

Patten, as well as fellow Florence residents Stuart and Johann Henderson, objected also to the land being sold without any public comment. "This attempt to shortchange the citizens of western Lane County through a preferential sale, at a pittance to a corporation, is bad politics. Many of us here question your motives," the Hendersons wrote West Lane Commissioner Jay Bozievich. He responded that notice had been given in the *R-G* and surrounding neighbors had been notified. He at first said he would be willing to pull the item from the agenda for further public discussion, and later says he would make sure it would be properly valued, saying, "there is no grand conspiracy."

Sorenson says that after he questioned Public Works staff, it became clear "that the county would receive very little money under this sale." He said the sale proceeds of under \$20,000 would result in the county receiving less than \$500 for the sale after county costs to sell the land and net taxes to other jurisdictions were deducted. The parcel, a portion of which borders Siltcoos Lake, will be logged.

— Camilla Mortensen

COUNTY COULD RECOVER MERS FEES

An April 23 Lane County Board of Commissioners meeting explored but did not go forward with the possibility of recovering lost filing fees from the Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems (MERS), a private company that tracks servicing rights and ownership of mortgage loans for big banks. Multnomah County is suing MERS and 18 co-defendants for \$38 million, saying that it wreaked havoc on the public property records system and denied the county of required transaction fees. Commissioner Pete Sorenson moved to join the suit, but the conservative majority didn't second the motion, saying that they wanted to consult the county attorney about possible risks.

Tom D'Amore said that the D'Amore Law Group, which represents Multnomah County, would advance \$20,000 of expenses for Lane County and recover the standard one-third of any award MERS pays. While the Oregon State

'If we were to receive a portion of that money, it could be a substantial help for us in our recordation function.'

- COMMISSIONER PETE SORENSON

Bar prohibits firms from promising not to collect if a suit isn't fruitful, D'Amore said that collecting expenses isn't their standard practice.

"Not only is the county not being paid filing fees accurately, but the county really doesn't know who owns the loan, who's the possessor of the loan and who the true beneficiaries are of the loan," D'Amore said at the meeting. This has resulted in loss of filing fees income for Lane

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