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Tax cut looms for budgeters

by DAN DILLON

Local officials are taking a "wait and see" attitude about a proposed 1.5 percent property tax limitation that some observers say could wreak havoc with local budgeting.

"I've heard that it would have a devastating impact," said Sandy Elementary District Superintendent Clark Lund, "but before I get excited and start issuing statements about gloom and doom, I'm going to see what happens."

State Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer is expected to issue an opinion this Monday, Aug. 2, about the effects on cities, schools and special districts if the measure is approved by voters in November.

City Manager Roger Jordan said he is waiting for the attorney general's interpretation before he analyzes the possible effect the pro-

perty tax limitation could have on the city of Sandy.

If there are cuts, smaller communities could be severely affected. "With small towns like Sandy, where there are one-person departments, it raises some questions," Jordan said.

He is also concerned that larger departments, like the police department, would face cutbacks while the smaller departments would take on added duties.

This marks the third time in five years that Oregonians will be asked to vote on a property tax limitation. Earlier proposals, in 1978 and 1980, were turned down at the polls.

The latest effort, introduced by Ray Phillips and the Oregon Taxpayers Union—sponsors of the earlier unsuccessful initiatives—would limit property taxes to 1.5 percent of assessed valuation.

That is \$15 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

In addition, the measure would roll back assessments to 1979 levels, limit future assessment increases to 2 percent annually and would require a two-thirds vote of both houses of the Legislature and of the voters to boost property tax rates.

Statewide, local government and school officials are saying the measure, if passed, would have a devastating impact on local services. They claim that any move away from property tax financing of public schools, which now provides about two-thirds of the funds for public education, would shift the school finance burden from business and commercial property tax to personal income tax payers.

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Schools revise busing plan

by DAN DILLON

Some Sandy Elementary District students may find getting to school a little different this year, although the changes are expected to be minor.

The school district's board of directors recently approved a plan that will make pick-up and delivery of students more uniform throughout the district and save time and mileage in the daily schedules.

"We're trying to be consistent in our practice of pick-up and delivery of children," explained Superintendent Clark Lund. "Some had practically front door service, while others had to walk up to a half mile."

Under the new plan, children who live less than one half mile from a main route will have to walk to that

main route. Children who live more than a half mile will still be provided the old service.

The district extended its route past Sandy Farms on Highway 211, where buses used to turn around, to Tickle Creek Road because of the danger to students walking along the shoulder of the highway.

In the Colorado Road area, off 362nd Drive, four families at the end of Moonbeam Lane will have pick-up. That is nearly one mile from Colorado Road, Lund said.

However, in snowy and icy weather, those students will have to meet the bus on Colorado Road because of the difficulty of maneuvering the bus.

The net result of the modifications will be a savings of about four hours

bus time per day and 44 miles of travel per day, Lund said.

"It'll be more cost-effective for us," he said. "As much or more than fuel costs, what we considered is consistency in practice."

While buses will be on the road less, the district will have an agreement for maintenance. For the first time, the district has signed a three-year agreement with Henry Reckman for lease of bus shop space.

In the past, the district had operated on a year-to-year basis with Reckman.

The Sandy Elementary District also signed a three-year agreement with the classified employees that will run through 1985.

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County sends Hood plan to LCDC

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

The Board of Clackamas County Commissioners has approved revisions recommended by the planning commission to the Mt. Hood Community Plan, with some modifications.

Planning Director Dominic Mancini said the commissioners' action "was to voice their intent to approve the proposed plan and to adopt the zoning ordinance as recommended by the planning commission."

The modifications of the planning commissions recommendations are related to the comprehensive planning map, the zoning map and in wetland designations, in and out of the Hoodland Service District.

Natural resource planner Gary Naylor said the wetland changes occurred in the Cedar Ridge area near Brightwood, where the 345-unit Brightwood Glen subdivision is proposed. Boundaries have been reduced from 19 to nine acres.

On Rutledge Lane in Welches, Naylor said, a 35-acre wetland area was designated.

Commission approval eliminated the 1976 Mt. Hood Community Plan as the primary planning document for the corridor.

Senior Planner Doug McClain said the commissioners made the decision after two work sessions. Along with the planning staff, they evaluated written testimonies and evidence which had been presented at public hearings.

McClain said the primary modifications to the area's plan focus on two areas outside the Hoodland Service District.

McClain said the commissioners elected to retain most of the 1976 land-use designations which is recreational-residential (RR).

RR zoning allows one unit on two acres with no public water and no public sewer services available. With only public water available, one unit could be constructed on one acre. With both sewer and water available, four units could be constructed on one acre.

The planning staff, however, had sought to have this area down-zoned and the land re-zoned to agriculture and forest. That would have allowed only one unit to be developed on 20 or 40 acre parcel.

After the comprehensive plan was rejected three times by the state Land Conservation and Development Commission, county officials feared it would meet the same fate unless this zoning change was made.

LCDC would not acknowledge the plan on the basis the county had not shown an exception for lands not zoned agriculture or forest outside of the urban growth boundary.

This proposal met heavy opposition from affected landowners, developers and real estate agents, who claimed the re-zoning would seriously affect the corridor as a tourist and recreational area.

Some of these down-zoning opponents formed together into the Sane Economic Development Association and retained attorney, Diane Spies of Portland, to combat the zoning change.

Spies had told commissioners she



Photo by Dan Dillon

Bing Beckman, of the Barlow Trail Long Rifles, struck a spark with Scouts in Meinig Park last week as he demonstrated fire starting with a flint and steel for participants in the annual Day Camp. Story on page 2.

Fire district eyes change in dispatching

by DAN DILLON

When Sandy Fire District signed on with Clackamas County Communications (C-COM) for its dispatching services, district officials hoped they'd found a home.

Now, three and a half years later, the district is investigating a move to abandon C-COM and align its dispatching with services offered at Clackamas Fire District No. 1's center—Station 400.

"We just never anticipated those problems," Sandy Fire Chief Bob Rathke said.

The problems included the "auspicious start" when C-COM failed to have the telephone line strung by the start-up date.

The signal from the C-COM center in Oregon City has repeatedly failed to activate the pagers that bring the local volunteers to the fire station in emergencies and County officials have dragged their feet trying to amend the situation.

For the past two years, the Sandy district has battled a problem where volunteers' pagers have not been activated by C-COM's signal.

Rathke said the rate of failure is about 7 percent of the time. The results could be disastrous in a house fire or medical emergency.

"We've had several incidents where a delay in the alarm caused additional damage," he said, "but with people, you never know."

C-COM "just isn't a reliable system," Rathke said. "They've admitted it isn't a reliable system, but it's a question of money."

Part of the problem is the topography and size of Clackamas County. That makes it difficult to place antennae to serve all the users with equal reliability.

C-COM recently established a task force among its users to work on the problems and Rathke hopes something can be done to alleviate the bugs that have plagued the system since Sandy left the Boring Fire District's dispatch for the County's.

"I honestly hope that the C-COM thing would work out," he said.

"I'm looking for the County to hire an engineer to say, 'Hey, you need to put your antennae here.'"

Those improvements would come from part of the annual fee that users pay for C-COM's dispatch services. Coupled with money from the 911 emergency telephone system, the project would not be fiscally impossible.

If the Sandy district would transfer its dispatching to Station 400—and their proposal won't be ready until late September—Rathke thinks the cost would be similar to C-COM. He anticipates the district could stay on the 911 emergency line.

"The County has indicated, if we were to move, that they would cooperate so we could use 911," he said. The move would require a telephone switch at C-COM to transfer incoming calls for Sandy assistance to Station 400.

"The unknown factor behind everything is the tax limitation," Rathke said. "We may have to go back to a primitive system with a phone at the station here" if the 1 1/2 percent property tax limitation passes in November.

The Sandy district's board will review Station 400's proposal in September, give C-COM an opportunity to offer alternatives and act on the transfer in December, Rathke said.

"There's no question, in my mind, it could be fixed," he said. "They tell us they don't want us to leave. If we saw some positive action, we would have to give serious consideration to staying with the County."

Irregardless, he said, it will cost between \$25,000 and \$35,000 for dispatching no matter where the district goes for the service.

Elsewhere in the district:

—Two new pumper trucks will arrive next Tuesday from Appleton, Wis., to replace pumpers at the Dover and Roslyn Lake substations. The old pumpers, which have both served about 20 years, are tentatively scheduled for reworking for other service in the district.

—The board of directors is reviewing the Fire Prevention Program and analyzing fire-loss figures to see how well the program has met the goals established in 1976.

They will analyze the program's effectiveness, see what areas need improvement and determine if it would be cost-effective to hire a full-time fire prevention officer as foreseen in the comprehensive plan.

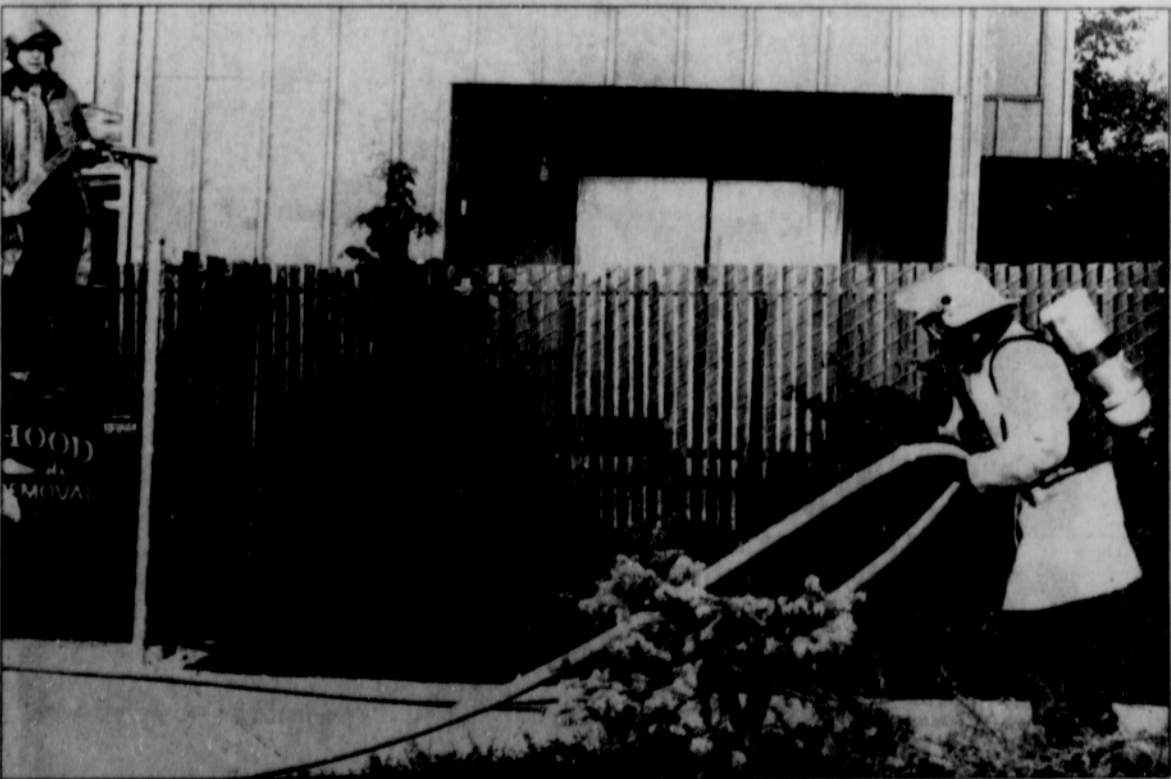


Photo by Scott Newton

Sandy firefighters move to extinguish a fire on the patio of a Pleasant Street apartment. According to investigators, the fire was set. Sandy police are looking for a teenage male, six feet tall, wearing blue pants and a red shirt who was seen in the area just prior to the 3:11 p.m. alarm Tuesday.

Water Authority charts course

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

The five special water districts recently organized from the Alder Creek Water Company will be cooperatively operated by the Alder Creek Water Authority.

The Water Authority is made up of a 10-person board of governors that

will oversee the operation and administration of districts when Federal District Court Magistrate George E. Juba transfers receivership of the company Aug. 1 from Gene Ginther who has been the company's receiver since Sept. 26, 1980.

Coordinating the activities of the Water Authority are two board members nominated from each of the five water districts who were selected by the boards each of their respective districts.

Representing the Sleepy Hollow district is Jeffery K. Shacileford and Charles Peterson.

Frank Fraijo and John Anderson represent the Wildwood area. From Country Club district is Robert Pomeroy and Jackie Yates, who is serving as the Water Authority's secretary.

Margo Dempster and Orville Thompson, from Alder Creek-Barlow, are serving on the board.

From the Riverside District is the Water Authority's President, Jock Stewart, and Nan Slanning, the organization's record-keeper.

Over the past few weeks, according to Slanning, the Water Authority has taken a number of actions that will allow transfer of the company's operations to go smoothly.

Jerry Schmidt, of Oregon Water Consultants, is the project manager for the five districts.

He will operate the districts, do maintenance on the systems, coordinate engineering studies related to renovation and, if necessary, the rebuild the systems.

The engineering will also be done by Oregon Water Consultants.

As project manager, Schmidt said he will work on a tight compliance

schedule to bring each of the systems into conformance with the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1976.

The Water Authority also has been working with Rebecca Marshall, of Clements & Marshall, a Portland financing consulting firm. She is currently studying sources of revenues and financing the Water Authority can apply for to fund the improvements.

The Sleepy Hollow system, which had a new system installed a few years ago, will need some renovation work to prevent future problems. In addition the Water Authority will have to secure easement rights through lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, where the system's source is located. Gerald "Red" Bennett, the system's former operator, had reportedly trespassed on BLM property and established a new water source.

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