

Vernonia City News...

At the November 18, 2019 Vernonia City Council Meeting:

Council Approves Food Trailer at Lake – Council approved the placement of a food trailer by David Sterner at Vernonia Lake. City Administrator Josette Mitchell told the Council the City can install an electric meter so Sterner can be charged for his electric use. Council agreed they would charge \$200 a month, plus electricity for a six month lease, beginning this spring.

Council Approves Two Public Safety Resolutions – Council adopted Resolution 16-19, approving an Intergovernmental Agreement between the Columbia County Sheriff's Office and Municipal Police Departments for the Columbia County Major Crimes Team, which allows mutual assistance between agencies for the investigation of major crimes.

The Council also adopted Resolution 17-19, approving the Columbia County Deadly Physical Force Plan, which provides a framework for a consistent response to an officer's use of deadly physical force across county agencies, in order to treat law enforcement officers fairly and promote public confidence in the criminal justice system.

Council Approves Bench Placement at Lake – Council approved the placement of a new park bench by the Lions Club overlooking Vernonia Lake, and ap-

proved naming the spot in honor of the Webb family. City Administrator Josette Mitchell confirmed there is not a need to make the bench ADA accessible. Council also discussed the need to move a set of sign posts used by the Intercultural Society of Vernonia to advertise events and activities. Councilor Dale Webb abstained from participating in the discussion because of his family's possible recognition as part of the project.

Council Schedules Work Session – At the request of staff, the Council scheduled a work session on December 9 at 6:00 pm to discuss revising the City's Urban Growth Boundary with the City Planner.

Council Takes No Action on Roseview Heights HOA Request – Council discussed a letter they received from the Roseview Heights Home Owners Association (HOA). The letter states that the HOA would like to dissolve and turn over maintenance of the streets in the development to the City. They asked the City to do an assessment of their streets to see if the streets could be accepted by the City. City Administrator Josette Mitchell told the Council that according to a visual inspection, the streets were not constructed to City standards of width, with no curbs and gutters, or stormwater drainage, and said it would be the HOA's responsibility to pay for an engineer to do the assessment. She suggested the HOA dissolve and enter into

a road maintenance agreement among property owners as another option. Council authorized the City Administrator to respond to the HOA and took no further action on the request.

City Administrator Report – City Administrator Josette Mitchell told the Council the Senior Center/Vernonia Cares project is moving along, with excavation almost complete and the foundation being poured soon. She said the City is still awaiting word on the C. Keith Birkenfeld grant the City has applied for.

Mitchell told the Council she is still working on a community informational reader sign, with costs shared between the City, the Vernonia School District, the Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District, and a new partner – the Vernonia Boosters.

Mitchell told Council the cemetery pole building at the Memorial Cemetery has been installed, and a good neighbor fence will be constructed in the near future.

Mitchell said arborist David Hunter examined trees at Hawkins and Anderson Parks and the report has been sent to the Council. She said staff will be making recommendations in the future.

Topics From the Floor – Scott Laird informed the Council about a new book that has just been published, *Voices From the Mill Pond*. The book is a col-

Citizen of the Month

Mayor Rick Hobart recognized Desmond Hines as Citizen of the Month, acknowledging how Mr. Hines was given a second chance with his life and has made the most of it by helping citizens around the community, assisting the City with multiple projects, and being a valued member of the community.



laboration between Vernonia Hands on Art and *Vernonia's Voice* and includes stories, poems, artwork, and photography by over 50 contributors from around the Vernonia Community.

Voters Fail to Pass Transportation Funding, Services to be Cut

Columbia County voters overwhelmingly rejected a measure to form a Transportation District in the County when they returned their ballots on November 5, 2019. Officials at Columbia County Rider (CC Rider), the County's public transportation system, say they will have to cut public transportation options as a result.

Measure 5-277 received 63% "NO" votes in Oregon's most recent election. If approved, the measure would have taxed local property owners at a rate of \$0.18 per \$1,000 of assessed value (approximately \$36 for a property valued at \$200,000) and raised over \$1 million per year for the next two years to fund pub-

lic transportation across the County.

The "all measure" election, which also included local measures in Scappoose and Rainier, saw 11,360 total ballots received, meaning just 34% of eligible voters took part in the election.

According to a letter sent to the Vernonia City Council from CC Rider's Todd Wood, CC Rider officials were scheduled to meet with other regional transportation system managers to help develop a plan for cuts to service. Wood noted in his letter that there is no local funding for public transportation and a lack of matching funds for grants.

Wood said he expects severe impacts to service

on CC Rider's Line 2, which provides service to Portland Community College; to Line 3 which provides flex service in the St. Helens, Scappoose, and Columbia City area; and to the Dial-a-Ride service; along with minimal impacts to Line 1 which provides service to Portland, and Line 5 which runs between Rainier and Longview. He said there should be no impact to current Vernonia service, although Vernonia service was recently reduced with plans to increase service in Vernonia if the measure had passed.

Wood said a public hearing will be held on December 18 at the Columbia County Courthouse at 10:00 am to hear comments.

Bonamici Releases Report on High Cost of Insulin in NW Oregon

November is Diabetes Awareness Month

Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) released a report during Diabetes Awareness Month that highlights the high cost of insulin in Oregon's First Congressional District.

The report, which was produced for Bonamici by the House Oversight and Reform Committee, compares pric-

es for the 50 most popular brand-name prescription diabetes medications in Northwest Oregon to the same drugs in Australia, the United Kingdom, and Canada. It found that Medicare beneficiaries in Northwest Oregon pay over a thousand dollars more per year in out-of-pocket costs for some medications than people in the other countries.

The report finds that the Medi-

care costs in Oregon's First District for the top 50 drugs are:

- 4.6 times higher than in Australia
- 3.2 times higher than in the UK
- 2.4 times higher than in Canada

Approximately 20,000 seniors and disabled Medicare beneficiaries have been diagnosed with diabetes in Oregon's First District, which includes Washington, Yamhill, Clatsop, and Co-

lumbia counties and part of Multnomah County.

"No one should have to jeopardize their health or worry about affording food because of exorbitant prices for insulin," said Congresswoman Bonamici. "Companies are charging much more for these critical drugs in the U.S. than abroad, hurting seniors and families in

continued on page 17

Police Blotter November 1-18, 2019

Reports Taken/Arrests

- November 6, 2019 Driving While Suspended Misdemeanor Level near Rose Avenue
- November 7, 2019 Report of Criminal Mischief III near Heather Lane
- November 8, 2019 Arrest on a Warrant near East Bridge Street
- November 8, 2019 Arrest for Driving Under the Influence near Timber Road
- November 13, 2019 Report of Non Injury Motor Vehicle Accident near HWY 47 South

Citations/Other

- November 5, 2019 Cited for Failing to

Yield to a Pedestrian in a crosswalk near Missouri Avenue

- November 5, 2019 Cited for Violation of the Posted Speed 52/35 mph, Driving While Suspended, and No Insurance near River Street
- November 12, 2019 Cited for Violation of the Posted Speed 43/20 mph and No Insurance near Cougar Street

Vernonia Police Department responds to calls that do not always end in Arrest, Report, or Citation. 11/01/2019 through 11/18/2019 VPD had 158 calls for service.

The Vernonia Transfer Station is scheduled to be open on the 1st and 3rd Saturday in November & December
December 7 & 21

The Transfer Station is scheduled to be open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday January - October
January 11 & 25

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, December 2, 2019
Monday, December 16, 2019

City Closures are scheduled for:
Thursday, November 28, 2019
Friday, November 29, 2019
Thanksgiving Holiday

Dates and times subject to change