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Staff photo

Weekend wonderland

SKIERS, SLEDDERS, and disc riders all found last weekend's weather a bit uncomfortable for their favorite sport. But the heavy rain and biting winds didn't stop this group from sliding down the slopes at Government Camp Saturday. Conditions were expected to improve as a cold front is moving into the area from the northwest.

In roundtable talk:

Officials view hard times ahead

by JOHN KLINE

These are hard times economically for small cities like Sandy. Members of Sandy City Council and the city manager who are struggling with this situation met with two representatives from the Legislature last Wednesday to tell them of some of the city's concerns.

State Representative Wayne Fawbush and Senator Ken Jernstedt sat down for a round table discussion with Mayor-elect Ruth Loundree, present and incoming council members, City manager Roger Jordan, Fire chief Bob Rathke and city recreation director Dick Halvorson.

Representing council were George Burg, Warren Decker, Deane Wesselink, Vern Richards and Olin Bignall.

City finances and the state's ability to continue its support through grants and other aid was the central topic of discussion. Jernstedt and Fawbush both agreed it will be harder for the state to increase or even maintain the current level of support with a proportionately smaller tax pie to be spread around.

"What you're asking us is to increase the amount of state money to you," said Fawbush. "I don't see that as a possibility. What we've got is a rising demand for services everywhere but not as much money to go around because of inflation."

The city's general fund now receives five percent of its money from the state, through direct grants, cigarette and liquor tax receipts and other indirect taxes. Fawbush said he did not expect the level of support to increase next year. The actual dollar amount coming in from the state may be the same, but the impact will be less because of inflation.

The problem of state finances is one where everyone wants their taxes cut but still wants the same level of services, Jernstedt said.

"All the services that the state has have been brought by groups with special interests," he said. "One group wants this, another wants that — in the end we are controlled by a wide variety of minority interests.

"They all say, 'I don't want mine cut and you don't want yours cut.' So where are we? I don't see any easy answers."

Fawbush said he believes the legislature will continue its commitment of 40 percent overall funding for education to local school districts. And Jernstedt added that support for higher education "has already been cut to the bone.

"This brings you down to human services and that is a very hard area to cut," he said.

Richards said he believes taxpayers in general don't think their tax dollars are being spent wisely. "People are opposed to reckless spending. The voters have the feeling that their money is not being spent well," he said.

"But it's hard to put your finger on something like that and say this is what needs to be cut," Jernstedt countered.

Welfare "chiselers" was one area which nearly everyone agreed needed attention, but there were varied opinions on ways in which the state can go about finding them out.

Rathke said he believes the state should spend more money for field workers to learn about situations where people are receiving more than they should.

"You can do this but I guarantee you that it wouldn't save any money in the long run," said Fawbush. He said it would cost as much to find out who was getting overpayments as it does to make the payments.

It doesn't appear there will be an increase in money for cities or states from Washington, D.C., Fawbush pointed out. The reason, he said, is because state and city governments don't have lobbies in the capitol, comparable to big powers like the Pentagon.

One way the city of Sandy can improve its financial standing would be to institute an income tax, Fawbush said. He said it would help free the city from its dependence on the Legislature for funding.

That idea didn't appear to draw support from others in the discussion.

"I think the point we're trying to bring across," said Jordan, "is that we (cities) don't want to be left out to dry by the state. I think you should look to see what the cities' problems are before you do things like give back the state income tax surplus (of $350 million)."

Another concern expressed by Jordan was that the state look at the cities as equals to counties in decisions on land use planning. He stated that with the loss of services from the Columbia Region Association of Governments (CRAG) on land use planning, the county planning department has indicated a desire to fill that vacuum. Such a move could be to the detriment of cities in maintaining local control, Jordan said.

"We don't want to have the county tell us what to do on our land planning decisions," he said.

Jordan also expressed a desire to maintain open spaces as much as possible in developments planned for the city. He disagreed with Fawbush on the minimum size for lots in a development.

Jordan favors larger lots with enough area for a backyard. Fawbush countered that with larger lot sizes it will be more expensive to build and maintain services (telephone, sewer, and water lines) to areas farther out from the core of the city.

"You can have those larger lots but it's going to cost more in the long run," he said. "New developments in the city pay for themselves only when they're in clusters."

Bignall said the city should achieve a "happy medium" for lot sizes. He said he is not happy with the current minimum 7,500 square feet and would like to see it increased to 8,500.

The officials agreed that round table discussions were a good way to keep the lines open between city and state. More may be planned for the future.

New baths, stairwell due for center soon

The new community center in Sandy will be renovated next month with a $15,571 grant that the city received recently.

The center's stairwell on the southwest part of the building will be widened, to accommodate persons two-abreast.

Other minor work will also be done in several other areas, according to Recreation and Senior Center Director Dick Halforson.

The city will pay the $1,069 difference between the project's cost and the amount of the grant.

STRINGS ATTACHED

There's one string attached to the grant that may have put it in jeopardy. All the grant money must be spent by Jan. 31. Reason for the tight schedule is the funds are carryover from the 1978 fiscal year and must be spent immediately, Halvorson said.

City council last Monday night authorized city Manager Roger Jordan to award a contract to one of several contractors contacted by Jordan after he learned the grant had been approved.

The contract was awarded under an emergency clause in the city code without benefit of a newspaper public notice usually required for such work. Because of the short timetable for having the funds spent, however, Jordan and the city council agreed that an emergency existed.

C&L Construction Co. of Sandy will do the work. It was the only company contacted by the city that said it could complete the work and present a bill for payment by the deadline.

Halvorson said that construction of upstairs bathrooms will allow activities to be held simutaneously in the upper and lower floors without one group interrupting the other. Renovation of the stairway is necessary to lessen the steepness and make it less hazardous for seniors, Halvorson said.

The bathrooms will be built on the north end of the building. The women's room will be equipped for handicapped persons, while the men's room will be more basic. The men's room will have the capacity to be converted if the improvement is desired later.

Halvorson told council members that handicapped men who have to use the bathroom will be allowed to go in the ladies room. He suggested that a woman could go in first to make sure that the coast was clear.

The grant funds came through a roundabout way to the city. They are federal Title V dollars from the Older Americans Act, channeled through the state Office of Elderly Affairs. Clackamas County Human Resources Department funneled them to the Clackamas Office on Aging, who disposed them to Sandy.

Expects 15,000 population

Retiring mayor views past, future

by JOHN KLINE

Much has changed in the city of Sandy in the past decade. Much more change is on the way. Vacant lots are now filled with stores and office buildings, and the city is planning for a big jump in population in the coming years.

Retiring Mayor Mel Haneberg has seen and been a part of much of the change. He leaves office Tuesday when former city recorder Ruth Loundree is sworn into office at city hall.

There is a little turn-about here. Mrs. Loundree, who came with the city as one of three employees in 1959, was the city officer who swore in Haneberg after he was appointed to the job in 1970 to replace Harold Edes who was moving to Canada.

"I have no experience as a mayor and ask your patience while I learn," he told city council at his first meeting May 26, eight and a half years ago.

GOT PLANT

Haneberg's first official act as mayor was to sign an application for sale of bonds to finance construction of the city's sewage treatment plant. Some problems just don't go away as council is again looking to get funds together to expand that facility.

Haneberg declined to list the projects he was proud to lead as mayor during his years in office, saying only that those were there for others to judge.

Retiring city councilman George Burg said that the outgoing mayor is "one who always did more than he was asked to do for the city

"I don't think we've ever had a mayor who worked as hard as he did," Burg said. "He's participated energetically in all the city functions over the years — the Bicentennial, the Spike Emerson shelter and Meinig Park, and I don't think anybody worked as hard as he did on getting the Alder Creek water system going."

Before he came down with a recent respiratory ailment, the outgoing mayor spent much of his time recently working with new City Manager Roger Jordan.

Haneberg and his wife, Edna, moved to Sandy in 1968 from Bull Run where they had spent all of their married lives. He was born in Seattle and rode down to Oregon with his family at age 2 on an open boxcar. Haneberg's father, a saw mill builder, bought a farm in the

Con'd. pg. 7

Year in Review photos inside!
I, 2-3
III, 2-3

Also Inside

Editorial, Opinion . . . I, 6
Area News. . . . . II, 1
People . . . . . II, 12
Home & Garden. . . . II, 6
Sports, Recreation III, 1-4
Legal notices. . . . . III, 5