

Editorial & Opinion

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SANDY, OREGON, THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 1983

Employee tax wise decision

Taxing county businesses \$10 per employee for seed money to operate a much needed county economic development commission makes good sense. We strongly urge support for this measure June 28 at the polls.

This head tax could generate some half a million dollars to stimulate business development in sluggish Clackamas County, and a good third of that money would come home to nest in grants to local cities and chambers of commerce that promote.

Aggressive cities like Sandy, Estacada and Molalla that have unified local economic development efforts surely could benefit from county grant money thus generated, as could chamber and booster groups on the mountain.

The money would be used locally throughout the county for administrative revenue to allow developers room to move in stimulating local tourism and industry, plus help local businesses secure federal growth money including new 503 SBA loans.

Generally each county business would be asked to "ante up" \$10 per employee to develop this better marketplace. However, there's a \$25 minimum for tiny shops and a graduated scale whereby big employers would pay as low as \$1 per worker, as in the case of 1,000-employee plants.

A few business leaders, notably officials of the Clackamas County Chamber and North Clackamas Chamber, have criticized this plan as just another tax to burden businessmen.

We think that's a bit irresponsible and short-sighted. This \$10 head tax to employers demonstrates a great grassroots example of business helping business directly. That beats other government funding with big government's spiraling costs of administration.

Dollars that county business persons "ante up" here will stay in Clackamas County to stimulate a better business climate for all—most immediately business persons. (VB)

Heritage Square dead city issue

It's sad to think some Sandy voters actually would vote down the city's lean operating levy Tuesday, simply because they think hidden charges remain from Heritage Square settlement.

With reduced assessment funding from property owners at Heritage Square, the city was forced to pay some \$98,000 of the \$165,000 parking lot project, it's true.

However, much of that money was paid out by the city over the years the local improvement district flap drifted in court. As the bills for construction came due, the city paid them.

Last year, the city looked in the crystal ball and budgeted money in its contingency fund to pay the remaining \$45,000. So the city's share of the parking lot expense has been paid, and no new funding will be required to cover the shortfall in LID assessments.

So there are no hidden charges to buy the city out of a jam at

Guest editorial:

Mayor urges levy support

by RUTH LOUNDREE,
Mayor, Sandy

Tuesday, June 28, is election day in the city of Sandy. On July 1, the city will begin a new fiscal year, and the results of the election will determine if we will have the funding to continue working toward the goals and objectives set by the City Council and toward the kind of city which I feel most city residents and property owners want to have.

For me, this is a particularly important election. I have been a resident of Sandy for 40 years and have been involved in city government for the past 25 years. We have a full-service city here in Sandy, services which we must pay for. We have a very livable city. It is safe. It is beautiful. It is a good place for people to live, work and raise a family. During this last year we reached a compromise settlement on the municipal parking lot, a settlement that already has begun the process of restoring our local downtown as a full-service shopping area. A recent major effort has been a program to attract clean industry, that would provide better employment opportunities within the city. By emphasizing our successes, I don't mean to say that the city doesn't have problems. However, I do feel that we can face the problems as they come up and resolve them.

In our last election May 17, the voting results were 242 "yes" votes and 251 "no" votes. This is a total of 493 votes cast, and it is not very good voter participation for a city of 3,500 people. The budget presented to the voters Tuesday is the same levy, the very same dollar amount that was presented May 17. It is a budget that has been carefully reviewed by the budget committee, which includes the City Council and seven citizen members. There is no excess in this budget. In fact, the expenditures will be less than last year. The employees will be receiving no wage increases during the budget year, and supplies and other services also have been cut back.

Many residents have contact with the city only when they run afoul of the law or receive a notice to cut weeds on their property. These governments overshadow the benefits that residents receive from the city,

Heritage Square. The city has faced that nightmare of remonstrances and court defeats over assessment levels squarely and shouldered the burden of shared expense.

Heritage Square is behind us as a city, something all taxpayers can rejoice about. Now we can all move ahead as a shopping district and as a city. But first we need to approve a budget to operate the city during the next year.

It's just a simple \$411,637 tax levy the city asks to operate without salary increases for basic full services to the community. In fact, level of services may be down a bit this coming year, even with passage of this budget. It's that lean.

That's something taxpayers should like. There's nothing up their sleeves at city hall. Like MacDonald, they do it all for you. (VB)



ty, which are not apparent. The nature of city government does involve the enforcement of city ordinances, but as I stated above, these ordinances have been carefully reviewed and have been adopted in order to promote the general welfare and to make Sandy a desirable place to live. We all should remember that the police also provide protection to our property and to all of us, including children. Police protection is a major segment of our budget. Police protection costs nearly \$300,000 to provide 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year police service. I hope you also will remember the other valuable services that are partially provided for by the budget, including the library, our senior center activities, recreation and street maintenance. Our tax base of \$14,901.11 is a result of voter approval in the year 1976, and does very little to provide the necessary services in 1983-84. The \$411,637.50 before you on Tuesday will quite provide the same level of services that we had in 1982-83.

Tuesday you have the opportunity to exercise the fundamental right of our democracy—that is, to vote. I urge you to exercise this right, as I would like to see a majority of voters decide this important issue.



Letters to the editor:

Welches, city levy debated

Support Welches

Next Tuesday the voters in the Welches School District will be offered an operating levy for the 1983-84 school year for the second time.

There are dollars in the budget, planned in the spring and reflected in the levy amount that probably will not be needed because of a decline in student enrollment—especially in the lower grades. The same was true last year to a lesser degree, and the dollars were not spent, but were carried over to the 1983-84 budget as part of the beginning cash balance.

By the time this is read, I will be the former superintendent of Welches with no official responsibilities to the district or the board of directors.

I would like to say in my unofficial capacity that your board and administration have in the past spent your dollars conservatively, balancing programs for children against patron tax dollars. The same philosophy continues.

You charged the directors with a responsibility when you elected them. You have the right, respon-

sibility and opportunity to monitor their actions by attending board meetings if you wish.

Support your district, board and staff by voting "yes" Tuesday for Welches programs for students.

Kenneth C. Blackburn
Rhododendron

Reject levy

I see where the Welches School District will try again this month to pass another school levy. When are elected officials going to realize that when the public defeats a measure, they have given their answer—"No." It is too bad that statutes don't require elected officials to finance subsequent ballot measures out of their personal funds, rather than waste taxpayers' money. In the Hoodland corridor, our taxes and unemployment figures are too high to warrant support for any additional burden.

The ploy used—lower millage rates—is true, but you don't complete the statement by advising people their assessments are higher each year. Loggers, woodcutters, retired and the unemployed are not as ignorant as our public of-

officials make them appear. Their "no" votes along with those of the fortunate who are working will defeat your "request" again. Is our position clear enough for the school board now?

Also, solicit the opinions of those residents within the Hoodland Sewer District that will probably be receiving additional assessments this fall due to the short-sightedness of other elected officials.

Dennis Cox
Brightwood

Umpires needed

Where, of where, have our umpires gone?

That seems to be the big question this year for our boys' baseball and girls' softball.

At one game no umpires bother to show up. Next time it is delayed 45 minutes for umpires showing up late. Or calling at 10 p.m. to say they are unable to make a 9 a.m. game the next day. When we are fortunate to get one to show up, they don't have the proper equipment and have to rely on help from spectators.

I feel with the money we parents pay for putting our

children in these sports that we could count on better umpires. An umpire can make or break a game.

Connie Rathjen
Sandy

Support city

Our chamber of commerce is concerned that voter apathy may force drastic changes in the level of our city services. A recent estimate by the Sandy Post approximated the voter turnout at the May 17 election at 33 percent of all registered voters. Don't we care about our voting privilege? Don't we want to have control of our local government? We can protect and promote our interests only by voting and participating.

Get out and vote, citizens. Make a note on your calendar that next Tuesday, June 28, is an important day. You get to vote.

Registered voters need only this reminder. For those of you who are not registered, you can register up to 7:55 p.m. at the Sandy Library, just prior to casting your vote downstairs in the Council Chambers.

Who needs to register?

You do, if you fit one of these categories: (1) You have never registered before; (2) You have recently reached age 18; (3) Your name has been changed; or (4) You recently have moved to Sandy. Everyone eligible can and should vote next Tuesday.

The Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce takes the position that the city budget committee has performed its responsibility well in containing spending. The salaries of the staff have been frozen, and unnecessary expenditures have been eliminated. Any further reductions in the budget require a curtailing of city services, which will affect all of us. The chamber strongly supports the new budget, because it is economical and necessary for the livability of Sandy.

There is our plug for the city. Yet, the most important point is that you get to voice your opinion on the city budget and other issues Tuesday. You can have an impact on local government. You make your beliefs known through your vote.

Arnie Poutala,
President,
Sandy Chamber of Commerce

Senator's report:

Guard state's long-term care head

by STEVE STARKOVICH
State senator, Dist. 14

During the early weeks of this legislative session, senior citizens around the state were shocked to learn of the firing by Governor Atiyeh of Long-term Care Ombudsman Jean Smith. Believing, as I do, that Jean Smith had been an effective advocate for the rights of nursing home residents, Oregon's senior citizen community suspected that Governor Atiyeh's action was politically motivated—that is, Jean Smith was fired for doing her job "too well."

Two bills that deal with the long-term care ombudsman have been introduced this session. SB 193, proposed by Governor Atiyeh, would move the position of long-term care ombudsman out of the governor's office and into the State Health Planning Development Agency. Senior citizen organizations reacted with skepticism toward this arrangement, believing it to be another attempt by the governor to weaken the authority of the position. Finding little support for SB 193, the Senate Judiciary Committee tabled this measure in March.

The second bill that relates to this position, SB 292, was in-



troduced by Senator McCoy and other legislators at the request of several senior citizens organizations. Upset over the firing of Jean Smith, these groups felt that the best way to insure that the long-term care ombudsman remained strong and effective was to put it directly under the control of the Legislature. At present, Oregon's constitution under the "separation of powers" doctrine doesn't allow indirect legislative control of administrative agencies. Thus, in order for SB 292 to be legal, a companion joint resolution must be passed by the Legislature and then adopted by

a vote of the people at the next election. Senate Joint Resolution 16, designed to accomplish this, was passed by the Senate on a 17-13 vote, but then defeated in the House by 40-20.

Plans currently are underway to amend SB 292, moving the ombudsman position from the governor's office to the office of the secretary of state.

My main concern in considering these various options is to assure that the position of long-term care ombudsman has the clout to do what it was set up to do—protect the nursing home residents of this state.

Another bill that concerns senior citizens is SB 731, which would increase the maximum penalty for certain crimes committed against victims of 65 years of age or older. Supporters of this bill argue—and correctly, I believe—that the effects of assault and sexual abuse on elderly people are especially serious because of their age. Also, living conditions often make them more vulnerable to harm. This bill has passed the Senate, 20-7, and is now before the House Judiciary Committee.

HB 2979 is another bill seniors are keeping track of. It would add a "check-off" box onto Oregon's income tax return, which would

allow taxpayers to contribute \$1, \$5 or \$10 of their tax refund to a special fund for local senior citizens' programs. This bill currently is before the House Revenue and School Finance Committee.

Finally, HB 2931 deals with helping seniors make decisions about long-term care options. It would require the state to develop plans that insure access to information, counseling and screening for persons potentially in need of long-term care. Many older Oregonians aren't aware of the institutional and other alternatives available to them in terms of long-term care, relying heavily upon information supplied by a small number of providers. This bill attempts to make available information about all possible options and counseling to help each individual decide which option best suits his or her needs. HB 2931 passed the House June 2 by a 56-1 vote and currently is in the Senate Human Services and Aging Committee.

If you have any questions about issues about senior citizens or any other issue, please contact my office by calling toll-free 1-800-452-7813, Ext. 8807, or dialing direct 378-8807. Write Senator Steve Starkovich, Room S-216, State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310.