

Vernonia City News...

At the December 20, 2021 City Council Meeting:

Citizen of the Month – Councilor J.R. Allen nominated Linda Hobart as the December Citizen of the Month. Hobart is the wife of Mayor Rick Hobart, a member of P.E.O., the Religious Education Director at St. Mary's Parish, a kindergarten teacher at McBride Elementary School in St. Helens and former Vernonia Elementary teacher, and volunteers on numerous City projects. "If we had more Lindas we'd have a much better town," said Councilor Allen.



Council Approves ARPA Funds for Weed Avenue Storm Water – Council voted 5-0 to approve a proposal from staff to spend \$79,850 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for a storm water improvement project that would install pipe under the Banks-Vernonia State Trail. The project would divert storm water from the Rose Avenue Project (Vernonia Health Center and Vernonia Senior Center/Vernonia Cares) into the Nehalem River, instead of into Bear Creek where it is currently redirected,

often causing localized flooding during heavy rains.

Council Approves IGA with County for Inmate Work Crews – Council approved Resolution 2021-21, approving a three-year Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Columbia County to provide supervised inmate labor crews through the County Justice Department to assist the City with code enforcement abatement clean up projects. Cost

for the City is \$375/day which is paid through an abatement fund the City collects through code enforcement fines.

Ash Appointed as Liaison to Parks Committee – New Councilor Charise Ash agreed to assume the role of Councilor Liaison to the Parks Committee. The rest of the Council will continue to serve as the liaisons to the City Committees they are currently serving: Mayor Rick Hobart – Senior Center and Library; Councilor Dale Webb – Public Works; Councilor J.R. Allen – Cemetery; Councilor Donald Normand – Airport.

Council Schedules Work Session to Discuss Sidewalk Fees – Council scheduled a work session for January 24, 2022 at 6:30 pm to discuss the Sidewalk Fee In-Lieu Resolution. Attendance has been confirmed by the City Planner, City Attorney, and City Engineer. The Planning Commission has also been invited to attend.

Mayor Appoints Calhoun to Parks Committee – With approval from the Parks Committee and the rest of the

Council, Mayor Rick Hobart appointed Carol Calhoun to the Parks Committee.

At the January 3, 2022 City Council Meeting:

Topics From the Floor – Dennis Weller brought concerns about sewage issues near Weed Avenue. Weller said sewage is backing up into houses and flowing into Hawkins Park.

Kimberly Normand also commented on the sewage problem. She said children were riding bikes through the sewage and asked the City to barricade the area. City Administrator Josette Mitchell told the Council the City is aware of the problem which is caused by storm water infiltration and the City is in the process of attempting to solve the problem.

Council Moves Forward on Spending ARPA Funds – Council voted 5-0 to direct staff to create a spending budget to spend American Recovery Plan Act funding available to the City to complete three sewer upgrade projects, one on Clatsop Street, one for Mill Houses, and one on Maple Street.

Local Political Races Take Shape *continued from front page*

on our forests, rivers, estuaries, and ocean and how they contribute to human health and community livability," Gardner says. "I am running because this is a critical moment, and I am the dedicated, knowledgeable, and experienced candidate to bring forward the right solutions."

In the election for Senate District 16, State Representative Suzanne Weber, a Republican who won election to represent House District 32 in 2020, has also announced her intention to run. Weber is a former school teacher, business owner, and City Councilor and Mayor of Tillamook. "I've spent my career helping kids and families right here on the North Coast," says Weber on her campaign web page. "I was tired of our

community having no voice for our values in the Oregon House so I decided to step up to serve."

Local voters will also have an opportunity to elect a new State Representative to serve District 31, currently held by Democrat Brad Witt from Clatskanie. When the District 31 boundaries were changed during the redistricting process this past year Witt announced he will not run for re-election in 2022. Republican Brian Stout has announced his plans to run for the seat again; Stout has twice lost to Witt in 2018 and 2020. No Democrats have yet announced plans to run for the seat.

Kellie Jo Smith, a St. Helens School Board

member and owner of Oregon Trail Lanes bowling alley, has announced her plans to run for Columbia County Board of Commissioners Position 2, the seat currently held by Henry Heimuller. "I am a public servant at heart," said Smith in a press release announcing she had filed to run. "I grew up with meager means and know that a connected, thriving community that helps each other makes for a great place to live and raise families."

Smith is a Resource/Foster Parent, has been very active in local youth sports, community projects, and other civic activities. She also has a background in law enforcement as a reserve deputy.

The Vernonia Transfer Station is scheduled to be open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday January - October
January 8 & 22
February 12 & 26
Dates are subject to change

Vernonia Police Blotter December 15-31, 2021

Reports Taken/Arrests

- December 8, 2021 Report taken of Disorderly Conduct near A Street
- December 11, 2021 Report taken of Failure to Perform Duties of a Driver near Jefferson Avenue
- December 23, 2021 Report taken of Stalking x2 and Violation of Probation near East Bridge Street
- December 26, 2021 Informational report taken

Citation/Other

- December 17, 2021 Cited for Driving While Suspended and Driving Uninsured near Rose Avenue

Vernonia Police Department had 63 calls for service from 12/14/2021 to 12/31/2021

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, January 18, 2022
Monday, February 7, 2022
www.vernonia-or.gov

City Closures are scheduled for:
Monday, January 17, 2022
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Dates and times subject to change

VERNONIA'S voice
reflecting the spirit of our community

Publisher and Managing Editor
Scott Laird
503-367-0098
scott@vernoniasvoice.com

Contributors
Damien Cox
Superintendent Aaron Miller

Photography
Scott Laird
Chuck Linville

Want to advertise? Have an article?
Contact: scott@vernoniasvoice.com

One year subscription (24 issues) \$35

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

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

Cedar Side Inn

Specialty Pizzas

Taco Tuesday
from opening until 9 pm
3 hardshell or 1 softshell \$4.25

11:00 am - 11:00 pm every day

Check our Facebook page for daily specials
756 Bridge Street, Vernonia 503-429-5841