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Economic slow-down halts city projects

by VON BRASCHLER

Construction slow-down and lost gas tax revenue are taking their toll on Sandy, where a small property tax base forces the city to live off recent growth, housing starts and outside funding.

City council meets at 7 p.m. Monday, in adjourned session to see what city services show the bruises during adoption of the city's 1981-82 budget.

City manager Roger Jordan said the council is committed to living within the A levy recently approved by voters.

City funds most likely to suffer, he said, include the street fund, sewer improvement fund, water improvement fund, sewer fund and water fund.

So residents on South Bluff Road, Revenue Avenue, Meinig Avenue, Langensand and Sandy Heights may have to wait a bit longer for road improvements.

Jordan said the city will keep levy election promises to patch North Bluff, oil Hood Street and install a walkway along Meinig Avenue from Highway 211 to Barker Street.

Some 50 percent of city systems development charges—revenue down approximately \$12,000 from January estimates with construction slowdown—fund toward street improvement here.

The street improvement fund further suffers from reduced state gas tax revenues—a sort of Catch 22 for Oregon motorists who conserved gas only to find less money generated for local streets.

The state gas tax revenue for local government distribution is based on usage, not the inflated price of gasoline. Local budgeters failed to predict the level of gas conservation in estimating the city's 1981-82 revenue.

City sewer and water improvement funds will be affected less by construction's systems development charge revenue shortfall, the city manager said.

Corresponding cut-backs in system connections and projects will counter the shortfalls in the two funds, Jordan predicted.

Council recently levied an additional \$300 per sewer hookup to soften the blow. Water and sewer funds—apart from their separate improvement funds—are better off in the budget crunch, since user fees pay most of the way.

Luckily, the city's general operating fund meets the crunch in good shape with a current year cash carry-over squeezed by cost-cutting department heads.

Jordan said city supervisors had generated general fund savings of approximately \$75,000 during the past year. The city has found increasing need for such cash carry-over to tide the government from budget's day one in July to November when tax money flows into town.

Department heads saved the money by postponing purchases, utilizing carry-over departmental funds and not immediately replacing personnel lost to attrition.

The city plans further personnel savings by pooling clerical staff for use by all departments. Other savings come from new reliance on part-time help for savings costly in fringe benefits reserved for full-time staffers.

The city also is locked in costly legal combat with Heritage Square property owners over Local Improvement District 4 parking lot assessment level.

The city's tapped its legal fee and borrowed to meet the parking lot costs that assessed property owners there contest.

Decision ultimately at the appellate court level isn't expected until October

or as late as January, offering little immediate hope of replacing expended funds through favorable judgement.

City council Monday authorized transfer of \$3,500 from contingency account to legal services account for LID trial fees billed earlier than expected.

Council also Monday authorized transfer of \$2,750 from capital outlay account for LID 4 project cost account of the off-street parking fund. Some \$13,000 was borrowed from the special assessment fund last year, and funds now are being transferred back.

—Council decided to rezone back to C-2 general commercial two lots owned by John Christensen on the corner of Highway 26 and University Avenue and the front half of an adjacent lot owned by veterinarian V.J. Keating III.

—Council also approved city employee pay increases of 9 percent for staffers earning less than \$15,000 and 7 percent for staffer who earn more than \$15,000. All will receive continuation of

The back half of the Keating property, mobile home site, will remain zoned for multi-family use.

The zone change contradicts the new city Comprehensive Plan that limits commercial zoning to the north side of the highway. Ordinance change and council acceptance of findings of fact will be necessary July 6 to finalize the change.

Council member Tim Ward and Mayor Ruth Loundree voted against the zone change, citing traffic safety problems with new commerce at that highway location.

—Council also approved city employee pay increases of 9 percent for staffers earning less than \$15,000 and 7 percent for staffer who earn more than \$15,000. All will receive continuation of

existing benefits and be eligible for up to 5 percent bonus for meritorious achievement. Policemen and the city librarian both will be voted salary range adjustments.

—Council also approved a contingency fund for a kitchen ventilation system at the Community Center and a \$5,200 low bid by Glenn Sheppard to clean the sewage treatment plant's polishing pond. The cleaning is expected by superintendent Bob Hornsby to increase reserve capacity to 150,000 to 200,000 gallons daily.

New Post Office

Council Monday also named council member Don Blair and Mayor Loundree to formulate a city recommendation to the Postal Service on location of a proposed new post office in Sandy.

Anti-copter group favors park for site

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

The controversy over the proposed heliport in Zigzag continues and some mountain residents are saying the 11-acre tract of land would be better suited for a park.

The issue began in March, when Joseph Stein, Randall Priest, Gale Peterson and Don Armintrout (who has since resigned from the heliport development committee) approached Clackamas County officials for a section of land at the junction of Highway 26 and Salmon River Road. They were interested in the construction of a landing site for emergency, as well as commercial, helicopter flights.

Due to its proximity to Welches Grade School, the Mt. Hood Pre-School, the Senior Center and tennis courts and a park area, many area residents and organizations have bitterly opposed the site.

Due to the public's outcry surrounding the proposed heliport, Clackamas County Commissioners requested the Planning Commission staff to investigate the feasibility of establishing the facility at the Zigzag site from the perspective of county ordinances.

Acting Planning Director Dominic Mancini forwarded a memo to the commissioners May 19 recommending that they not pursue a conditional use permit on behalf of the applicants because it would be contradictory to the requirements of the ordinances.

Commissioners Robert Schumacher and Ralph Groener agreed with the findings of the staff, but said that their decision would not prevent the heliport developers from filing for a conditional use permit.

Many opponents of the heliport felt that recommendation put an end to the controversy. However, the Hoodland Chamber of Commerce kept prospects of the heliport alive at its June 2 meeting by forming a committee to investigate the proposed site as well as other potential sites.

The committee, comprised of John Rizzo, Nancy Spencer, Renee Knapp, C.J. Sullivan and Lowell Njust, will present its findings to the chamber July 7.

The impact the chamber committee will have on the heliport proposal remains to be seen. In the interim, George Sheets, chairman of the Environmental Committee on Suitability, has submitted a proposal to the Park Advisory Board for "the establishment of a recreational site to be developed and maintained by the people of the mountain."



Taking advantage of one of the few sunny days of the summer, this group of rafters navigates the first white water on the Sandy River east of Dodge Park. It took a little coaxing before they were ready for the rapids, but the ride went smoothly.

Photo by Mark Floyd

DEQ threatens fines for Welches spills

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

The furor over the spillages at the sewage holding tanks at Rippling River has not subsided.

Dick Wixon of the State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) said he has sent a letter to Rippling River threatening the developers with a fine "if any future incidents occur and DEQ is not notified."

Rippling River developer Carl Bright said he has been flooded with telephone calls from angry residents who he claims are "holding him personally responsible for the accidents."

Now it appears that Rippling River's involvement in the mishaps is questionable.

According to Clackamas County soil scientist Dan Bush, the Environmental

Services Department will conduct its own investigation into the incidents because there is a serious question as to who is responsible. Based on what lay scattered along the small waterfall which flows down to the second fairway from the holding tank area, the investigation appears warranted.

When Wixon examined the site of the spillages, he observed large quantities of kitchen grease, sanitary napkins and a number of other items that were caught on branches and rocks. Because large quantities of grease were found at the site, and because there is no direct line into the holding tanks from the resort's kitchen, it is believed that someone purposely dumped the sewage over the embankment into a creek that flowed into the Salmon River.

This same person or persons may

have been responsible for removing a cap in a manhole that led downhill to a pump station that will not be operating until the new \$2.8 million sewage treatment plant for the area is completed 10 months from now.

According to DEQ utilities director Dave Abraham, the sewage filled the line, backed up out of two manholes and contaminated a small creek that emptied into the Salmon River. The accidents apparently happened over the Christmas holiday and again in March.

The accidents at Rippling River are now being referred to as "midnight dumpings," an illegal and deliberate spill by a sewerage pumper truck which officials say is a common occurrence, but difficult to prove.

According to one pumper truck operator, illegal dumpings of this

nature occur next to roadways, in vacant lots, fields, down manholes, in gutters or directly into creeks or rivers. Sometimes, midnight dumpers will tap into a sewage treatment facility to avoid paying a dumping fee.

DEQ licensing clerk Margie Weigand said that lengthy licensing procedures, including bonding, inspecting and tagging, are time-consuming but necessary for identifying illegal dumpers. But, she added, criminal prosecution was difficult because "you had to have proof of the dumping such as an eyewitness or a photograph."

Weigand admitted that DEQ was short of manpower to actively pursue dumping cases.

"Unless you have people posed all over the backroads, there is rarely a chance to catch them," she said.

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Community School faces critical vote June 30

by DAN DILLON

For nine years, the Sandy Community School has served as a meeting place where hundreds of newcomers and longtime Sandy residents could get acquainted and share a sense of community.

It has served as the springboard for a number of community projects, including the Silver Threads program, the Sandy Community Players and the new Country Market.

And the school has presented a wide variety of opportunities for educational and cultural experiences that Sandy-area residents might not have otherwise enjoyed.

"People aren't going to have the money they used to have to drive into Portland for cultural events and such," new Community School coordinator Jan Reynolds said this week.

"The community should answer that need and the Community School can pick up the slack."

The need will be addressed June 30 when voters go to the polls to decide the fate of the Sandy Elementary School District's Ballot 'B' measure.

Because of funding rearrangements, the district's portion of the inter-jurisdictional agreement for Sandy Community School has been placed on its 'B' ballot.

The June 30 election marks the last opportunity for approval of the funding.

Ann Fenwick, whose family has utilized the school since its inception in 1972, said, "I don't know what everybody else gets out of it, but we'd sure miss it."

Through the years, there has been a great deal to get out of Sandy Com-

munity School. Just ask those who have taken advantage of its opportunities.

"Growth is continual and has no boundary for age," said Dorothy Shrum, 1981 Oregon Community Education Association volunteer of the year. "We grow by way of experiences and through the varied means of communication and observation that today offers. The community school opens its doors to so many opportunities."

The diversity of offerings, from karate to financial management, macrame to lifesaving techniques or alternative energy ideas to pre-school co-operatives, has been possible through the efforts of volunteers who bring a great deal of expertise to the school.

Joan Ragan has attended classes, taught classes and helped coordi-

nate schedules at the school for a number of years. "Each time I'm surprised with the quality—in a volunteer situation—that they're able to draw," she said. But more importantly, she is impressed by the sense of community that participants feel.

She said it should be a major concern in a growing community, such as Sandy whose population nearly doubled in the last decade, to have a place to meet new people and old-timers alike. "That," she said, "is a plus."

Shrum agreed, "As our economy dwindles—and it will—it may bring about a tendency toward caring and sharing or a closer relationship between people. Common interests bring people together and the community school, by way of its volunteer programs, offers these op-

portunities.

Prior to the beginning of the Community School and the Sandy Mountain Festival there was little that was identifiable as a focal point, Fenwick pointed out. "There wasn't anything to jell the community together. Now there is," she said.

That sense of community has led to other community projects.

"The Community Players were born here," Ragan noted.

"That's what it's all about—community spirit," Shrum said.

The school has also served as a starting point for the new Country Market which gathers each Saturday at Nelson Memorial Pioneer Park for local crafts people and growers to sell their wares.

The school has grown to the point where 2,650 persons participated in its 138 different class offerings in

1980, according to Reynolds.

The benefits seem as great for the instructor as the students. Roman Scott, a Sandy High School junior, taught a class for youngsters on cartooning. "It learned a lot more about teaching through this. If it wasn't for the Community School, I would have never taught anyone cartooning."

Reynolds, who succeeded Nancy Allyn as coordinator for the school, sees a bright future for the program. "I see Community School as an ultimate facilitator and as an ultimate resource center. The possibilities are limitless."

"With the administration cut-backs and economic situation dictating a need for localization, the community can do nothing but benefit by investing in its local projects."