

Vernonia City News...

At the August 17, City Council Meeting:

Council Approves Lincoln School Conservation Easement Changes

Council approved proposed modifications to the Conservation Easement on the Lincoln School which would allow changes to the interior of the building to turn it into a residence; the applicant is proposing no changes to the exterior of the building. The Council's approval was a procedural move. Previously the zoning of the property had been changed from Residential to Commercial and the Conservation Easement was put in place to protect the conservation values which are "the cultural, aesthetic, educational, historical, and recreational values which contribute to the quality of life in the surrounding neighborhood and the City of Vernonia." The proposal must now go before the Planning Commission.

Council Approves Vernonia Trailhead Proposal

Several members of the CZ Trail Citizen Advisory Committee presented a plan for a trailhead to be developed near Anderson Park to serve both the CZ Trail and the Banks-Vernonia State Trail. The gravel parking lot and trailhead will be located at the corner of Adams Avenue and Maple Street, the former site of West Oregon Electric Co-op. The trailhead could include trail maps, a

merchant sign to tell visitors how to locate local points of interest and businesses, and interpretive signs discussing the community's history. The proposed budget for signage at the trailhead and street signage to direct people to the trailhead is approximately \$7,700. Portions of the funding could come from the Columbia County Tourism Initiative. Columbia County Parks Manager Casey Garrett told the Council the CZ Trail is getting close to securing an easement from Knott Street through property owned by

Randy Holce. The trail will connect by logging roads to Pebble Creek Road and then use the Green Bridge to connect to Vernonia Lake. Ultimately, the plan is to build a pedestrian bridge over the Nehalem River. Council voted 4-1 to work with the Advisory Committee to develop the trailhead, with Councilor Bruce McNair voting against.

Council Approves Police Body Camera Purchase – The Council voted unanimously to approve the purchase of five new body cameras from AXOM for the police department. Police Chief Michael Conner explained that officers are required to use body cams and record all professional encounters. The City pre-

viously purchased cameras from AXOM six years ago, which are now outdated. Cost for the cameras is \$21,786 over five years, with the company replacing the cameras at 2.5 years and 5 years.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Rick Hobart told the Council he has been appointed as a private citizen to the Columbia County Jail Advisory Commission.

Topics From the Floor – City Recorder Stephanie Borst read an anonymous letter into the record which expressed concern that members of the City Council and staff are participating in discussions with a group on the issue of racial justice.

Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

Please check the City's website for details on upcoming City Council Meetings scheduled for 7:00 pm:
Tuesday, September 8, 2020
Monday, September 21, 2020
www.vernonia-or.gov

City Closures are scheduled for:
Monday, September 7, 2020
Labor Day Holiday

Dates and times subject to change

Police Blotter August 1-16, 2020

Reports Taken/Arrests

- August 1, 2020 Report of Business Operating without a license near Riverside Drive
- August 3, 2020 Report of a Warrant Arrest near Bridge Street
- August 4, 2020 Report of Theft I and Unauthorized Entry of a Motor Vehicle near Knott Street
- August 6, 2020 Report of a Lost/Missing Firearm near Rose Avenue
- August 7, 2020 Report of Fleeing, Driving Under the Influence and Reckless Driving near Bridge Street
- August 10, 2020 Report of Warrant

Arrest near Jefferson Avenue

Citation/Other

- August 2, 2020 Citation issued for Passing in a No Passing Zone near Nehalem HWY N
- August 12, 2020 Citation issued for Open Container of Alcohol While Operating a Motor Vehicle near Bridge Street

Vernonia Police Department responds to calls that do not always end in Arrest, Report, or Citation. 08/01/2020 through 08/16/2020 VPD had 122 calls for service.



reflecting the spirit of our community

Publisher and Managing Editor

Scott Laird

503-367-0098

scott@vernoniasvoice.com

Contributors

Chip Bubl
Rob Davis
Tobie Finzel
Superintendent Aaron Miller
Karen Miller
Shannon Romtvedt
Representative Brad Witt

Photography

Scott Laird

Vernonia's Voice is published on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month.

One year subscription (24 issues) \$35

Vernonia's Voice, LLC
PO Box 55
Vernonia, OR 97064
503-367-0098

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