

The Sandy Post

Editorial & Opinion

Scott Newton, editor
Karinda Hedlund, advertising representative

Tri-Met issue has long-range impact

Sandy residents and people living within the larger community should participate in the City Council's study of whether to withdraw from the Tri-Met taxing district.

The City Council will hold its first meeting on the subject Monday evening. The questions to be raised could have far-reaching consequences.

State Sen. Bob Kintigh, R-Springfield, said last summer that Clackamas County business owners annually pay \$1.8 million in taxes but received only \$800,000 in services.

A Tri-Met representative said Sandy pays \$139,000 for \$41,000 worth of bus service that connects to an \$80 million mass transit system.

The city of Sandy, with help from the Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce, is conducting its own survey on the cost of the payroll tax to local business.

The payroll tax levied by Tri-Met is six-tenths of 1 percent of the gross payroll of a business. As all local business owners know, the cost of mass transit is expensive.

As it is, Sandy is at least tied to the Portland metropolitan area with a rudimentary service.

Could better service be obtained at a lower cost? Would Sandy be better off with no service at all, selling prospective business owners on the idea of living in an area without the Tri-Met payroll tax? Who would be hurt if Sandy simply dropped out of the system?

This is an issue that defies simple answers.

Letters to the editor

City doesn't help business

I grew up in a small town in central New Jersey. The town, over 200 years old, was once a bustling mill town. But, when I was growing up, it was economically depressed.

My friends were poor and their parents worked at nearby plastic factories and paper mills, or were not employed at all.

I went back to this town not long ago and found that it was once again bustling. This time it was not the mills that were holding the economy together but small businesses: antique stores, restaurants, gift stores, etc.

This town was not unlike the city of Sandy. Unfortunately, the Sandy city government has not recognized the value of small businesses and continues to hinder them by introducing laws limiting the use of A-frame signs. These signs are a major form of advertisement for small business.

In order to make this town the quaint place you want it to be, you have to let small businesses grow. I know several businesses that would upgrade the appearances of their buildings and signs if they only had the income coming in their doors to do so.

These places are trying to give something to the city of Sandy, so why don't you give them a chance?

Alex Farnham
Sandy

Sandy Post letter policy

Letters to the editor should be typed, double-spaced and signed. An address and telephone number should also be provided, although only the name of the letter writer and the city or area he is from will be published.

Letter writers may also wish to include a title or office held if it is appropriate considering the subject matter of the letter.

The news deadline of noon Tuesday

Thanks, Safeway, Sandy community

We would like to thank Safeway and the Sandy community for helping us with our successful paper drive.

Lois Drill
Blue Marlin Aquatic Club

City spirit or ghost town

Dick Harrison's suggestion at the last City Council meeting to ban all A-frame signs in Sandy has sent the message to the business community that he does not want to deal with any controversy.

A-frame signs are an important tool for small businesses. Small businesses without 90 feet of frontage can not, under the city code, have a free standing sign.

To ban A-frame signs would put the small businesses at a distinct disadvantage.

The newly formed Small Business Association of Sandy asks the City Council to work with businesses to come up with a viable solution or the city of Sandy will surely become a ghost town.

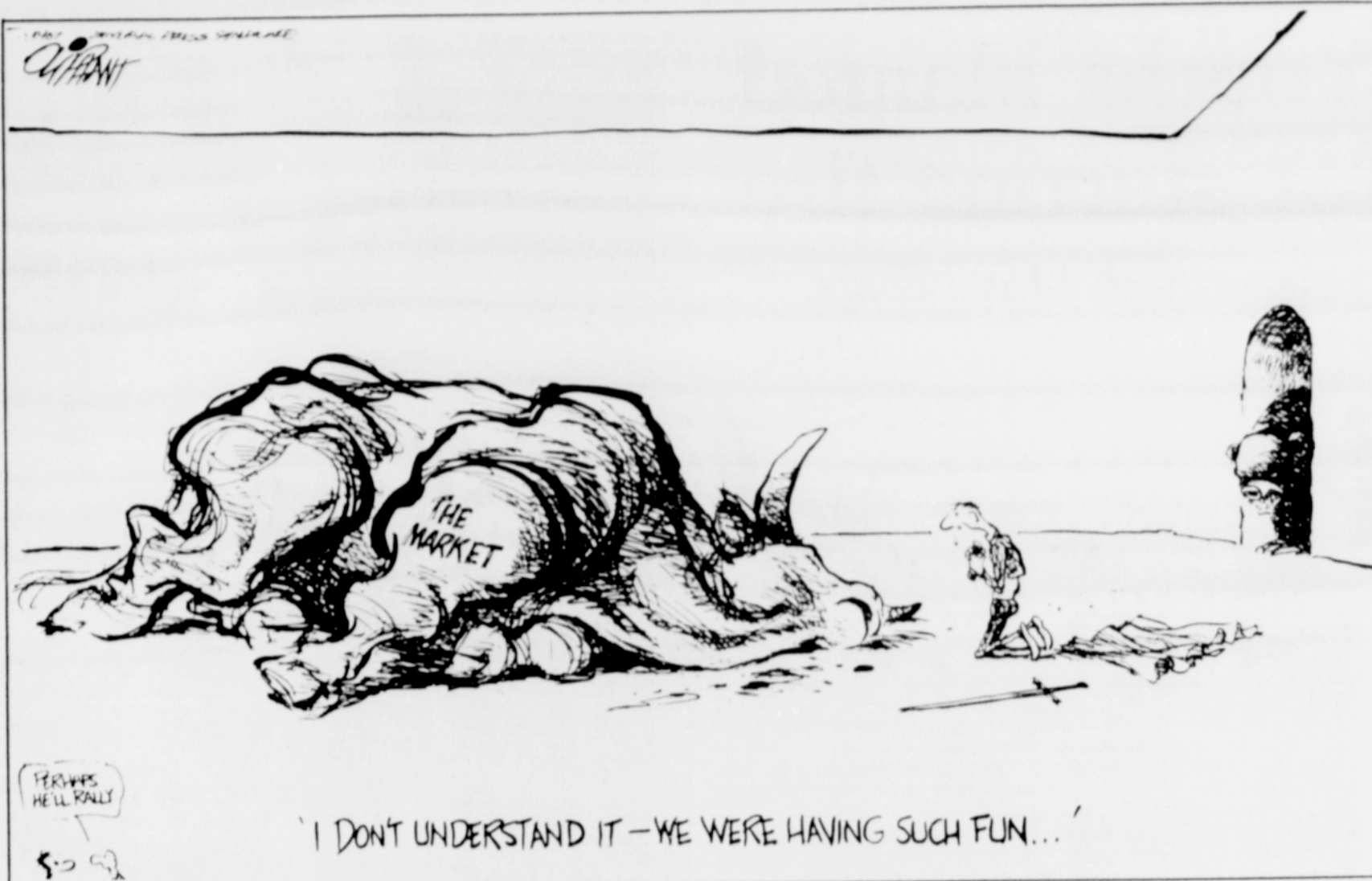
When our City Council members refer to the spirit of Sandy, are they speaking of a ghost town?

Joe Langella, owner
Jo Jo's Pizza
Sandy

is also the deadline for letters to the editor.

Letters should be accurate, free of libelous remarks and in good taste. This newspaper attempts to publish all letters it receives from area residents.

We reserve the right to edit letters to conform to style guidelines or for length. Letters should be 300 words long.



Seaside improvements cause reflection

We sneaked down to the beach over the weekend and stole the last days of summer right out from under the nose of winter.

Any savvy Oregonian knows that the secret of a good weekend at the beach is in the wind. The more it bellows down the gorge, the better the coast will be.

By the time the East Wind got to Seaside it was spent, worn down to a mere zephyr. We East County residents don't know a much about zephyrs. Our wind comes in bigger doses. But zephyrs are the warm little puffs that ruffle your hair when you are sitting on the sand in your shirtsleeves. The breezes that carry the scents of cotton candy and popcorn down Broadway. And that nice beachy, dock smell that you get near the pier in Astoria.

You know the smell. A bit of fish. A drop of oil. A skosh of gasoline. A tang of creosote. All cured in the brine of sea.

"It smells a little bit bad," said my friend Ed, drawing great draughts of sea air up his industrial-sized nose. "like you really shouldn't be enjoying it."

The best part about the breeze at



Sharon Nesbit

the beach last weekend was that it carried the sound of the slide trombone and the bang of the banjo. It came trickling out of the Moose Lodge in Astoria and syncopating out the door of the Elks Lodge in Seaside. It was the Oregon Dixieland Jubilee and traditional jazz fans filled the motels. They clapped their hands. They strutted and they danced. And everytime we looked into the crowd, we spotted someone we knew. Sometimes, Oregon is a very small club, and you never know who will

wash up at the beach or turn up on the Turnaround.

My first job out of college was at the newspaper in Seaside. I remember it as a bleak and often tawdry town. All honky-tonk and carnival in a mustard-yellow kind of light. There were good parts, of course. The Turnaround was there and so was the Prom with its lovely old, weathered-shingle houses facing the ocean. But mostly, Seaside had seen better days.

These days there is more than one turnaround in Seaside. The people there spruced the place up and headed their town in a whole new direction. Flowers grow in street-side beds. A boardwalk rims the Necanicum River.

There are walkways and lamp posts and benches. The things that city planners call "street furniture." Street furniture is a good term. Because Seaside is now the kind of place you like to hang around in, as comfy as your living room.

It didn't come easily. The people there voted in favor of the same tax-increment funding scheme that was turned down here in Gresham last spring. When Gresham Outlook

reporter Christy True went to Seaside in March to write a story about their turnaround, she wrote that the tax rate there is \$1.71 per \$1,000 more than it would have been without the urban renewal plan. On the other hand, property values have tripled in Seaside and the town has a new sewer plant that it would have had to buy anyway.

So that's how we ended up talking about tax-increment financing and other mundane matters as we walked down Seaside's sunny streets last weekend. We talked about the meetings on a plan to fix up Troutdale that are taking place right now. And I felt better about sitting in on those meetings and taking part. They are the boring stories you force yourselves to read in the newspaper — the "spinach" of the news that you consume because it's good for you.

But sometimes it all comes together in something as fine as Seaside on a sunny day with jazz and cotton candy in the air.

And you hope it can happen for your own town. The good part about being an Oregonian is that we have such good raw material to work with.

Meetings demonstrate sitting styles

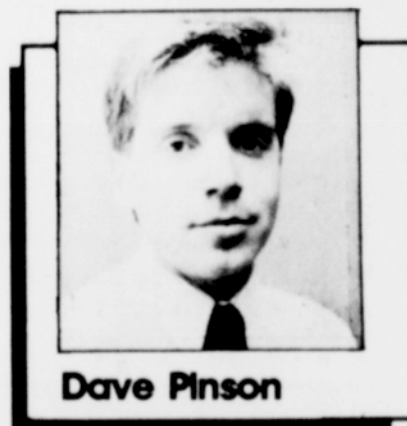
This isn't about head bumps or lines in the palm of the hand. This is about sitting, plain old sitting in a chair. I've discovered that the way a person sits tells quite a story.

For example, I attended a meeting recently to report on what happened. Now, reporters sit through a lot of meetings. And most people will agree that meetings can be monumentally boring. So reporters spend a lot of time being bored.

At this one meeting — and I could safely say it represented most meetings I attend — there was a variety of people and an even broader number of ways to sit.

Let's start at the top with the chairman of the meeting. Whoops, before I go on, let me quickly add that this was a pretty informal meeting. It was not a suit-tie, power-dress meeting where everyone sits as if they're at a funeral. No, this was a pretty cool affair, which is the best place for letting it all hang out, sit-wise, I mean.

And hanging out was exactly what the chairman was doing. This chairman fellow was the kind of guy who likes to place his hands behind his



Dave Pinson

head and look like he's a superhero preparing to take flight. And sometimes, I confess, that's a comfortable position. But not at a meeting. I mean, it's a little difficult to talk to a man when his armpits are looking back at you.

Just down the table from the chairman was a woman who did not shift in her seat once during the nearly three-hour meeting. She sat like a statue, except when she talked. Then she was animated with her hands and used her motions to emphasize her verbal points. But unless she was speaking, it was hard to figure out

whether she was alive or not.

Not so at the other end of the table. The woman at the other end of the table was shifting her sitting position more than Pat Robertson on the subject of children born out of wedlock.

She'd shift her feet, her hands, her back, just about everything shiftable. At one point, she'd wrapped her leg around the table post. Toward the middle of the meeting, I noticed that she had placed on elbow on the table, her face in the palm of her hand and was looking sideways at the chairman, who was still preparing to take flight.

Then later, she sat with her arms folded. Folks more familiar with non-verbal communication skills will tell you that such a position is a defensive one. I don't know. Sometimes just tying your arms up so you don't have to worry about them is a useable option.

Anyway, I identified with the woman in constant motion. I too move around a lot. Ancient teachers would say I am a fidgety person. I cross the legs, slouch, sit up straight, shift, groan, hold my head and generally try to keep the old body guessing what's next.

I guess I'm trying to keep my body

awake to make it through monumentally boring meetings.

Just down the row of seats from me was the Man-With-The-Plan. This guy was sitting on the edge of his life. With his hands clasped, his body leaning out over his knees at a 45-degree angle, this fellow was full of business. I call this the lineman position because of its similarity to a football lineman's stance just before he beats heads with the other team.

I wanted to shout "34, 34, hut, hut!" But I didn't.

Finally, there was the woman who was sitting normally enough, but the way she sat down caught my eye. When she approached the chair, she walked up, turned and plopped down. Boom.

No indecision and no measure to make sure that she missed the arm rest. No, it was walk, turn and plop. And that chair had better be ready or she'll tell it a thing or two.

Looking back, I'm not sure what this analysis tells me about how sitting relates to personality. But, you see, most meetings are like that as well — much ado about very little — and by the way, wake up the reporter on the way out.

by Adam Kraft

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