

VOLUNTEERS from page 1A

According to Ferguson's report, in the period between July 2017 and June 2018, city volunteers provided 3,966 hours at the FEC, 3,623 in the auxiliary, 2,932 at the airport and 506 in parks. "That's 11,027 hours, or 275 weeks of time," Ferguson said, counting 40 hours in a work week. Florence is a city that runs on volunteers. According to the Florence Area Community Coalition, 1,079 volunteers donated a total of 73,984 hours to 14 groups in the Siuslaw region last year, including area museums, mentorship programs, invasive species removal in the dunes and much more. "Over at the FEC, our city volunteers run a large amount of activity," Ferguson said. "They run operations, help out in our office, provide some technical support, usher during events and also volunteer at gallery events, as well as events that the Friends of the FEC put on. In a typical month, the FEC sees about 49 volunteers." This isn't counting the actu-

al Friends of the FEC, which is a separate group and nonprofit. "Over at the airport ... they greet pilots and passengers, answer the phone, provide other basic information and provide eight-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week coverage at the main airport office," Ferguson said. "That's 18 different volunteers, in a typical month, donating their time." The airport volunteer group formed in 2011 to offset costs at the airport during the economic recession. Many of the founding members continue to dedicate time at the airport. At the city's parks, unaffiliated volunteers help with routine maintenance. Again, Ferguson said, this isn't counting those who volunteer with official groups such as the Adopt-a-Park Program. "If you'll remember, there were about 3,500 hours of time donated by our police auxiliary — and that's averaged across just 11 members," Ferguson said. "Those 11 members provide just an insane amount of time and dedica-

tion when they volunteer." The Police Auxiliary helps in the office, on patrols and with outreach events. In addition, the police department is starting recruitment for its reserve officer program, where sworn officers volunteer help in the community and the department. "Just as a plug, the Police Auxiliary is doing a toy giveaway at the Florence Justice Center on Dec. 15 from 3 to 5 p.m. Santa will be there," Ferguson said. Every child who attends will have the chance to take a picture with Santa Claus and receive a toy. City Manager Erin Reynolds said, "It's a great thing that our volunteers do, along with the police department. They gather donations to go out and buy toys and have that photo opportunity with Santa." Florence Police Department is also teaming up with Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue on Tuesday, Dec. 18, for the Lane County Toys for Tots Giveaway at the Siuslaw Valley Main Station, 2625 High-

way 101. More information will be available soon. "That's a brief overview of what our volunteers do here at the city," Ferguson said. "We wouldn't have 11,000 hours of volunteer time if the program we run internally wasn't run well." He said the reason for the policy manual is to help the city document volunteers and donated time and make things consistent across various departments. "It's a centralized document for how we treat and organize our volunteers," he said. The Volunteer Policy Manual establishes a registration process for volunteers; requires volunteer position descriptions; enables an orientation to cover safety requirements, emergency procedures, incident reporting and insurance coverage; sets requirements for timekeeping; and establishes performance management and termination guidelines. Ferguson said that some aspects for the manual are required by Oregon statutes, such as the timekeeping function.

As for who the policy applies to, he said it was pretty easy to find out: "The distinction is basically who are you volunteering on behalf of. Are you doing it for a different organization, or are you doing it for us? Any time you're doing it for us, the Volunteer Policy Manual will kick in." City Councilor Joshua Greene said the consistent timekeeping aspect of the new volunteer policy will help not only volunteers and the city, but also show verified numbers for in-kind work when the city applies to grants. The Volunteer Policy Manual is also separate from the Committee & Commission Policy Manual previously approved. "This is separate and distinct from that," Ferguson said. "This applies to volunteers who are individually volunteering services directly to the city. It's not going to apply to any of the members that are elected or appointed to any of our committees, commissions or agencies. It's also not going to apply to individuals or groups volunteering for another agency."

He stressed the importance of bringing together the city's various volunteer practices into one document that will ultimately protect volunteer workers when there is an injury or accident and provide general oversight of the volunteer program. City Councilor Susy Lacer said the document should be useful to not only the city, but to other groups who work with volunteers. "I can tell you right now, I intend to copy and model it for many of the other nonprofit organizations I work with," she said. "Thanks for doing it." Reynolds added "a huge thank you" to the city's volunteers. "As Alex already highlighted, 11,000 hours is amazing and we really appreciate it. We look forward to continuing to benefit from those volunteer services so that we can provide services that our community expects in a financially feasible way for the city," she said. She also included the volunteers who serve on city committees and commissions, including the Planning Commission, Budget Committee, Community & Economic Development Committee, Environmental Management Advisory Committee, Public Arts Committee, Transportation Committee and the Audit Ad-Hoc Committee. "We are thankful for members of the community that offer their time, energy and passions towards the wide variety of things that we do as a city. We are currently recruiting for all of our committees," Reynolds said. "I encourage everyone who is interested in hot topics and things that get the work of the city done, to apply to be on one of our committees. You have until Dec. 31 to apply." Those who are interested can pick up applications at ci.florence.or.us or Florence Public Works, 2675 Kingwood St. The starting date will be in February 2019. Besides giving recognition to the city's volunteers, Florence City Council also reviewed and recognized Reynolds for her work as city manager. Each councilor gave input and results of the annual review were discussed in an executive session before Monday's council meeting. "The result was a rating of 3.82 out of 4, which is pretty close to perfect," said Mayor Joe Henry. "That's very commendable." He said the council reviewed the operations of the city and talked about challenges during the review. "For the most part, our City in Motion continues to move along in very fine fashion," Henry said. "We're proud of our city manager and our entire staff for the performance that they have turned in in 2018, and in prior years." Reynolds will receive a two percent increase to her pay, bringing her total compensation in 2019 to \$132,451. "All of us are very proud of the work that Erin has done, and the growth and the responsibility she stepped up to when she started four years ago," Greene said. "We are very fortunate having her and such a great staff." Reynolds responded, "It is an honor to serve you, my city council, and our community. I appreciate the investment of time and energy you put into this, especially for being a great partner with me in helping to run this city and make it a great place to live, work and play. ... To our staff, my evaluation is a reflection of all the hard work that you have all put in this year and the years before. So thank you very much. I appreciate it. And a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year." The mayor and council joined Reynolds in giving holiday wishes to the Florence community. "Since this is the last meeting of the year, I just want to add my thanks to staff for all their hard work and a great performance, the council for all the time they put in to our committees and to all our volunteers," Henry said. "Our city would certainly not be the awesome place it is without all our volunteers. I wish everyone a happy holidays and a very merry Christmas — and to all a good night." The next meeting of the Florence City Council will be on Monday, Jan. 7. It will also be the first meeting of the new council, including councilor-elect Geraldine Lucio. "We expect to do great things in 2019," said Reynolds.

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