

Vernonia City News...

At the March 19, 2018 City Council Meeting:

Topics From the Floor – Roger Smith, representing the Jamboree Committee, drew the winning raffle name of Richard Colton, for a \$1,000 gift card to Martin Arms.

John Brewer asked the Council for cooperation in the community's attempt to save the Greenman Field bleachers. He presented a petition signed by 134 students, mostly from Vernonia Middle and High School, asking to save the bleachers.

Del Allen asked the Council to give the group working to save the bleachers a chance. He said it's just one beam that needs to be fixed. He said the grandstands is part of Vernonia history. He asked that demolition be put off until July 1.

Rick Hobart said the lumber for the grandstands came from the O-A Mill and that volunteers originally built it and could be used to restore the structure.

Casey Mitchell said he was disappointed that those trying to save the grandstands are still saying it's just one beam that needs to be fixed, which is not true. He said he serves on the Parks Committee and started out wanting to save the grandstands, but when the Parks Committee and Council looked at real costs and insurance requirements to save it, and future potential uses, it doesn't make sense. He said community volunteers have already discussed this issue and decided demolition was the best answer, and asked Council to share that information with the people in the audience.

Janice McGuire thanked the Council for their work week after week. She asked the Council to consider giving the community an opportunity to save the bleachers without it affecting the City Budget.

Don Willard asked Council to give the community more time to find a solution to saving the grandstands.

Following Topics From the Floor the Council took time for the second meeting in a row to address community concerns and discussed the grandstand issue for over one hour. Councilor Susan Wagner said she appreciated the community's passion and energy to saving the grandstands. Councilor Jill Hult said she had hoped there was a way to save them, but was not sure what the answer was. Councilor Bruce McNair suggested the citizens interested in saving

the structure organize a non-profit that could raise money to repair the structure and then manage it for use and maintenance, rather than those tasks falling on the City who has not identified an ongoing use for the structure. Mayor Mario Leonetti said he thought the community should be given an opportunity to find a solution to save them.

Council agreed to allow the group to continue working to find a solution, provided they give the Council continuing updates on progress. They asked the group to meet with the Parks Committee to see if their were any conflicts with proposed uses.

Council Reschedules Work Session – Council rescheduled a Work Session to discuss potential changes at Ora Bolmeier Park for April 9 at 6:30 pm. The original Work Session had to be canceled as it was not publicly announced.

Council Approves Resolution to Apply for Grant – Council approved a budget and Resolution 3-18, authorizing the City to apply for a Local Government Grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to make improvements at Spencer Park. The total grant project request was for \$411,785 and includes funding for a skate park, pathway and plaza area, natural play structure area, sports field amendments and irrigation, baseball and softball dugouts, and other park amenities including a drinking fountain, picnic tables, and garbage containers. The City must match 20% of the total grant amount through cash and in-kind services for the project.

Mayor Appoints Colburn to Library Board – Based on a recommendation from the Library Board and approval from the rest of the City Council, Mayor Mario Leonetti appointed Cory Colburn to the Library Board.

Council Discusses Size and Rules of Planning Commission – Council discussed a request from the Planning Commission to review the Ordinance that rules their Commission and allow them to change the number of members on the Commission from seven to five, and reduce the quorum needed to conduct business from four to three. City Recorder Stephanie Borst told the Council that the Planning Commission has struggled to find seven members and currently only has five. They have often had issues getting three members to attend. Council agreed to the changes and Borst will prepare a new Ordinance with

the new rules for approval at a future meeting.

Council Approves Emergency Management Plan – Council voted 5-0 to approve Resolution 2-18 adopting the City of Vernonia Emergency Management Plan and Continuity of Operations Plan.

At the April 2, 2018 City Council Meeting:

Mayor and Councilor Absent from Meeting – Both Mayor Mario Leonetti and Council President Bruce McNair were absent due to illness. Councilor Jill Hult chaired the meeting with Councilors Mike Seager and Susan Wagner in attendance.

Council Hears Waste Management Recycling Presentation – Council heard a presentation from representatives of Waste Management, who explained proposed changes to their curbside recycling program since China is no longer accepting contaminated recyclables. Waste Management is proposing removing many items they allow for commingling and is also proposing a 5% surcharge (about \$1.36/month for weekly service) to customers for recycling. There are no changes proposed at this time for the Vernonia Transfer Station. A final proposal will be brought back to Council for approval at a later meeting.

Council Receives Rate Review Recommendations – Council received the

recommendations from the Rate Review Committee on proposed changes to the City's water and sewer charges. The recommended changes would eliminate the Water Allowance of 2,000 gallons, increase both the water and sewer base rates, decrease the water consumption rate but increase the sewer consumption rate, and lower the sewer loan repayment charge by almost \$11. The net result is the average customer would see about a \$7 reduction in their total bill. The new rates must be approved by the Budget Committee and would take effect July 1, 2018.

Council Hears Library Statistics Report – Library Director Shannon Romtvedt presented the annual Usage Report which provides statistics and compares the Vernonia Library to other libraries in Columbia County. The report shows the Vernonia Library has a high number of visits, circulation, and attendance at programs.

Council Approves Cost Schedule for Reimbursement District – Council approved Resolution 4-18 that establishes a fee of \$4,000 to cover administrative fees for WOEC's application to form a Reimbursement District. WOEC is seeking reimbursement for improvements made during construction of their headquarters.

Council Hears Grandstand Update – Janice McGuire and John Brewer
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Vernonia Police Blotter March 13-31, 2018

Reports Taken/Arrests

- March 15, 2018 Report of Warrant, Escape III, and Interfering with a Police Officer near Adams Avenue
- March 16, 2018 Warrant arrest near Noakes Road
- March 21, 2018 Report of Fraud near Bridge Street
- March 21, 2018 Report of a Hit and Run with Property Damage near California Avenue
- March 22, 2018 Report of Criminal Trespass near Knott Street
- March 25, 2018 Report of Disorderly Conduct near Bridge Street
- March 27, 2018 Warrant arrest near State Avenue
- March 30, 2018 Report of Theft in the First Degree near Bridge Street

Citations/Other

- March 13, 2018 Cited for Violation of the Basic Rule 72/55 mph near Nehalem HWY South
- March 14, 2018 Cited for Operating a Vehicle While Using a Mobile Communication Device near East Bridge Street
- March 21, 2018 Cited for Failure to Drive Within Lane near Rose Avenue
- March 23, 2018 Cited for Violation of the Basic Rule 58/35 mph near Nehalem HWY South

Vernonia Police Department responds to calls that do not always end in Arrest, Report, or Citation. 03/01/2018 through 03/31/2018 VPD had 198 calls for service

Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

City Council Meetings are scheduled for 7:00 pm:
Monday, April 16, 2018
Monday, May 7, 2018

City Closures are scheduled for:
Monday, May 28, 2018
Memorial Day Holiday

Dates and times subject to change

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The Vernonia Transfer Station is scheduled to be open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday January - October 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

**April 14 & 28
May 12 & 26**

Dates and times are subject to change due to weather