

Moore: He is 10th manager in 16 years

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While he worked in larger markets, Moore said, his recent experience in Champaign County has similarities to Clatsop County. The regional planning commission offers community development, planning and early childhood educational services to local governments.

Moore led a staff of 215 employees with a \$25 million budget. Clatsop County has about 200 employees and a budget of about \$60 million.

"They are similar sized," he said. "Many of the things we do here, I have some background in."

Board of Commissioners Chairman Scott Lee said he has been impressed with Moore.

"Cam is coming in with a lot of background," Lee said. "He had been managing organizations with hundreds of employees for a long time. I sensed right

away he is someone that has an intuitive understanding of the job."

Revolving door

Clatsop County has had a difficult time retaining county managers. Moore is the 10th manager to take the helm in 16 years.

That fact mattered to Moore. Throughout the hiring process, he asked many people to give their honest assessment about the revolving door of county managers. He discovered many former managers left on their own, either through retirement or as a step forward in their careers. He also heard some left because their spouses were not happy in the area.

"The answers I got were remarkably consistent," he said. "What I heard from people gave me a comfort level to come here."

For Moore, he is putting roots down in the community. He and his wife recently bought a home in Gearhart, and they plan

on eventually retiring in Clatsop County. "This is the last stop in my career, or as I have said a few times, this is my last hurrah," Moore said. "I don't see myself leaving here for another job."

Core philosophy

As county manager, Moore said, his core philosophy is managing the county's financial and human resources. On the human resources side, Moore's priority is to make sure every county employee succeeds at their jobs. The more focus put on helping employees, the more successful the county becomes, Moore said. In addition, he said, taxpayers benefit in the long run from a more efficient and effective organization.

"I think every day about what I can do while I'm here to create a positive environment, to encourage employees and to recognize the good things they do," he said. "This is where I focus most of my time thinking about these things."

Alameda: Coast Guard paid for the speed humps and installation

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The Coast Guard paid for the speed humps and the installation, Petty Officer 1st Class Levi Read said, "to help dissuade people from speeding through the neighborhood where kids like to play."

City Councillor Drew Herzig has cited the speed humps as the latest example of residents taking the initiative and demanding traffic safety improvements.

Persistent complaints about a confusing intersection at Eighth Street and Irving Avenue eventually led to a new stop sign and other warnings.

"It's a good thing, in their perspective, because they think it's going to help slow traffic down," Jeff Harrington, the city engineer, said of the speed humps on Alameda. "Whether it does or not, we won't know until the results are in."

Rate hikes: The City Commission will vote on proposed budget in June

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'Not doing due diligence'

This year, Warrenton's water rates rose 15 percent, sewer rates 2.5 percent.

"This is basically the result of us not doing due diligence years past," City Commissioner Tom Dyer said. "It's coming back to us."

For several years, Warrenton chose not to increase rates at all, though previous studies advised the city to increase them by double-digit percentages. During the height of the Great Recession, the city increased rates by 5 percent annually until the city started implementing double-digit hikes two years ago.

"It wasn't enough, because we've been eating through the reserves the last five years," Fritsch said. "We are behind the eight ball."

'The costs don't go away'

The city's revenue worries have been compounded by the loss of three major ratepayers over the last decade: Gearhart, Camp Rilea and Pacific Coast Seafood, which burned down in 2013 and recently announced it is returning to Warrenton.

"It's good news, obviously, that we hear that Pacific Coast Seafood is coming back

— that does not solve all our problems," Fritsch cautioned. "It really just gives us some breathing room when we get into having reserves and a healthier ending fund balance, should we get in trouble again."

The budget committee will consider a multiyear plan that calls for flattening the rate hikes while borrowing money and postponing a handful of capital improvement projects.

An alternate plan proposed zero debt but a 13 percent water rate increase and a 9.5 percent sewer rate increase.

Fritsch said the city should revisit the plan in a couple of years and see if it needs to be fine-tuned.

Budget committee member Paul Mitchell, marketing director at Columbia Memorial Hospital, said the commit-

tee ought to focus on the dollar amount rather than the percentage increase.

"It's the percentage points which make it look large. It isn't the actual number," he said. "The number is not that overwhelming."

He added that the committee must sell the positives of the plan and explain exactly what the public is paying for

to make the rate jumps more palatable.

Commissioner Henry Balensifer said he thinks Warrenton residents "realize that they need clean water, and that water needs to be reliable, and that our infrastructure is not aging and leaching things."

The City Commission will vote on the proposed budget in June.

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