

Vernonia City News...

At the August 7, 2017 City Council Meeting:

Council Hears Update on Picnic Shelter Construction – City Administrator Josette Mitchell updated the Council on the Spencer Park Picnic Shelter and explained that the covered basketball court was used to construct the trusses for the shelter because it was the only flat level space large enough to build the jig that was used to construct the trusses. City staff and volunteers will be cutting down oversized beams with help from Mike Pihl Logging to move the beams. Mitchell said construction is hoped to be completed by the end of August.

Council Receives Update on Bridge Street Trees – City Administrator Josette Mitchell told Council that the stumps along Bridge Street have been removed and the tree wells in the sidewalk have been temporarily filled with gravel. Mitchell said all of the brick pavers will be removed and reset, but a timeline was unavailable as it has been difficult getting a contractor. Mitchell also said the City is redesigning the garbage receptacles. Mitchell said once the pavers are all reset, the issue will be returned to Council to make a final decision about what to do about the streetscape.

Council Hears Presentation on Art in the Park – Council heard a presentation from Brittanie Roberts about a proposal she is working on to have art students from the Vernonia Schools create art projects installed in Vernonia Parks. Roberts told the Council she has had initial discussions with the School District and the Parks Committee and wanted to

keep the Council informed of her progress. She is proposing an initial project that would decorate garbage receptacles in selected parks.

Council Approves Contract for Wastewater Project – Council authorized the City Administrator to sign a contract with Wastewater Compliance Systems, Inc. for the installation of 48 Bio-Domes in the sewer lagoons, which will remove ammonia before the discharge from the City plant. Cost for the project is \$301,500 and will be paid for with grant funding the City has already obtained. The installation is expected to be complete by November.

Mayor Appoints Two to Parks Committee – Based on a recommendation from the Parks Committee, and with approval from the rest of Council, Mayor Mario Leonetti appointed Steve White-man and Richard Stein to the Parks Committee.

Council Approves Grant Application – Council approved an application from the Public Works Department for an ODOT Special City Allotment grant to repave a section of Louisiana Avenue from Mississippi Avenue to Oregon Avenue, and a short section of B Street in the same area.

Topics From the Floor – Terry Lindauer, who lives on Nickerson Avenue, addressed the Council and expressed disappointment that the City has not made any progress in resolving the conflict at the Nickerson Ridge Estates housing development. The City is currently not approving any new building permits until the developers correct issues with

drainage and sidewalks that were part of original construction over 15 years ago. The City's legal counsel is currently attempting to get compliance by the developers, but has not received any return correspondence from them for many months. Lindauer owns two lots in the development, one with a home and one where he has been unable to build a planned workshop, because he cannot get a building permit. Lindauer told the Council that while the original construction took place before any of them were in office, "...you're in office now. Our lack of not being able to obtain a building permit is not only because of the development issues, it's also because City government at many levels dropped the ball. The problem is here, like it or not. The time is now to fix it. We've been patiently waiting for a resolution to these issues. Your passive approach is not working." Lindauer proposed that the City address specific drainage issues so he can build his shop, and still hold the developers responsible for the other issues while continuing to deny them building permits.

Brett Costley addressed the Council about several issues, including the operation of water fountains at Vernonia Lake, the need for a stop sign at Jefferson Avenue where it crosses the Linear Trail, and encouraging the City to use social media as a way to share information and to address concerns of citizens. Costley also praised the Council's willingness to find a compromise and work to create stricter smoking regulations in parks without completely banning it.

Council Discusses Legal Issues with Attorney – Council recessed to Executive Session under ORS 192.660 (2)(h), "To consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed." The City's attorney Ruben Cleaveland was in attendance at the meeting. Following a return to open session, Cleaveland told the Council that he will be turning the notice of a pending tort claim by Mr. Sterner over to CIS, the City's insurance company (See full story on front page); that he will continue to work with the attorney from WOEC concerning communication the City has received; and that he will continue to pursue compliance on Nickerson Ridge issues.

Police Department Report – Officer Cody Pesio, sitting in for Police Chief Mike Conner, told the Council that Jamboree weekend was mostly uneventful, with only two DUII arrests and few other disturbances or incidents.

City Administrator Report – City Administrator Josette Mitchell told the Council that the Public Works Committee completed a tour of the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Mitchell told the Council that CDBG is reviewing the Environmental Review for the proposed Senior Center/Food Bank, and once approval is received the City can move forward obtaining bids for construction.

Mitchell told Council that the City has received no correspondence from the developers at Nickerson Ridge.

Citizen Files Pending Tort Claim Against City *continued from front page*

Sterner's notice to file a tort claim includes numerous claims, including that both City Administrator Mitchell and Councilor McNair made false allegations, that Mitchell attempted to mislead the public at large with her statements, that the official minutes from meetings "contained serious errors and omissions," and that the entire Council "knowingly violated their respective oaths of office, by failing to adhere to and defend the statutes and rules involving conflicts of interest, despite being fully aware of the ongoing violation of those statutes and rules."

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Police Blotter • August 1-14, 2017

Reports Taken

- August 1, 2017 Suspect held on a Detainer Warrant near Jefferson Avenue
- August 2, 2017 Report of Criminal Mischief 2 near California Avenue
- August 8, 2017 Report of Reckless Driving on Nehalem HWY S
- August 11, 2017 Report of Medical Assist near Bridge Street

Citations/Arrests/Other

- August 6, 2017 Cited for Dog as a Public Nuisance near N Mist Drive
- August 8, 2017 Cited for Driving While Suspended/Uninsured and Violation of the Basic Rule 75/55 mph near Nehalem HWY S
- August 8, 2017 Cited for Violation of the Basic Rule 97/55 mph near Nehalem

HWY S

- August 9, 2017 Cited for Violation of the Basic Rule 52/35 mph near Nehalem HWY S
- August 10, 2017 Cited for Violation of the Basic Rule 76/55 mph near Nehalem HWY S
- August 10, 2017 Cited for Violation of the Basic Rule 76/55 mph, Careless Driving, Driving While Suspended, and Failure to Carry Proof of Insurance near Nehalem HWY S

Vernonia Police Department responds to calls that do not always end in Arrest, Report, or Citation. 08/01/2017 through 08/14/2017 VPD had 143 calls for service

The Annual Picnic of the Vernonia Society, VHS "Old Grads" and Oregon-American Alumni

Place: Anderson Park, Vernonia
Date: Sunday, August 20, 2017

Please Come and Bring your Friends.
All current and former Vernonia people and families are welcome! Bring your own picnic lunch.
Coffee will be provided.

Registration begins at 10:00 am

Hot Dog lunches (hot dog, chips and drinks) will be available for purchase.

The Vernonia Transfer Station is open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday from 8am-2pm

August 26
September 9 & 23

Dates and times are subject to change due to weather

Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

City Council Meetings are scheduled for 7:00 pm:
Monday, August 21, 2017
Tuesday, September 5, 2017

City Closures are scheduled for:
Monday, September 4, 2017
Labor Day Holiday

Dates and times subject to change