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Assessment ruling may slow road improvements

by DAN DILLON

The city of Sandy will seek the opinion of outside counsel before it decides whether or not to appeal a recent court decision limiting the amount of assessments it may collect on the Heritage Square parking lot.

City Manager Roger Jordan said Tuesday he will initiate a review of the case by a consulting expert in the field of local government law, the Portland law firm of Ragen, Roberts, O'Scannlain, Robertson and Neill.

Clackamas County Circuit Judge Winston L. Bradshaw ruled Dec. 22 that property owners involved in the local

improvement district may be assessed only \$66,198 of the \$105,000 the city spent to build the parking lot.

Should the city decide to accept the judge's decision, it would be faced with absorbing nearly \$45,000 in legal fees, interest and construction costs.

According to Jordan, that could mean the elimination of several local road improvement projects slated for 1981 including work on North Bluff Road, Revenue Avenue and Hood Street. The judge's decision would cut a "substantial amount" from the city's street fund and off-street parking fund.

If the city decides to appeal, it will have to issue new warrants on the

project, Jordan said. That would increase the interest costs of the project, something the judge's decision says the city cannot collect. That would change, however, if the appeal were successful.

Jordan said the independent review should be completed within two weeks and a decision to appeal or assess the project at the new amounts should be made "by the end of January, hopefully."

The municipal parking lot, located between Pioneer and Proctor boulevards just off Shelley Avenue, was originally approved in April, 1976. At the time of its go-ahead, the project cost estimate did not include property

acquisition, lighting, underground utilities or attorney fees.

The city contended in its legal brief that those were legitimate costs of the project. Judge Bradshaw disagreed.

The original cost estimate was \$57,565.

In June, 1979, notices of assessment were mailed to the participating property owners in the amount of \$104,979.76. The judge ruled that the city had to follow the ordinance which allows a city to charge improvement districts only 15 percent more than the original assessment.

So the city is left holding the \$45,000 difference.

The participating property owners in the project were the Heritage Square Development Corp.; Georgia Shaffer, owner of the Wheatland Building; Carroll and Phyllis Rader, owners of the Frontier Building; Bill and Bette Herzog, owners of TJ's Fireside Dining; King Lau, owner of the Double Dragon restaurant; Warren Decker, owner of Decker's Store, and Arthur Bolster and Wally Scales, owners of the Bolster-Scales professional office building.

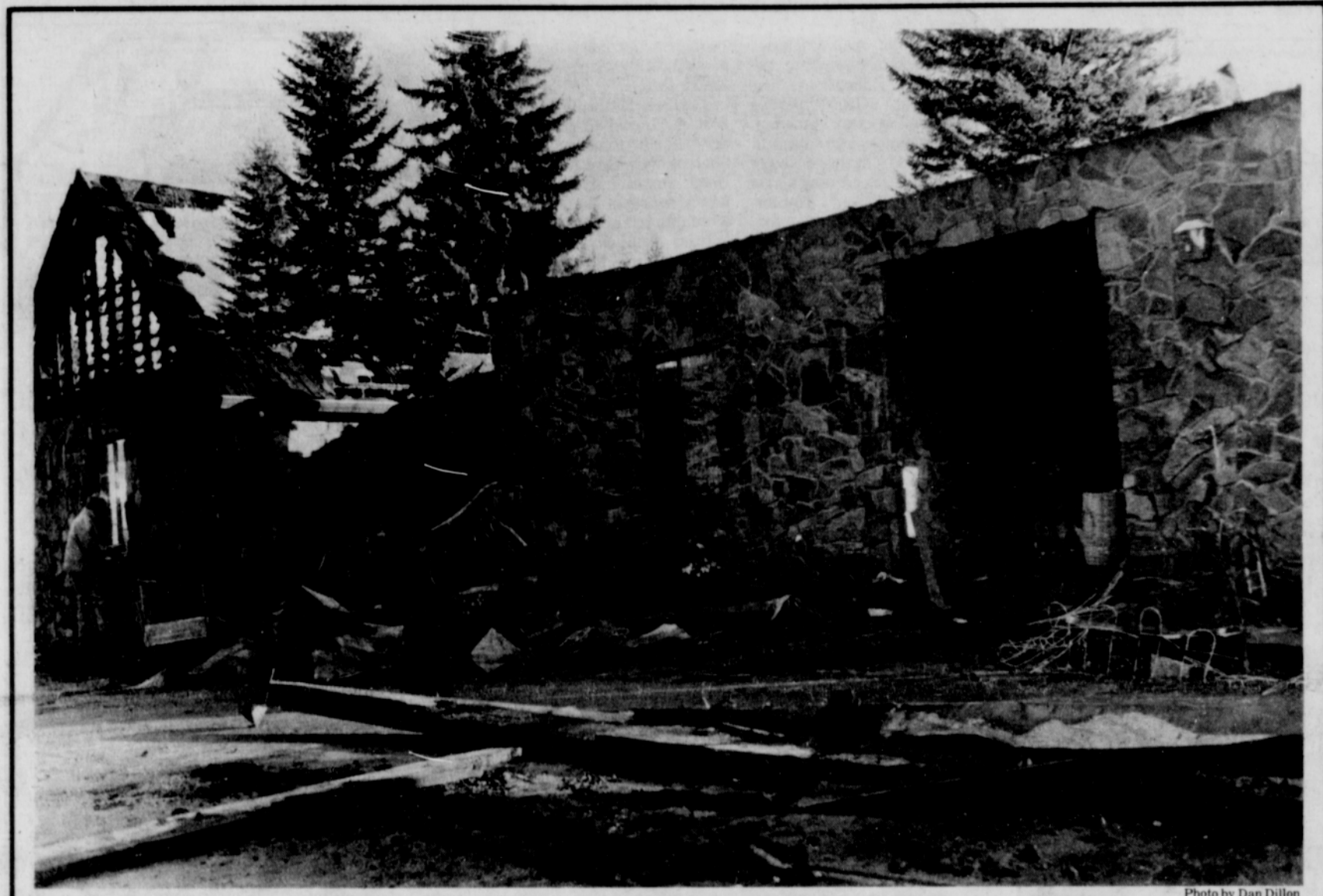
According to Bradshaw's opinion, the Heritage Square Development Corp., Shaffer and Decker, who sued the city along with the Bolster-Scales Company,

pressed the city to complete the project, but were without knowledge that the added improvements (lights, underground utilities and condemnation costs) would cost more than the engineer's original estimate plus 15 percent.

The Herzogs, Lau and the Raders accepted their assessments and applied for long-term Bancroft bonding.

Jordan said that because the lot is a municipal parking lot, there are means the city could take to recoup the \$45,000, such as limiting parking, installing meters or charging to use the facility.

That, he said, is an administrative decision that will be made later on.



The rockwork base is all that remains after a Monday morning fire destroyed this Wildcat Mountain Drive home valued in excess of \$300,000.

Photo by Dan Dillon

Early-morning blaze destroys house

An early-morning fire Monday swept through a Wildcat Mountain area home and destroyed it as 30 firefighters from the Sandy Fire District battled the blaze.

The fire, which caused in excess of \$300,000 damage, began in a recessed light fixture in the kitchen, according to Jim Gallagher, fire marshal for the Sandy district.

The owners of the home at 49025 Wildcat Mountain Drive, Dr. and Mrs. David Meiel, were in New York at the time of the fire, en route home from a vacation in Europe.

According to fire district reports, the blaze was reported at 3:22 a.m. as a "glow in the sky." When the first engine arrived on the scene seven minutes later, from the Dover sub-station, the firefighters reported a working struc-

ture fire.

By that time, it had already burned through the roof over the kitchen, Gallagher said.

The two-story home was situated overlooking a pond and firefighters used two portable pumps to feed that water through the engines to fight the blaze. In addition, 14,000 gallons of water were pumped from the six pieces of firefighting apparatus which were used to battle the fire.

Gallagher said it took a little more than an hour for firefighters to control the fire. Mop-up continued until 8:30 a.m., he said.

The damage caused by the fire, in excess of \$300,000, came just more than four days into the new year, but it pushed the loss by fire in the district over last year's entire total, Gallagher said.

Water distribution plan outlined for city

by DAN DILLON

The city of Sandy has rights to enough water to adequately serve a city three times its size. Getting it where it needs to go with sufficient pressure is the city's primary concern.

In order to provide adequate water supply for future growth in Sandy, a 12-inch transmission line circumventing the southern portion of Sandy, a pair of water towers and some land purchases by the city are planned.

Those recommendations came this

week in a study of Sandy's water distribution network by independent engineers, Cunningham Associates, Inc. The report contains both the short and long-range improvements necessary for the city's distribution system. Sprague Burdin, representing the firm, told the Sandy City Council Monday night, "Your lines are plenty big enough for everything except fire."

There are basically three problem areas.

The most immediate is improving flow to the western portion of the city. There is currently a dead-end line of inadequate size serving this area which includes the Industrial Park, Tickle Creek Estates and the proposed Mercury Development Shopping Center.

There are some short-term solutions which can improve the water supply to this area. If it is to continue to develop, a reservoir will be required in the vicinity of the Industrial Park in the "not-too distant future," according to John Lichtenheld, city engineer.

The second area of concern is the south-central portion of the city. Its flow problems can be addressed in the short run, but in the long run, the city will need to construct a reservoir in the vicinity of Sandy Heights and Bluff Road to handle future growth.

The North Bluff area is the third area of concern. The problem is caused by a long-dead-end line which is of inadequate size to serve the entire area if it fully develops. This area could be served, again, with the construction of a reservoir.

But before the city's skyline changes with water towers, there are easier and more economical solutions to improve the quantity of water on the west side of town.

The three-part solution would entail installing a station in the six-inch line on Sandy Heights Road and removing a check valve in an eight-inch Bluff Road line, including the main and pressure reducing valves. This would cost approximately \$7,500.

The second step would extend a six-inch line on Sandy Heights Road to join a six-inch line on Wewer Road in Knollwood Estates. This would cost \$3,465.

Finally, installation of a station in an eight-inch line on the south side of Proctor Boulevard and six-inch connections to six-inch lines on Proctor and Pioneer boulevards would cost approximately \$12,230.

The long term solutions involve a \$500,000 gallon reservoir near Ruben Lane which would be a steel tank 64 feet tall and 36.5 feet in diameter. "The necessity for, and timing of, construction of the low level reservoir or standpipe in the vicinity of Ruben Lane will depend on the rate of development," according to the report.

If a shopping center or other facility requiring fire protection, fire sprinklers and irrigation facilities moves into the area, the low level standpipe will be mandatory, the report continues. Its estimated cost is \$210,000. The city is advised to purchase a site in the area by the report.

Construction of a pressure regulating

station on the eight-inch line which ends at Beers Avenue on the south side of Proctor Boulevard and connections to the paralleling six-inch lines will improve intermediate zone pressure and supply volume at any time, but will be most beneficial when increased capacity is needed to supply the proposed standpipe near Ruben Lane. This construction is recommended to precede or be coincidental with construction at Ruben Lane. It would cost an estimated \$12,000.

The city will try to complete the short-term solution by next year, according to City Manager Roger Jordan. It will eliminate dependence on a single line with a loop system. The nearly \$25,000 will come from the water improvement fund, he said.

The purchase of the two reservoir sites would be financed through connection fees and systems development charges. "I'll reassess the fees to be sure they're paying their fair share as part of the cost of improving the system," Jordan said.

He anticipates that it will be 10 to 20 years before the reservoirs are necessary for the city's system, but is glad the report is in hand.

"We've got to be real cautious where we place growth," he said. "It has to be in relation to public facilities."

Burdin said he recommended the reservoirs instead of new, bigger pipelines, because "reservoirs are cheaper and accomplish the same purpose." He added that they offer a "better supply and less trouble" to the public.

Able & gifted program faces budget cutback

by KAYE BARTON BAKKE
Post Correspondent

Sandy Union High School District's budget committee held its first public meeting Monday night to discuss the district's \$4.6 million budgetary proposals for the 1981-82 school year.

During the session, which kicked off a month-long series of such meetings, District Superintendent Jack Peters presented the 125-page budget document to the committee.

The meeting was attended by 25 citizens, many of whom were present because they hoped for an opportunity to speak in support of the high school's academic program for able and gifted students.

The able and gifted program, in its third year of existence, has been funded for two years through federal grants.

\$6,200 from the district's general fund is being spent on the program for the current year.

The budget document proposes a \$14,338 allocation for the program in the 1981-82 school year. Several of the 27 students involved in the program appeared at the Monday night meeting.

Proponents of the program did not get a chance to speak at the Monday night session, which was devoted to an explanation of the budget document, by Peters, and scheduling of future committee meetings.

Committee members decided to study the budget document individually before their second meeting Wednesday night, when they began their fine-tooth examination of the district's proposals.

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Fire districts seeking dispatch improvement

The Sandy and Hoodland fire districts have had problems with their emergency dispatching ever since they joined the countywide service at the Clackamas County Communications Center (C-COM).

While the two districts have charged that there are flaws that cause lapses in response times, the county has countered that they can't seem to find them, no matter how hard they search.

Now, Clackamas County officials say they will work with the two districts to search out and correct those flaws. Sandy and Hoodland officials have told the county officials that they would be willing to pay to have the flaws fixed, but until now their pleas have fallen on deaf ears.

At a Dec. 30 work session with county commissioners Stan Skoko and Ralph Groener, representatives from the Sandy, Hoodland, Estacada and Boring fire districts outlined existing problems that plague the two members and prevent the other two (Estacada and Boring) from joining.

Sandy Fire Board member Jim Duff said the problems are at the dispatch center itself. "The way C-COM is worked up, there's a lot of room for operator error," he said. "We feel the tone in the voice is a failure in the phone lines."

The two districts are dispatched from a repeater station located on a hill just outside Boring. Those are the only groups, among six fire districts, the

sheriff's office and two police departments including Sandy, which use C-COM and have problems hearing the dispatchers.

"The pattern of the breakdown is not consistent," said Duff, who represented Sandy at the work session. As a result, the two districts have told Dick Bass, director of the County Communications Center, that they would be willing to purchase a microwave system to broadcast instead of relying on telephone lines.

Bass said at the meeting, that the county expects to receive a mini-microwave in five to seven weeks. That will result in a test period when it will be used in lieu of telephone lines.

Groener and Skoko asked Bass to head a committee of fire district representatives to consider the technical and financial aspects of improving the dispatching service.

Duff said he personally favors hiring a full-time head of C-COM. Bass is the unpaid head of C-COM but also handles County emergency services. That new head would report directly to the sheriff, according to Duff, rather than to Bass. The sheriff's department is the largest user of the center's services.

Another thing needed, he said, is a full-time dispatch training officer to teach the new dispatchers the ropes. Currently a training officer is on board, but he also mans a console and there isn't enough time for sufficient training, Duff said.

Busby named Chamber head

Richard Busby, Independent Bank of Sandy president, was elected new Sandy Chamber of Commerce president at a Chamber board meeting earlier this week.

He and other new Chamber officers will be installed 7:30 p.m., Jan. 23 at a banquet at the Red Lion Inn (Bowman's) in Welches.

Other new chamber officers are Vice President Chuck Jones of Ferguson's Power Equipment, Secretary Vicki Ward of Tim Ward's dental office and Treasurer Ed Storey of Clackamas County Bank.

Other board members are Marge Hoffman, Kathleen Eldridge, George Morgan and Arnold Poutala.

Poutala replaces Bill Sundin who resigned, due to business schedule conflicts.

"We accepted Bill's resignation with much regret, because of his many contributions to the chamber," incoming President Busby said of Sundin.

Retiring from the Chamber board are Frank Happold, Ned Dyal and outgoing Chamber President Bob Kallen.

The annual installation banquet at Red Lion will be preceded by a no-host cocktail hour from 6:30 until 7:30 p.m.



RICHARD BUSBY

Menu will feature prime rib of beef. Banquet tickets are available through local banks and savings and loan institutions.

A citizen of the year will be named at the banquet to honor outstanding community service during the past year.

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