Bruce McNair raised questions about the bidding process and the costs associated with the proposed extended construction schedule and asked that more information be provided at the next Council meeting. Council agreed to table the discussion.

City Department Updates: November 1-13, 2014

Administration / Utility billing

- The Utility Clerk mailed 896 bills on 24th of October. Late fees will be applied on November 14, 2014. Shut offs will be on November 21, 2014
- Under the direction of Council, the City Administrator and Utility Clerk met to review and draft an update on the "Billing and Collection" section of the Utilities/Water Ordinance. The intent is to simplify and clarify the Billing and Collection process and to limit the opportunity for the creation of large and long term outstanding water bills. Once completed, the draft will be presented to City Council for review.
- Vernonia Cares is asking Businesses and Organizations to come together and help collect food items for the "Annual Christmas Holiday Boxes." City Hall will be a drop location; the goal is to receive 50 boxes of gelatin and 50 boxes of pudding to help support Vernonia Cares. For more information or questions, please call Pam Weller 503-429-4431 or Vernonia Cares 503-429-1414 for drop off sites.
- So far for the month of November we have opened two new utility accounts.
- Utilities Clerk will be sending out the Utility Bills on November 25 and we will have two inserts:
 1. Public Work on Testing Backflow Assemblies
 2. Columbia County Mental Health on Suicide Prevention

Police Department - VPD

- November 1st, 2014 – November 6th, 2014 The Vernonia Police Department documented 43 incidents/calls for service.
- November 7th, 2014 – November 12th, 2014 (5 Days) – The Vernonia Police Department documented 42 incidents/calls for service.
- On Tuesday, November 4th a fire started in a residence on "F" Street. The Vernonia and Mist Fire Departments responded to the call as well as Vernonia Police Department. The house was completely destroyed. No residents were in the home at the time of the fire. This case is currently under investigation.
- We are currently working on completing work on the second new patrol vehicle. Once that is complete, we will be able to begin the sale of the two recently surplussed vehicles.
- We are hoping to complete interviews with the four Reserve

Police officer applicants shortly. Those individuals selected will then be sent in for medical evaluations and psychological testing.

- On November 10th, 2014, the Vernonia Police Department responded to a report of "Found Property" in the 700 Block of Jefferson Ave. The property was a small back pack that contained baggies of Marijuana and a few other items. The owner was identified and the Marijuana was seized. The weight of the Marijuana was just under (1) ounce.
- City Hall staff recently reported a person that has been found sleeping in the restroom/lobby area of City Hall at night. This person was identified and trespassed. Chief discussed with the City Administrator the possibility of locking the outside doors when City Hall is not open. This is not the first occurrence of people sleeping in the lobby and the restroom. In addition, there have been other reports from City Hall of people stealing the toilet paper.
- The Vernonia Police Department is still working on the Nuisance Complaint in the 400 Block of "A" St. The court date that was originally set has been reset. There has been some improvements on the property but it is still not complete. VPD will be contacting the responsible person to provide more direction on what needs to be done to correct the violations.

Finance

- The Finance Director attended the City Council meeting Monday night to provide information regarding the server software upgrade proposal that was submitted to Council for approval. Council approved the funds to be expended in order to upgrade the City's server that houses all City documents and records.
- Finance Director continues to work with Drew Davis from USDA to ensure that all necessary forms, documents, and applications have been submitted so that the Waste Water Treatment Plant project will continue on schedule.
- The City Administrator, Mayor and Finance Director met with Brad Bogus of Tetra Tech and Drew Davis of USDA to clarify necessary project oversight pertaining to the Wastewater Treatment Project. Clarification was also made about a Project Resident Inspector that is required to be onsite to ensure that the contract specifications are being followed,

the project stays on schedule and that all construction regulations are being followed. This position will report to the project manager as well as City staff.

- The Library has been accepted by TechSoup, a discount software provider for non-profits and public libraries. This will allow the Library to update their computer software in a very inexpensive way. Staff will be evaluating comprehensive needs of the Library over the next weeks.
- Finance Director, Billing Clerk and City Administrator met with other members of the sub-committee of the Public Works committee that has been tasked with verifying information in order to complete the sewer rate study. The other members include two members of the Public Works Committee and two members of City Council. This will allow the City to implement rate changes in accordance with the current operating/debt budget. The sub-committee has met twice and plans to meet again in a month or so to finalize the data.
- The Library has entered into a service agreement with Ricoh to provide a new printer/copier/fax machine for the library staff as well as patron use. This lease agreement includes all supplies and maintenance.
- Finance Director is working with the Public Works Foreman to purchase a new motor for the tractor that was formally used to take care of the Cemetery. It has been out of service for the past two years and the cost of a new motor is less than the cost of repairs. We are currently looking at the budget to determine where the funds will come from. Once it's back in service it will be returned to the Cemetery and the mower currently being used will go to the Parks Department.
- The online payment feature is up and running on Munibilling. So far we've had three customers take advantage of being able to pay their bill online. There is a small fee charged by a third party credit card processing service. Please contact City Hall for more information on how to register your account.

Public Works

- Public Works staff continues to locate and exercise water valves throughout the City so if there was a water main break the line could be shut off in a timely manner with minimal water loss or property damage. As a side benefit the job gets public works more familiar with locations of water valves

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Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

City Council Meetings are scheduled for 7 PM:
Monday, December 1, 2014
Monday, December 15, 2014

City Closures are scheduled for:
November 27 & 28, 2014
Thanksgiving & Staff Day

Dates and times subject to change due to conflicts of schedules



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