

Siuslaw News

P.O. Box 10

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Opinion

125TH ANNIVERSARY FLASHBACK

1890 | THE WEST ❖ FLORENCE TIMES ❖ THE SIUSLAW OAR ❖ THE SIUSLAW NEWS ❖ SIUSLAW NEWS | 2015

This year marks Siuslaw News’ quasiquicentennial, our 125th anniversary, a remarkable achievement for any business in a small community like Florence. To commemorate this milestone, throughout the year we’ll feature some of the town’s history as originally published in the newspaper, including historic articles and photos from more than a century ago. —*Editor*

Dunes City nears full city status

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Dunes City is nearing its ninth birthday with prospects of becoming a full-fledged community, designed to fit the needs and desires of the 1,000-plus inhabitants. Included among issues which will shape the future of the city are the following:

- Probable adoption of a home rule charter. The city has operated under state law during its relatively short lifetime and city attorney William Jayne of Reedsport has drawn up a charter for consideration by the city council, and, ultimately, votes of the city. An election at which voters will be asked to approve the charter probably won’t be held until after the November general election, although it is possible the matter could be included on the November ballot.
- After operating on franchise payments from utilities, the city may be in line for state-shared revenues of about \$20 per capita, if recent efforts by Jayne are productive.
- A survey completed by a team of students from the University of Oregon’s department of urban planning, recently completed

and compiled, furnishes a sound foundation for planning for the future.

- It appears that a municipal water system may be installed after months of hard work, discussion and controversy.

In order to include the home rule charter on the November ballot, it will be necessary for the council to accept the document and call for the election 60 days prior to the November 7 election. Jayne said it is doubtful if the council will be able to complete work on the charter in time to place it on the general election ballot. The charter generally follows the same set of laws under which the city has been operating since its inception with the exception of officers. At the present time, voters elect five councilmen, and they select one of their number as mayor. The proposed charter calls for six councilors and a mayor. Councilors would serve four-year terms and the mayor would be elected every two years. Terms of four of the five present councilmen expire at the year, so voters in Dunes City will be picking new officers at the general election.

Nearly half the residents who responded in the survey completed by the team of UO students — 46.77 percent — listed public water service as having the highest priority in needed civic improvements. Over 50 percent said they would be willing to pay their fair share of a municipal water system if it is economically feasible for the city to provide one. With this strong support, the council has been working toward a water system, but problems have arisen, mainly sewage disposal and financing. City officials have indicated they believe the smaller system would be adequate but officials from the Lance Council of Governments, Farmer’s Home Administration state agencies and Lane County have raised the problem of sewage disposal, which could be aggravated if stringent controls aren’t employed to prevent dense deployment. With a municipal water system, it was pointed out, Dunes City would be an even more attractive place in which to build. A new subdivision ordinance recently adopted by the city requires 10,000 square feet in a lot for home construction. If the

builder plans on putting in both a septic tank and a well, a full acre is required. Addition of a municipal water system would make considerably more ground available for construction. Jayne has been working with city officials in an effort to qualify Dunes City for the state-shared funds, which include taxes collected by the state and returned in part to local units of government on a per-capita basis. State law requires a community to provide a certain number of basic services to qualify. Jayne argued that Dunes City already provides the required number. When Dunes City residents voted 143-74 to incorporate as a city on June 11, 1963, little did they realize the problems which would arise in the future. But today the vast majority of people who live there, according to the UO survey, like the city, believe the city government is doing a good job, like the “rural” atmosphere of the community and 68 percent of them said they are in favor of remaining an incorporated city. That’s a better percentage than the first time around. ❖

LETTER

To all my kids

In 1982, I started an incredible journey that lasted longer than I ever could have imagined. I’ve had the same bus route for 33 years and would like to share some statistics. I’ve been through four buses, seven superintendents, four supervisors, two mechanics and five presidents. I’ve seen really early mornings, really late nights, snow, ice, wind storms, tsunami warnings, landslides, floods, road construction, broken windshields, flat tires, mechanical failures, untied shoelaces, missing lunches, upset tummies, frogs, hamsters, bugs in jars, broken friendships, first loves, new life, death, puberty, new haircuts, cell phones, AIDs awareness, Gulf War, Twin Towers, exotic hair coloring, hats, trivia questions, state playoffs, sick coaches and lots of cookies. In the meantime, you discovered “E.T.,” “Dukes of Hazzard,” “Ghostbusters,” “Strawberry Shortcake,” “Power Rangers,” Spice Girls, Legos, Batman, “Star Wars,” Pet Shop Pets, Pogs, Mr. T, The Hulk, Cabbage Patch dolls, Iron Man, Pokemon, Boomboxes, Walkmans, SpongeBob, Pretty Pony, iPods, Elmo, minions and every conceivable Disney character imaginable.

From K to 12, I watched you grow up and will never forget any of you. Thanks for the ride.

Linda Westlund
Westlake

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor concerning issues affecting the Florence area and Lane County. Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters should be limited to about 300 words and must include the writer’s full name, address and phone number for verification. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received. Libelous and anonymous letters as well as poetry will not be published. All submissions become the property of Siuslaw News and will not be returned.

Write to: Editor@TheSiuslawNews.com

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