

CJ City Council grapples with issues of land revisions for new development

Wading through a veritable morass of public hearings related to new housing, the Cave Junction City Council conducted a marathon meeting of more than three hours on Monday night, Oct. 25.

The lengthy, sometimes tedious meeting in city hall also included addition of a new councilman, Margaret Miller, whose name is on the Nov. 2 ballot.

Replacing Sandi Lund, who resigned, Miller took the oath of office, administered by City Recorder Jim Polk, and took her seat on the dais.

Miller, a native of North Bend, Ore., has lived in the city for 13 years. She served on last year's budget committee.

In addition, Councilman Tony Paulson, who is on the Nov. 2 ballot as the lone mayoral candidate, was elected council president, replacing Lund.

Approximately 2 1/2 hours of the meeting were consumed by reports on recommendations, testimony and related discussion -- plus public hearings -- regarding requests for one variance and three land partitions.

The council was aided in its ponderings by Dick Converse, of Rogue Valley Council of Governments, who serves as adviser to the city in such matters.

With Mayor Ed Faircloth voting "no," the council voted 4-1 to deny a variance application by Merlin resident Steve Muhl nickel to allow a proposed cul-de-sac (Cindy's Way) to exceed the recommended 400-foot maximum length.

The 548-foot road was proposed in the 300 block

of S. Old Stage Road. Muhl nickel said he needed an OK so that he could pursue development of housing.

The council, taking Councilman Rita Dyer's lead, indicated concern that the variance approval could cause traffic problems later. She moved for denial of the request.

A Sherwood Avenue resident objected to the request, calling it a matter of "putting the cart before horse."

With a 5-0 vote, the council approved a request by William R. Clinton, of Sonoma, Calif., for a land partition to allow three lots of 0.28 acres each as part of a 5.02-acre parcel on Schumacher Street.

Clinton said that he plans to develop the property "piece-meal," but that he has no timeline.

Councilmen and the mayor, regarding all four public hearings, encouraged developers to seek water and sewer solutions by working with others developing other projects.

Developers on Monday night said that in general they have taken such steps to share costs for such infrastructure.

Regarding a land partition request by Hoyt Patton, of Wilderville, the council conditionally OK'd his request 5-0.

Patton plans to build three homes on W. River Street. Considerable discussion revolved around access and other issues, including improving the roadway.

Some citizens expressed concern about possible problems due to a steep grade and subsequent runoff to Daisy Hill Lane, plus a comment about

"back-door developments." The reference is toward gaining approval for partial development of sites, with plans "up in the air" about subsequent work.

Patton noted that the firm, H.D. Patton Construction, has or is building a number of homes in the city and is improving the quality of life.

"You are not losing control; we are not doing this in a hodge-podge manner," he said, indicating that the firm builds quality homes and is not interested in causing problems or skirting its responsibilities.

The firm will need to present the city a performance bond to guarantee that funds are available for roadway work.

With a 4-1 vote -- the mayor voting "no" -- the council approved a land partition request from Bill y Bob Properties Inc. Takilma resident Robert Hirning is president; Clinton is secretary.

Their request to partition two, 1-acre lots on Schumacher passed conditionally. A primary condition is that the Bill y Bob dedicate 25 feet, besides 30 feet already included, for street improvement.

Regarding all four matters Monday night, the council included the stipulation that conditions be met prior to construction.

No pet goat in CJ, says city

A city of Cave Junction resident has until Sunday, Oct. 31 to find a new home for her pet goat.

The city council agreed during its meeting on Monday night, Oct. 25 that Oct. 13 notification to Sande Moquin of the deadline is proper.

She has a pygmy goat named "Magic," which she obtained to help with the loss of her dog, she wrote in a letter to the council.

City Recorder Jim Polk said that the goat has been in the front yard.

"The mayor considered your request," Polk wrote Moquin, "and determined that it is not in the best interest of the city or the citizens to make an exception to allow the goat to remain within city limits." She had offered to obtain a permit.

Say you saw it in the 'Noose'



FALL RECYCLE ROUND-UP - Various types of material were brought by residents to the 'Can Slam' at Illinois Valley Visitor Center on Saturday, Oct. 23. The event was co-sponsored by Southern Oregon Sanitation, I.V. Community Response Team, Sterling Savings Bank, I.V. Chamber of Commerce, and I.V. Sierra Club.

Beware of Nigerian Internet scam

By GLENDA GRAHAM
Special to 'I.V. News'

Type "Nigerian Internet Scams" online, and watch thousands of Websites appear.

There is lots of helpful information for researchers, even some first-hand accounts from people already scammed.

Unfortunately, without warnings posted anywhere within classified ad Websites, sellers learn too late about Internet-based scam operators, as one Illinois Valley resident found after placing an ad on Cave Junction's official Website.

Internet scams are called "crimes of persuasion" by the Internet Fraud Complaint Center (IFCC), a cooperative effort of the FBI and National White Collar Crime Center, established in 2000.

IFCC's '02 Internet Fraud Report states that there were more than 75,000 complaints that year, an increase of 60 percent from 2001. It estimates the loss at \$54 million. The newest scams involve the use of counterfeit cashier's checks, and they target individuals who use Internet classified ads to sell merchandise.

An example would be a situation in which someone lists a car for sale. A potential buyer outside the country contacts the seller by e-mail, and explains that a U.S. business associate will mail a cashier's check for the item plus the overseas transport cost.

"Hoping the seller is an honest and trustworthy person," the buyer asks the seller to cash the check immediately; remove the purchase price; and wire the difference, minus costs, to a third party (generally the "shipper" in West Africa, Nigeria.)

Scam victims admit they initially were skeptical about the sale, but that after the check cleared, allowing access to the money the next day, they believed that all was fine.

The seller then follows through and wires the rest of the money to the third party. Later, the seller receives a bank notice that the check was fraudulent.

It was this "Nigerian Scam" that victimized a valley resident recently, costing her \$4,000.

The scam takes advantage of a little-known loophole in the U.S. banking system. Many are unaware that when a bank says a check's funds have cleared, it doesn't mean the check is good.

Banks must give their customers access to the money from these checks within one to five days,

under federal law. Banks would better serve customers by explaining that they are unable to tell immediately if a check is good.

It can take weeks for fake checks to be detected in the banking system. Depositors need to realize that it will be them, not the bank, who is responsible for any withdrawn money if the check bounces.

IFCC offers these suggestions for protection from Internet scams:

*If a prospective buyer contacts you by e-mail, insist on a physical address and phone number so you can check to see if the buyer is genuine.

*If a buyer is sending a cashier's check from someone else with an amount more than the purchase price, and you are asked to cash the check at once and wire the excess

money to another person: Don't do it.

*Research the information you receive on the buyer and all others involved in the transaction. If unable to locate any data on the names of people or companies mentioned: Stop the process.

*Anyone desperate enough to e-mail total strangers asking for their help in smuggling money by offering a percentage of said money likely is in a bogus scheme. Don't do it.

*Support only classified ad sites that post scam warnings. They protect us all. And remember the saying, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is."

Those who think they have been victimized by an Internet scam can contact IFCC at www.ifccfbi.gov; or the nearest appropriate law enforcement agency.

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