

# County Commissioners Election *continued from page 3*

enough patrol officers. “Let’s move public safety from the bottom rung up at least a bit.”

Johns said while reviewing the County budget he noticed that C.C. Rider received a grant for \$560,000 to build a bus stop in Rainier. He said the transit system the County created is antiquated and the spending is not properly prioritized. He suggested there might be a way for the County to use its funding to subsidize private drivers to meet the needs of the population, rather than investing in buses and infrastructure.

When asked about the County road system Johns said the Commissioners need to be more strategic and creative in seeking out State and Federal funding opportunities.

**Henry Heimuller** – Heimuller is the current incumbent and is running for his third term. A former Paramedic Supervisor, Heimuller has worked as the Columbia County Transit Coordinator, and served on the Columbia County Economic Team, Columbia Emergency Planning Association, Columbia 911 Communication Board, Columbia County Fair Board, Columbia Pacific Economic Development Council, and the Oregon Public Transportation Advisory Committee.

“Public service is what I do,” said Heimuller when asked why he is running for re-election. “Being in EMS is a problem solvers job, and being a County Commissioner is a problem solvers job as well. You have to be the kind of person that can solve any kind of issue – anything from someone’s garbage issue or their dog issue, to huge land use issues, or police or personnel issues. Keep in mind the Board of Commissioners administer this operation. We don’t have a County Administrator, we have a \$60 million enterprise to run. If you can’t solve problems on a daily basis this is not the job for you. And I think I do those things pretty well.”

Heimuller said the Commissioners have made public safety a priority by finding funding in the General Fund to add a Sheriff’s Deputy and a Detective position; upgraded some old equipment, including some new vehicles; and secured a \$1 million grant that will be shared between the District Attorney’s office, the Sheriff’s Office, and County

Corrections which will add one new employee to each organization to increase prosecutions. He also noted that Columbia County has the longest stretch of Columbia River waterfront in the state and needs to find ways to pay to patrol that waterway. “It’s about looking for opportunities.”

“I’m always happy to talk about Port Westward, it’s one of the crown jewels of Columbia County and I’m all for development out there,” said Heimuller when asked about the controversial industrial site. “It’s a self scouring port and the docks are great. We have three PGE plants and we have Global Energy out there. We have a company thinking about siting a methanol plant out there and if that plan comes together and is as clean and green, and as efficient, and creates the number of jobs that they are speculating, Phase I would add about 50% to Columbia County’s taxable value, and if they developed Phase II it would double the tax value of this County. That’s huge when you’re about funding roads, funding law enforcement – funding everything the public wants us to provide. It’s something we have to consider. We don’t want to do it at any expense, but I’m open to hearing about it.”

Heimuller said the Port of St. Helens is the applicant to rezone over 800 acres of agricultural property adjacent to Port Westward to Rural/Industrial. “The good thing is, until it is actually developed, it can still be used as agricultural – rezoning doesn’t take it out of production. It would have access to the docks, roads, and other infrastructure already at the port. A lot of things could be done out there, except anything to do with coal, we’ve specifically excluded that from that property. It’s an opportunity for our north county residents to have jobs closer to home and maybe more direct access to the Columbia River. And for those people against more trains and trucks traveling through our County, we have the best interstate commerce transportation system for moving goods in the Columbia River.”

Heimuller notes that Oregon has a long history of being environmentally friendly and paying attention, through the state and county permit processes, to how industry impacts land and water. “I’m always very confident that when we

site industry it will have been through a solidly structured due diligence process. If something doesn’t look or feel right it can always be stopped.”

Heimuller said he is always concerned about the commuter rate in Columbia County. “Over the years we’ve lost hundreds and hundreds of good paying family-wage jobs. We can’t survive as just bedroom communities. I’m convinced that the more jobs we can bring back into the County, and reduce the number of commuters, will be better for our communities.”

Heimuller agreed that all county roads in the State of Oregon could use some help, including Columbia. Heimuller said Columbia County uses their share of state gas tax funds to directly fund their Road Department, but said our County is the only one in the state that also receives a Depletion Fee that is added to aggregate rock mined within the County, which also goes to roads. He said in good years extra money from the County General Fund has been funneled to roads. He said, because Columbia County roads mostly started

as wagon roads and were never built properly with a solid base, the roads here will always need maintenance. “We can patch them and pave them, but in order to make these roads right, you would have to go back and build them from the ground up, and there’s no possible way to afford to do that.” He said the County has been very strategic in working in cooperation with partners like watershed councils and water and soil districts to find grant funding to share costs to replace culverts in fish bearing streams, while at the same time widening roads and upgrading bridges to current standards. He added that House Bill 2017, passed by the Oregon Legislature last year, will pump more state funding back into county transportation projects, including county roads, when they are distributed in 2019.

Heimuller admitted that the Parks Department in Columbia County is underfunded, like many things. “We have to be very strategic because the Parks are important to our County.” He said the Parks Department is now man-

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## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL

Proposed Street Vacation in the City of Vernonia, Oregon  
File No. VAC 17-02

When: May 7, 2018 at 7:00 pm

Where: Council Chamber, City of Vernonia, 1001 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR

Why: Vacation request by a petitioner

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Vernonia City Council, will conduct a public hearing on a request by Joe Riley to vacate a portion of the public street on 3rd Street, adjacent to Weed Ave.

**That portion of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street lying west of Block 17, North of the North right of way line of G Street and east of the easterly line of the old Railroad grade described in Deed Book 32, Page 344, Columbia County Deed Records.**

And,

**That portion of 3rd Street lying west of Block 20, south of south right of way line of G Street, east of the easterly line of the old Railroad grade described in Deed Book 32, Page 344, Columbia County Deed Records and north of the westerly extension of the north line of the alley lying south of Lots 1-6, Block 20, Second Addition to Vernonia.**

And,

**That portion of 3rd Street lying west of Block 20, north of the north right of way line of F street, east of the easterly line of the old Railroad grade described in Deed Book 32, page 344, Columbia County Deed Records and south of the**

**westerly extension of the south line of the alley lying north of Lots 7-12, Block 20, Second Addition to Vernonia.**

SAID PUBLIC HEARING will be held before the Vernonia City Council on Monday, May 7, 2018, in the Council Chambers of Vernonia City Hall, 1001 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR at or after 7:00 pm, at which time proponents and opponents of the proposed Vacation will be heard.

A staff report will be available to the public at City Hall one week before the hearing, and may be copied for a nominal fee. Failure to raise an issue in a hearing, in person or by letter or failure to provide statements or evidence sufficient to afford the decision-maker an opportunity to respond to the issue precludes appeal to the board based on that issue. Public testimony is welcome, and written statements will also be received before the hearing.

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours prior to the public hearing to Josette Mitchell at 503-429-5291 ext. 106, TTY 1-800-735-2900 or at City Hall, 1001 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR 97064.

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

## Vernonia Police Blotter

April 1-30, 2018

### Reports Taken/Arrests

- April 1, 2018 Report of Theft II near Rose Avenue
- April 6, 2018 Arrest on a Probation Detainer near Pebble Creek
- April 13, 2018 Report of Criminal Mischief II near Washington Avenue
- April 13, 2018 Report of Criminal Mischief I near East Bridge Street

### Citations/Other

- April 13, 2018 Cited for Improper Display of Validation Stickers near Bridge Street and Madison Avenue
- April 14, 2018 Cited for Dog as a Public Nuisance near Madison Avenue
- April 15, 2018 Cited for Failure to Carry Proof of Insurance near Bridge Street and Washington Avenue

- April 18, 2018 Cited for No Operators License and Careless Driving near Bridge Street
- April 23, 2018 Cited for Violation of the Basic Rule 70/55 mph, and Failure to Carry Proof of Insurance near Nehalem HWY South
- April 23, 2018 Cited for Violation of the Basic Rule 71/55 mph near Nehalem HWY South
- April 24, 2018 Cited for Violation of the Posted Limit 54/35 mph near North Mist Drive

**Vernonia Police Department responds to calls that do not always end in Arrest, Report, or Citation. 04/01/2018 through 04/30/2018 VPD had 188 calls for service**

## Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

City Council Meetings are scheduled for 7:00 pm:

- Monday, May 7, 2018
- Monday, May 21, 2018

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

*Dates and times subject to change*

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

**May 12 & 26  
June 9 & 23**

*Dates and times are subject to change due to weather*