

City Begins Budget Process

The City of Vernonia has begun their 2016-17 budget process.

The Budget Committee met for the first time on Tuesday, April 12 and received the Budget Message from City Administrator and Budget Officer Josette Mitchell.

The proposed budget, prepared and presented by Finance Officer Angie Handegard and Mitchell, totals \$7,128,988.

“There are no dramatic shifts to reduce or increase city service levels from the current year,” said Mitchell in her prepared Budget Message. “The proposed budget maintains existing service levels in spite of rising costs. We have been able to do this by finding some efficiencies and by keeping costs as low as possible.”

Mitchell lists three community/city goals and objectives for the upcoming fiscal year: completion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility, build the Rose Avenue Senior Center/Food Bank, and construction of California Avenue. Mitchell also listed

the upgrade of the culvert on Adams Avenue and storm drainage work on Knott Street as possible projects in the fiscal year.

The Budget Committee is made up of the five members of the City Council and five citizen members. At the start of the first meeting, the committee elected citizen member Brett Costley as the Chair and citizen member George Tice as Vice Chair. Other citizen members are Brittanie Roberts and Rick Hobart. There was one open seat on the committee.

Mitchell thanked staff members Handegard, Jeff Burch, Michael Conner, Shannon Romtvedt and James McMahon for their help in the preparation of the budget.

The committee was scheduled to meet on April 19, April 26, when they will discuss the Water, Street, SDC's, Timber, Facility Reserve and Water Debt Service funds, and May 3, when they were scheduled to discuss the General, Administration, Library and Police Funds.

Readers Lend Their Voices...

continued from page 4

To the Editor,

I am asking the Vernonia Community to pray for my son Johnney.

Because of prayer two serious surgeries were canceled. First was his brain, second was his heart. I went to Four Square Church and the Assembly of God. They anointed him and prayed. The doctors x-rayed him both times and couldn't believe he was healed both times.

He now needs another surgery and he doesn't react well to medication. We need another miracle. Please pray for him April 22.

God bless you and thank you.

Gail Law, Sarah and Johnney too!
Vernonia

she supports our law enforcement communities, community mental health and wants to grow healthy businesses that support family wage jobs.

But here is what I believe is her most important trait, Susan is a worker -- that means she's an excellent collaborator, helper and advocate; she's willing to listen to all sides of small, large and thorny issues before making decisions and taking action. Susan doesn't grandstand, make bold promises to special interest groups, she isn't a good old boy. Susan Conn is the People's Candidate because she believes all the citizens of Columbia County deserve a great place to live and work.

Cecelia Nunn Haack
Scappoose, OR

To the Editor,

Susan Conn is the best candidate for County Commission Position 1. Susan isn't owned by any special interest group(s), understands how city, county and regional governments work (that means she will hit the ground running and not have to waste time figuring out how things are done) and she has a long history of working to improve our community.

Susan worked tirelessly for 14 years on the Commission for Children and Families, the organization that oversaw programs like Head Start and Healthy Start, she is a key player in the Crisis Intervention Team bringing life saving crises response training to our community, law enforcement and first responders.

Susan is for kids, libraries, parks and education, senior citizens, families, farms and healthy business development;

Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

City Council Meetings are scheduled for 7:00 pm:

Monday, May 2, 2016
Monday, May 16, 2016

City Closures are scheduled for:

Monday, May 30, 2016
Memorial Day

Dates and times subject to change due to conflicts of schedules

Upcoming Election Info

Oregon's Presidential Primary: May 17
(including local and County elections)

Last day to register by mail: April 26

To register to vote online or to update your voter registration go to:
<http://sos.oregon.gov/voting/Pages/voteinor.aspx>

You can find a voter registration card at Vernonia City Hall, Vernonia Library or county elections office. You can also ask the Columbia County elections office to mail you a card:
230 Strand St.,
St. Helens, OR 97051
(503) 397-7214, (503) 397-7266 fax,
Office Hours: 8:30am - 5:00pm (M-Th)

Vernonia City News...

At the April 18 City Council Meeting:

Chamber Asks for Room Tax - Nicole Larke, representing the Vernonia Area Chamber of Commerce, presented a plan for the City to add a 10% room tax and a \$1 per night tax on camping spaces in Vernonia to generate funds for the operation of the Chamber. Larke proposed that 3% of the tax would go to the City to administer the program and said the Chamber portion would pay for staffing costs, provide community grants, and create funding for festivals and events. Council scheduled a workshop for June 6 at 6:00 pm to discuss the proposal.

Council Approves Request to Extend Park Stay - Council approved a request from Corinna Rumbolz to allow her son Dakota to stay at Anderson Park at the winter rate until he graduates from Vernonia High School.

Council Hears Update on CC Rider - Council heard an update from Janet Wright, Director of Columbia County Rider, and Genell Grow, on Measure 5-251 which would create a Special Transit District and provide funding for the CC Rider public transportation system. Wright told the Council that after a 64% cut in funding last year ridership dropped about 20%, but still provided over 84,000 total rides in 2015. Wright said CC Rider is one of only two transportation systems in Oregon that does not operate in a transit district and said becoming a Special Transit District would provide stable funding and allow CC Rider to focus their service on rider's needs. Measure 5-251 would establish a funding mechanism of \$0.23 per \$1,000 of assessed value and raise approximately \$1 million each year for

operating expenses.

City Administrator Report - City Administrator Josette Mitchell updated Council on the Wastewater Treatment Plant project, the Rose Avenue Project and the California Avenue Project.

Mitchell told the Council the City has heard from four customers requesting to downsize their water meter following the sewer rate adjustment. Mitchell said staff is working with the customers to calculate the minimum size meter they will be allowed by code and noted customers would have to pay the costs for changing the meter.

Mitchell told Council the City has hired Jerry McCall as a part-time seasonal worker.

Mitchell told Council that April 23 is Make Vernonia Shine Day, although there will be limited projects as the volunteer who usually organizes the project has stepped down and not been replaced. There will be a Hazardous Waste collection at the old School District Office on Bridge Street.

Mitchell updated Council on the Nickerson Ridge Estates development issue and said the City Planner requested that the City engineer assist in determining any code violations that might have taken place. A comprehensive letter is being sent to all parties involved.

Mayor Appoints Hobart to Budget Committee - With approval from the rest of the Council, Mayor Randy Parrow appointed Rick Hobart to the Budget Committee.

Earth Day Proclamation - Mayor Randy Parrow read a proclamation declaring April 22 as Earth Day.

NOTICE OF POSITIONS OPEN CITY OF VERNONIA

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the General Election will be held on the 8th day of November 2016, at which time the legal voters of the City of Vernonia will be entitled to vote for candidates to certain city offices.

OFFICES OPEN FOR ELECTION:

VERNONIA MAYOR TWO YEAR TERM
VERNONIA COUNCIL MEMBER FOUR YEAR TERM
VERNONIA COUNCIL MEMBER FOUR YEAR TERM

Election packets are available at the office of the City Recorder, 1001 Bridge St, Vernonia, OR 97064. Nominating petitions can be filed no sooner than June 1, 2016, and filed no later than Friday, August 26, 2016, by 4:00 pm with the City Recorder. For more information call Stephanie Borst, City Recorder at 503-429-5291 ext. 104.

The City of Vernonia is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.



True Value
START RIGHT. START HERE. SM

**Don't wait for the sun!
Get your MOWERS tuned up now!**

Oil Change • Sharpen Blades
Filters • Cables • Pull Ropes
We pick up & deliver!

Family owned & operated for over 45 years
834 Bridge St., Vernonia (503) 429-6364