

County librarian speaks on proposed library levy at Candidates Fair

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Multnomah County's chief librarian Vailey Oehlke spoke at the Southwest Candidates Fair on April 10 at the Multnomah Center on behalf of the proposed library levy, Measure 26-125.

Because there was no organized opposition, the librarian did not have to answer questions.

The ballot measure will replace the

current five-year library levy, which is about to expire. She is seeking voter approval for its renewal.

The rate, as before, will be 89 cents per \$1,000 property valuation, about \$13 a month for the average homeowner, she said.

This will account for about 65 percent of the library's operating funds, Oehlke said. The Multnomah County General Fund provides another 22 percent, and the rest comes from library fees and fines.

The total, about \$13 million, funds a system that serves 30,000 users a day, the second highest per capita rate of usage of any library system in the U.S., she said.

Multnomah County Library not only lends out books and provides the public a place to read them but also offers other services such as children's story hours, free Internet access, and classes. It does so out of 19 locations "with a total square footage that is less than Seattle's main library," Oehlke said.

Income from the first three years of the previous levy exceeded expectations, and the Library prudently put some of it into savings.

It was able to draw on this during the next three years, when bad times

compressed property values and reduced income for all government services.

According to a statement by the Library, if the levy fails most branches would be closed, the rest would have their hours reduced, and many services would be cut.

Editor's Note: The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners has pledged to refer a library district measure to voters in November at a rate that fully funds the library, should the May 15 levy be approved. If voters approve a library district measure, it would supersede years two and three of the levy and that level of funding would take effect in fiscal year 2014. For more information about Measure 26-125 visit www.librariesyes.com.

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sites in "well-defined neighborhoods where people can take the bus, walk or take their bike," Ray said

Journeys building (but not the bar) for sale in the Village

Just up the street, a for-sale sign is posted in the front yard of Journeys, a wine bar at 7771 SW Capitol Hwy.

"I do know that the Journeys building is for sale and that Journey's has a long term lease so they will be the tenant when the sale goes through," said Joan Steinbach, co-president of the Multnomah Village Business Association.

The building owner, listed in Multnomah County property records as "Capitol Highway LLC," is asking \$595,000.

A real estate ad from the owners' agent, Realty Trust Group Inc., says the 1,748-square-foot building was built in 1921.

Former Pagenwood Restoring building gets makeover

A couple doors down from Journeys, a vacant building at 7783 SW Capitol Hwy is getting an upgrade.

Tom Pagenstecher ran Pagenwood Restoring & Antiques out of the building from 1983 until last February. Workers have been cleaning and tearing down interior walls laid out for the previous tenant.

"We're just looking at options of fixing up the building, revitalizing it," said Mark Schick, property manager for the building.

The property, owned by the Rose Property Management Corporation, has been listed for lease, and there have been inquiries, Schick said.

"We've had a lot of interest but nobody has done anything permanent or final," Schick said. The listing is being handled through Urban Works Real Estate.

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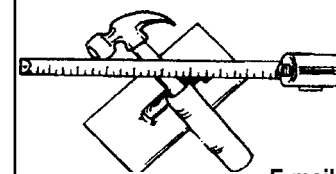


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