

Alley from 1A

The second way to determine value was to use a recent appraisal of a vacated alley north of Florence. That amount came to \$5 per square foot, or \$12,850 for the appraisal value.

"The value received would go towards the streets fund," Southerland said. "The city council would just have to determine which value they would like to use. The applicant also reserves the right to direct the city to hire an appraiser, at (the applicant's) cost, to determine a different value."

Councilor George Lyddon said, "Since we want to help

business owners expand and develop, ... they want to vacate this property to progress their plans. It would be, I think, in our best interest to help them and accommodate them in valuation of the alley."

"As Councilor Lyddon said, I think we need to be fair if we're going to try to encourage owners," Mayor Joe Henry said. "I certainly don't think we should go for the higher."

Councilor Susy Lacer said, "I looked at those two values, and my first inclination was to go with the lower value to promote business development, as that's something that this council has made a priority. The other side of that is the higher dollar amount means more

money into our streets fund. It's a balancing act, as (is) so much of what we do up here."

"I'd like to see a value that's fair for both sides. I think \$5 per square foot is low and I think \$14.95 per square foot is pretty high," said Councilor Joshua Greene.

All five councilors agreed that the higher valuation would be too high for the property owner.

Lyddon said, "We want to set a precedent. We want to make a word in this town of, 'Yes we can help you and we're here to help you.' If we start this off the right way and develop a reputation of being helpful ... I think it will go a long way and will pay dividends much more down the road, as opposed to right now."

"That alley has no value, if you get right down to it," Henry said. "We had stated that as a council we would make it business friendly, user friendly. We've talked about the fact that doing business in Florence is costing Florence business because of the fees that we charge in economic develop-

ment. ... If an alley has no value, it seems that \$5 per square foot is a fair amount."

When put to a vote, however, the council decided that \$5 per square foot was slightly too low.

Councilor Ron Preisler said, "That valuation of \$5 per square foot has nothing to do with the prime real estate in town. I think that the city council is showing good faith towards the community by modifying and not using the \$14.95 per square foot."

Greene said, "It sets a precedent for us to work with in the future. It does bring another 30 percent more money, which we do need ultimately, especially for streets."

The council voted 3-2 to value the vacated alley at \$7 per square foot, or approximately \$17,990. An application fee of \$3,000 to initiate the vacation also would be required.

Now, the issue will go to the Planning Commission for a public hearing Tuesday, March 10, at 7 p.m. in City Hall. It will then return to the city council for final approval.

Siuslaw fire department consults community

By CHANTELE MEYER
Siuslaw News

Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR) held its first meetings to gather information for a new five-year strategic plan on March 3. Internal staff, volunteer firefighters and community members met in three meetings throughout the day.

Jack Snook, president of Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI), led the meeting for the 18 community members at 6:30 p.m.

"With the Siuslaw Valley fire department, their whole purpose is to serve you and to serve the needs you have in the community," he said. "Basically, in simple forms, we take input from the community regarding expectations, concerns and positive feedback that you have for the fire department. We think that's important for them to get feedback from you."

"You folks were all selected because of your positions in the community, your knowledge of the community, and probably, your feel for what the expectations are for the district in your community," SVFR Board President John Scott said.

Fire Chief Jim Langborg said, "This being Florence, everybody is involved in some type of volunteer organization, at some level, on top of their job, so I know how valued your time is. This is extremely important to your fire district. You're going to help us determine where we're going to be going in the next three to five years. As far as

I'm concerned, as the chief, you're the end user. You're the customer. Your opinion is some of the most valuable we're obtaining in this project."

Community members spent more than two hours analyzing SVFR's strengths, challenges and the expectations the community has for the fire department.


"At the same time we've also called the volunteer firefighters together and we're doing some work with them," Snook said. "We're trying to determine the strengths of the organization from their perspective: the weaknesses, opportunities, threats and challenges. They're doing the same thing from an internal perspective. They will look at the list of services and say what they think the priorities are. We're asking them if there's additional services that the fire department should consider."

Earlier in the day, Snook and his ESCI colleague Mike Hansen met with SVFR's internal stakeholders, its staff of seven.

Snook said, "We're going to spend another day with them after we input your information tonight and what the volunteers have to say."


"Everybody in the organization should have their hands on this by the time we're done. Of course the community, you're going to have a big part in that too. It should be a working document that should be a guide and a map for the organization for the next three to five years," he said.

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Rhody from 1A

Kiwanis President Bob Sneddon said, "We adopted the park three or four years ago and we've not done a lot on it. ... We've done stuff quietly."

Kiwanians have worked since then to clear weeds, but haven't had a big work day yet. Saturday, April 11, is Kiwanis One Day, when Kiwanis clubs around the world volunteer in community service projects.

Local Kiwanis members will work with the Rhody Court seniors to give a "facelift" to the park, according to Sneddon.

Volunteers will freshen the bark mulch, weed the area, prune the native plants that Terynik planted, plant more

shrubs and possibly add more flowers.

"I think it's great," Sneddon said. "A lot of what we do in Kiwanis is aimed at developing youth and leadership. This fits right in with our stated directives. This is an opportunity for them to create a legacy and leave an impact."

Wobbe said, "We really want this to be a gift to the community that could be seen by the 30,000 who come to Florence on Rhody Fest weekend. And it's something to present to the city council as a gift."

Community members may join the 2015 Rhody Court and Kiwanis on April 11 to hear from Terynik about the care of native plants and to help with the landscaping.

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