

Council gets an earful

by JOHN KLINE

Sandy City Council opened the floor for public input on the proposed 1978-79 city budget which went down to defeat by a 2-1 margin two weeks ago and received an earful from several disgruntled city residents at its July meeting Monday night.

The main point of contention centered on the \$6.50 per \$1,000 tax rate required to fund the city's share of the proposed budget. The figure represents an increase of over last year's rate and is figured to be the main reason behind the June 27 levy defeat.

After hearing comments from six speakers on various aspects of the budget and city operations in general, council deferred action on resubmitting a new tax proposal to the voters until a special meeting called for this Monday night (July 17).

If any single conclusion was reached by the speakers at the meeting, it was that city voters don't have a true understanding of the budget process or the complicated tax structure.

But, it was stated, they know how to interpret the \$6.50 tax rate.

"It all comes down to that rate," said Joe Cejaka. "People are just not willing to pay that much of a tax bill."

However, City Manager Paul Helton pointed out that the increase this year was due to first year payoff on general obligation bonds which city voters approved in previous elections.

The larger of the two bonds is for the \$1.5 million Alder Creek water system. The other is the \$150,000 newly purchased community center on Pioneer Boulevard.

The first year principal and interest

on those bonds comes to \$127,850. Without the bond payments, the tax rate would drop to \$4.37, 20 cents below last year's rate.

Fallout from California's Proposition 13, and subsequent efforts to put a similar measure on the November Oregon ballot, plus the fact that the city was seeking a three-year rate levy in the election, were mentioned as other reasons why the levy did not pass.

"I didn't expect that this budget would pass," said Mayor Melvin Hanenburg. "Not because it was a bad budget, but because of the reaction to Proposition 13."

"Everywhere I've gone lately, people are saying the same thing. They are against higher taxes."

"It's going to be up to us to come up with an answer to the situation," he said. "I don't know of anything that can be cut out of the budget. There hasn't been any money available for any new programs. We'll have to look it over and come up with a decision at a later date."

Two areas of the budget which were mentioned as possible targets for cuts were the Recreation Department (including the Senior Center) and the police department.

City funds for operation of Recreation and the Senior Center increased from \$26,000 a proposed \$41,000. (The total budget increase was from \$67,000 to \$94,000, however outside grant funds and program fees accounted for \$12,000 of that increase.)

Bob Rathke, a member of the council's citizen budget committee, suggested the Senior Center may be a luxury the city cannot afford.

"It's something which is darn nice to

have," he said. "But it's not something we really need."

Senior Center Director Dick Halvorson defended the increase in the Recreation and Senior Center budget and argued that fees and grant funds have offset much of the new programs.

"We generate a lot of grant funds for the center," he said. "I take the philosophy that those dollars are out there and if we don't go after them, then someone else will."

The police department budget was increased from \$109,000 last year to a proposed \$158,000 for 78-79. Much of the increase is due to the increased 24-hour surveillance which has taken place in the past year.

Rathke suggested the city consider looking into other options for police protection which could possibly save the taxpayers money. One option he suggested is studying the plan adopted by Estacada for contracting the Clackamas Sheriff's Department for police protection.

"I'm not sure how it would work out," he said. "But it's something we should look into."

Rathke and budget committee chairman Ben Salisbury both stated their concern over frictions that have arisen between members of the council and City Manager Helton.

"Unless some of that friction is resolved, I don't see how the people will accept this budget," Salisbury said.

(See related story)

Salisbury also stated that the three-year levy was a major stumbling block in getting voter approval of the budget.

Mayoral candidate Dick Harrison

also stated his opposition to the three-year rate levy. He said he would have voted for the \$6.50 rate if it had been on a one-year basis but could not support the three-year measure.

Meanwhile, the lack of an operating budget leaves the city in a sticky legal bind for the present on how to pay salaries and bills.

Attorney John Hutchinson, a law partner of City Attorney Jack Hammond, told council members that a recent ruling from the Attorney General's office made it possible for the city to spend carry-over funds from the previous fiscal year on current bills.

However, he cautioned that the city be conservative in its spending. He pointed out that council members could be held liable for certain debts incurred by the city if a budget is not passed.

Helton leaving post Sept. 15

Sandy City Manager Paul Helton, under fire from several members of city council, will step down from the position Sept. 15, it was decided at an executive session of the council Monday night.

Helton declined to comment on the matter. He made the announcement in a press release issued Tuesday afternoon.

Council is expected to formally act on the matter in open session at a specially called meeting Monday night (July 17).

The executive session was held following the regular business portion of the meeting in which several city

residents had aired concerns about conflicts which have developed between Helton and council members over the city management.

The executive session, which was called by councilman Vern Richards to discuss personnel matters, lasted approximately one hour.

Helton, 54, was appointed city manager on Feb. 9, 1976. He was selected from a field of 93 applicants for the job.

Prior to his position with the city, Helton served as business manager of the University of Oregon Medical School and as city manager of Milwaukie.

Sandy Post
Great Way To The Mt. Hood Playground
Vol. 68 Single Copy 15¢ SANDY, OREGON THURSDAY, JULY 13, 1978 No. 28

Redland students' withdrawal shorts Sandy High \$.5 million

by MARK FLOYD

The Redland School Board clouded the future of a number of Sandy Union High School employees by voting 6-0 to withdraw its students from Sandy this year.

Approximately 13 employees at the high school are paid from funds generated by the out-of-district Redland students. The Sandy Union High School board had budgeted an income of \$495,000 in tuition from the Redland district for 200 students it had expected to enroll.

The majority of teachers at Sandy High have already signed contracts for the coming year which may put the district in a bind.

Although the future of the Sandy High faculty is uncertain, the operations of the school should be relatively unaffected, according to District Superintendent Jack Peters.

"Our budget will not be affected as such because tuitioned students (such as those from Redland) have been kept separate from our kids in preparation for the day when Redland students would no longer be here," Peters explained.

The secession of the Redland students resulted from the failure of the Redland and Sandy school boards to agree on the funding of those students. Although both boards had signed a contract for the upcoming year, the exact dollar figure was still to be negotiated.

The contract called for Redland to pay \$2,475 per student with a minimum enrollment of 200. Redland board members felt that the dollar figure was too high and that the enrollment figure should be based on an average daily attendance rather than projected registration figures.

The number of Redland students has historically dropped during the year from opening day figures. The Redland board members felt that the tuition should be adjusted accordingly.

However, Peters disagreed, arguing

that the figure should be based on the preparation for the students.

"If we're told that 200 Redland students are coming to Sandy, we have to prepare for 200 students," he said.

"We don't know that there is going to be less than that and we'll have to hire employees accordingly."

By moving its students to David Douglas, the Redland School Board stands to save about \$300 per student, although that was not the determining factor in the switch, according to newly appointed chairman of the Redland School Board, Kirk Braun.

"It seemed in the best interest of our

students to leave this year," Braun said. "We have the opportunity to put all of our kids in one high school for several years without having to split families."

The multi-year stipulation is of major concern to Redland board members because the Sandy board had voted in June to oust Redland from the district following this year.

The Sandy School Board must decide whether to initiate action in an attempt to hold Redland to the contract. An attorney for the Redland board advised them that the contract was not binding, however, since it did not specify an exact figure.

Community School may get the axe

A number of Sandy-area residents have seen the handwriting on the wall from the fallout of the 27 levy defeat for Mt. Hood Community College and are garnering support to continue the MH-CC-Sandy Community School.

A delegation of area residents was to appear at the college's board meeting Wednesday night (July 12) to ask that support for the community school be continued.

A spokesman for the Sandy delegation was to have read a statement on behalf of the group at the board meeting. They are requesting that the college continue support for the community school through the fall until the programs can be taken over and funded locally by area residents.

The statement read in part: "We are fully appreciative of the support the college has been giving to our community in the past and recognize the financial dilemma the college is now

facing.

"We understand that eliminating the school program from your budget may be an unpleasant but necessary decision you have to make. . . . We ask that you not cut the Sandy Community School immediately but to continue with it through the fall. (This) would allow our community time to organize and explore other possible means of support for the programs."

The Sandy Community School operates on a budget of approximately \$20,000, most of which comes from the community college. However, the college board is expected to cut back heavily on community school programs in the wake of the \$2.5 million levy defeat two weeks ago.

The community school is housed in a trailer owned by the college on the grounds of Sandy Elementary School. It enrolls over 1,000 participants in approximately 200 programs a year.



John Kline photo

THIS YOUNGSTER is hard at it at a potter's wheel at the 5th Annual Sandy Mountain Festival. Gray skies threatened to open up on several occasions Saturday and Sunday at the festivities but held off in favor of warm weather. Massive crowds poured into the city for the event. See pages 6 and 7 for more photos.

Throwing the pot

Tri-Met approves zone fares

Unanimous approval Monday of a three-zone fare increase by the Tri-Met board was hurried through by General Manager Peter Cass to avoid further delay in establishing a rate structure.

The three zones, proposed by Cass last Friday, were an alternative to an

earlier two-zone proposal that was strongly opposed by suburban residents. Without unanimous approval, the new proposal would have required another reading at the August board meeting.

"That would leave us very little time to make the necessary adjustments," Cass told the board.

The new rate system will begin Sept. 3.

The directors heard testimony from a few citizens and passed the resolution with little discussion.

Zone 1 will be downtown Portland's Fareless Square, zone 2 will encompass a five-mile radius of the square and zone 3 will include any of the Tri-Met district beyond that radius, including

East County. Zone 3 boundary will be 82nd Avenue.

Trips within Fareless Square will continue to be free. Rides within one zone or between two zones will cost 45 cents and rides between the first and third zones, such as Sandy to downtown Portland, will cost 65 cents.

Students through high school will pay 30 cents for rides anywhere in the Tri-Met district and handicapped and senior citizens will continue to receive reduced or free fares during off-peak times.

Mayoral candidates invited to Chamber forum Tuesday

The four announced candidates in the upcoming Sandy mayoral race have been invited to speak at a forum sponsored by the Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce this Tuesday (July 18).

Candidates in the race are Bruce Cook, an insurance salesman, Jim Duff, teacher at Sandy Elementary School, Dick Harrison, teacher at Sandy Union High School, and Dennis Wolf, a Sandy police officer.

Cook and Duff are presently members of city council.

Each of the candidates will be allowed 10 minutes for presentation of his views.

City councilman Vern Richards has

also been invited to speak at the forum. Richards is considering a move to place his name in the mayoral race but has indicated he may wish to speak in favor

of one of the announced candidates.

The forum will be held at noon at Griff's Longburger Country on Proctor Boulevard.

Inside The Post
Sports & Recreation Page 10-11, Sec. I
Bigfoot film here Page 3, Sec. II
TV directory Page 11-13, Sec. II