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Sandy sewer, water rates rising in January

by DAN DILLON

Sewer and water rates for Sandy residents will go up with the January 1982 billing.

Although the move won't be official until formal ratification at the Nov. 16 Sandy City Council meeting, all members present at Monday night's meeting have indicated they will support the move when the ordinance is read for a second and final time.

The basic fee for water service will jump 75 cents to \$7.75 per month. That will be coupled with an approximate 10.4 percent rate increase for general water service.

The basic sewer fee will rise \$1 to \$7.50 per month and all other sewer fees will be amended by a 5 percent increase.

Along with the new sewer and water rates, City Manager Roger Jordan is recommending a cost-of-service study and a thorough review

of the revenue and expenditures necessary to operate the sewer and water services during the next few years.

The rate increases were recommended by the local budget committee when it prepared the 1981-82 budget. The committee and council agreed at that time that utility funds

should be self-supporting and that annual cost-of-living rate adjustments be made.

However, since the budget was prepared the number of new construction starts—a prime source of revenue for utility funds—has faltered.

"I have analyzed the records to

date concerning building and reviewed the economic projections for the future, and at this time I am revising the estimates used in the budget for new connections below those already-low projections used in the budget," Jordan said.

Water connection fees have been revised down to \$24,600 from \$29,750.

The sewer connection fees' estimate drops \$10,000 to \$32,500.

The last rate increase was made in July 1980. "In reviewing the cost of living during this time," Jordan said, "these rate increases simply reflect the cost of living increase."

However, Jordan is uncertain that the city can continue to use a cost-of-

living index to raise utility rates.

"It appears to me at this time that the simple annual cost-of-living increases which we have been making over the past few years are not going to continue to provide the necessary resources to support these funds," he said. Thus, he suggested initiation of the cost-of-service study.

Phone bills should drop for Sandy

by DAN DILLON

While everyone else in the area served by General Telephone Co. of the Northwest can look to help support the utility's increase in annual revenues, Sandy residents can be happy they live in the only Oregon area covered by the utility where rates will actually drop.

Originally, the telephone company asked in June for authority to increase its annual rates by \$24.5 million. Last Friday Public Utility Commissioner John Lobdell granted GTNW its first increase since 1975—\$16 million beginning this week.

While one-party residential rates will increase an average of 22.3 percent elsewhere, in Sandy they will drop.

The basic rate will drop from \$9.65 to \$8.88 per month for a one-party residential telephone; from \$8.15 to \$7.46 for a two-party residential telephone, and from \$6.50 to \$5.87 for a four-party residential telephone, according to John Clay, PUC information representative.

The largest rate increases in Oregon will occur in some business services because of higher equipment costs and an increase in the amount of service offered.

In Sandy there will be an increase and a decrease in business services. A one-party business telephone will rise from \$26 to \$26.25 per month and a two-party business phone bill will drop from \$20.25 to \$19.53 per month, Clay said.

Also included in the rate increase is approximately \$25,000 in revenues the company hopes to generate from the increase in its coin-phone rate from 10 to 25 cents.

As part of the rate case, GTNW agreed to establish reduced intrastate long-distance rates for persons with hearing or speech impairments who use keyboard equipment to type phone messages.

"This settlement is in the best interest of General Telephone and its customers," said Lobdell. Ratepayers benefit because the size of the increase was sharply reduced.

The rate increase includes approximately \$4.4 million in revenues the company will collect as the result of the new Federal Communications Commission regulations which require telephone companies to more quickly recover the costs of items such as new telephone connections.



Photo by Dan Dillon

Hayrides may sound old-fashioned, but many Sandy residents got a taste of nostalgia last Friday during a merchant-sponsored "Moonlite Madness" celebration. Sandy High Future Farmers of

America conducted the hayrides and supplied a booming fire to keep warm and roast marshmallows between rides.

Customers claim water district not necessary

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

Customers of the Alder Creek Water Company claim that the receiver appointed to run the water system has misused his power to form a water district which they claim would cost as much as \$100 a month.

The receiver claims that the water district is needed to combat the problems which have plagued the system.

Last Friday, the first round of hearings on whether the Alder Creek Water Company constitutes a health hazard and should be made a water district got under way.

Opponents argue that if a health hazard is proven to exist, a costly

water district could be formed without a customer vote. They say they would have to pay for the system and a rate that could reach \$100 a month.

Gene Ginther, who was appointed receiver in 1980 by U.S. District Judge Gus Solomon, disagrees. He said the total cost for the district would be \$1.7 million, or \$14 to \$27 per month over a 30-year period, if Farmer's Home Administration money is available at 7 percent interest. Hookup charges for new customers would be approximately \$1,000, but current users would not be charged.

Attorney Ed Sullivan, representing the opponents of a district formation, charged Friday that Ginther has deliberately ignored the concern's of

water company customers and is making the system a health hazard, "so the people could not have a direct vote and a direct say."

An alternative plan to the district was "made to fail," Sullivan charged.

The Environmental Protection Agency, on the other hand, wants to provide evidence to show that improper construction, operation and administration of the system were the factors leading to the health hazard.

EPA attorney Barbara Lighter said, "Improper water was due to the presence of animal and human wastes in the water." She added that certain conditions, such as broken pipes and inadequate water

pressure, allowed germs to enter the water.

She charged that Gerald "Red" Bennett, who owned the company until it was placed in receivership, "served water without regard to public hazards," and that he "willfully exposed the public to these hazards."

"EPA has brought these charges against me," Bennett said, "but has continually denied me a trial. I can produce documents to prove that EPA personnel falsified records, manipulated test results... and caused results from water tests to be polluted when the tests were never performed."

Larry Payette, EPA environmental specialist, explained methods us-

ed to take water samples and how those sites were selected.

He said sampling locations were selected by Ginther and were generally those that provided easy access. Tests were generally taken between 11 a.m. and noon.

Payette said he knew the water source of each home tested, but Bennett and others on the system claim that some tests were taken at residences not even being served.

Bennett will be given an opportunity to produce a document that, he says, will prove that tests were not taken at locations where the EPA says they were.

The hearing will reconvene Nov. 11 and 13 at 10 a.m. at the Mt. Hood Lions Club in Wemme.

LCDC approves County comprehensive plan

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

After reviewing mountains of public documents and listening to two and a half hours of testimony, the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) approved the Clackamas County comprehensive plan last Friday in Salem.

Roger Kirchner, LCDC information officer, said, "The commissioners took action to indicate that the county had met all of the goals required for the northwest urban areas and that the plan complied."

In the disputed rural areas of the county, such as the Mt. Hood Corridor, the commissioners pointed out a number of areas that need further investigation, Kirchner said. LCDC dis, however, approve the plan for the area within the Hoodland Service District.

"The commissioners signed off on the area within the Hoodland Service District and agreed that it should not be zoned for natural resources," he said.

The commissioners also agreed to accept the county's exception not to apply the natural goals of the state there allowing the land to be developed.

Linda MacPhearson, LCDC field representative, explained that the commission amended its decision and required Clackamas County officials to go back and re-examine all information related to three wetland areas which were not included in the natural resource inventory submitted by the county. Two are within the Hoodland Service District. Claire Punchy, LCDC planning

resource specialist, said Clackamas County would now have to apply an administrative rule to the wetlands and explain what conflicts may exist if the areas are developed. The county will also have to explain how those conflicts would be resolved.

She said the county will most likely have to include citizen input to meet the LCDC conditions. It will, however, be up to county officials to determine how much citizen input

will be allowed.

LCDC staff member Lloyd Chapman examined the wildlife resources in the Mt. Hood Corridor. He said that the Cedar Ridge winter range area for deer and elk will also be re-examined. He said the area is unique because it contains both wildlife and wetlands.

"Normally, the two are not related," he said.

Clackamas County officials argued

that the Cedar Ridge area, which is inside the Hoodland Service District boundary, was considered for its wildlife values when the plan was prepared. They did not recognize that development would have an impact on wildlife.

Chapman said, "The county contended this was a trade-off that had to be made—winter range for development."

He said that all information con-

cerning the winter range areas within the corridor was sketchy.

An LCDC subcommittee will conduct a public hearing Nov. 16 at 1 p.m. in the County Commissioner's Hearing Room, Clackamas County Courthouse, 906 Main, in Oregon City. Testimony at that hearing will be limited to those persons who appeared and signed up to testify at the LCDC hearing last Friday in Salem.

Livestock attacks increase countywide

by DAN DILLON

A Sandy-area family found out last Thursday what can happen when people's pets run free in a rural area.

Bill Blazek had seven sheep grazing on 14 fenced acres near his home on Dover Court in the Firwood area. Thursday three dogs attacked and killed six of the sheep. The surviving lamb suffered cuts inside its ears where the dogs pulled at them.

"I'd had the animals up there in the pasture since May," Blazek said. "We hadn't had any problems—no problems whatsoever—then boom. This is it."

"The sheep were my children's pets, just like those dogs were someone's pets."

A neighbor called Blazek mid-Thursday afternoon to tell him

that some dogs were running his sheep. "The attack was really vicious," Blazek said. "They had been at it awhile."

When he arrived, four sheep were dead and two were badly injured.

Blazek shot one of the dogs—a "jet-black" Labrador-German Shepherd mix—and the other two escaped. A neighbor came forward and agreed to have tests run on his dog.

The third dog—a pure white German Shepherd-Samoyed mix—escaped. "It's been spotted by two or three people," Blazek said, but doesn't appear to be from the area.

The dead dog had wool in its teeth, but the owner has not been identified.

"The person from Animal Control said that it definitely

was a pet," Blazek said. "It was in too good of shape."

There are concerns that unless the white dog is identified, more attacks could occur in the area.

"I'm afraid it will happen again," Blazek said. "And they just don't stop at sheep. They will take a cow or a calf if there's enough of them. It's pretty disgusting."

Blazek also grazes a cow and calf in the pasture where the sheep were kept.

The problem of dogs attacking livestock is growing in Clackamas County, according to Director Richard Wick of Animal Control.

A pasture near Redland has lost 30 sheep in the last six months, he said. "Throughout the whole county, this goes on.

"By state law, they have a right to kill a dog that's attacking the stock," he said. But a person whose stock has been attacked cannot take the matter into their own hands, even if they know where the dog came from.

"When a dog owner is known, then the dog owner is responsible to pay for damages," Wick said. "If the owner isn't known, the stock owner can file a claim with the county. It goes before the Dog Control Board which pays a percentage of the market value."

"It's not near as much as they'd get if they know who the owner is," Wick said. State law allows the stock owner to sue the dog owner for double indemnity.

Index

SECTION I	
Obituaries	3
School Lunch Menus	5
Keeping Posted	5
Senior Center News	5
Editorials, Letters	6
Sports, Recreation	7-8
SECTION II	
Area News	1
Around the County	2
About People	4
Hoodland Happenings	5
Classified Advertising	11-14
SECTION III	
Television Directory/Inside Tab	