WATER from page 1A

aware of the proposed increase by many Dunes City residents who found the letter both unexpected and alarming.

in its letter to the utilities commission used the figure \$47.54 as the average customer bill and suggested the proposed increase would result in a bill of \$121.02.

Ron Stanley is a customer of SCWC and he contacted the Siuslaw News and his neighbors with his concerns.

"I don't want to sound conspiratorial in these times, but I just think something smells fishy," he said. "This is big increase and for a lot folks I have talked to, \$900 is a lot of money. We have people living on fixed incomes and this was a shock, no question about it. I'd rather give it to charity than some big company buying out a smaller company and have us pay for it."

increase was facilitated by City Administrator Jamie Mills, who briefly reviewed the transfer of ownership of the water rights to SCWC from Dunes City and touched on some of the infrastructure changes needed to accompany that decision.

During this, Forsythe stated that he felt there was a need for repre-The council has been made sentatives from SCWC to provide the council with additional information, preferably in person.

He recounted a discussion he had with Mills regarding the rate The example provided by SCWC increase and shared a letter Mills had written to the PUC detailing Dunes City Council's disappointment with the manner customers were notified of the increase and the amount of that increase.

> "I think it outrageous, this kind of increase, with little notice," Forsythe said. "I would think a company wanting to do this would have a public meeting."

> The other councilors agreed with the mayor. The council gave direction to Mills to send the letter to the PUC and to coordinate a conversation and perhaps a public meeting with the management from SCWC.

SCWC is owned and operated by Puttman Infrastructure Inc. and the water delivered to Dunes City The evening's discussion of the residents comes from Woahink

Thomas Puttman is the president and CEO of Puttman Infrastructure Incorporated, which invests, manages, operates and maintains a number of other public utilities across the country.

In a conversation with the Siuslaw News on Thursday regarding the situation, he seemed surprised by the confusion regarding the rate increase and wanted to assure Dunes City customers of his company's desire to work with both the city and its customers to improve communication.

a letter to SCWC customers to respond to what he views as an error in communication.

decision made by city officials to change the source of drinking water for residents and his understanding of the information provided to consumers.

"I wanted first to apologize for the miscommunication surrounding the recent rate increase notice. We were following Oregon PUC guidelines for the notice. What we missed was the context — the 'why' the increase is being proposed," Puttman's letter stated. "For years, SCWC sourced its water directly from Siltcoos Lake. Over the years, Siltcoos Lake water quality degraded enough to not be a safe or reliable water source as determined by the State of Oregon. To resolve this water quality risk, the decision was made to change the source of water from Siltcoos Lake to Woahink Lake. Woahink Lake is an excellence source of drinking water."

He further explained the rate increase is primarily related to the capital improvements required to make the change to Woahink Lake. These improvements include a new treatment plant, decommissioning the old treatment plant and a new Consequently, Puttman sent out supply main and pump station to convey water from Woahink Lake to the new treatment plant.

"As the new owner of the system, In it, Puttman recounted the it was our understanding that the customer base understood these improvements had been made and the rate increase was forthcoming. These improvements were made prior to our ownership of the system and the proposed rate increase is necessary to pay for these improvements," Puttman stated.

> The second point Puttman wanted to make was related to the lack of notification to all customers served by SCWC, which was not intentional but more of a technical

"My second apology is to customers that did not receive the notice. For customers with online bill pay, paper invoices are not sent. When we mailed the notice for the potential rate increase, it only went to customers who request paper bills. Those that do not receive paper bills did not receive the notice. We did not know of the mistake until we heard from a few customers that they had not received the notice. When checking our customer account system, we realized notices were not sent to customers with online bill pay," He said.

This issue has been addressed with SCWC staff and all future communications will be included in digital notifications.

Puttman also expressed his willingness to respond directly to the Dunes City Council and will work with city staff to answer any and all questions related to the requested increase, and encouraged anyone with questions to contact SCWC at customerservice@puttman.com

For the remainder of the July 28 meeting, Mills gave her monthly report. This included a pending grant application and information on road repairs.

Mills also announced a "Ceremony of Life" on Saturday, Aug. 21, from noon to 3 p.m. to recognize the efforts of the many volunteers who have worked to advance the city. There will be a barbecue and socializing will be encouraged, COVID restrictions permitting.

The July 28 Dunes City Council meeting is available at for viewing at dunescityhall.com.



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# Faith - Friendship - Fellowship - Fun **CHURCH DIRECTORY**

To include your organization in this directory. please call us @ 541-997-3441

#### BAHA'I FAITH OF FLORENCE

Ongoing Devotions, Study Circles, Services To The Community, Informal Gatherings. For Information, Visit Us On Facebook: Baha'l Community of Florence, Oregon Or Phone 541-590-0779

#### **BAY BERRY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**

Friday Evenings – 7 PM SINGSPIRATION You are invited to come and sing your favorite Ole Time Gospel songs. Come and enjoy a time of fellowship & refreshments before we sing. **NEW LOCATION** 

Now Meeting in Fellowship Hall of First Baptist Church at 1935 East 25th Street For Info: Jack - 541-999-8278 or Ron - mccrary9483@gmail.com

#### THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

2705 Munsel Lake Road, All are welcome! Sunday Worship Services are at 10 AM & 11:15 AM. Bishop Larry Farnsworth 541-999-1979

## **COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH**

4590 Hwy. 101, Across from Fred Meyer -- 997-7418 Sunday School, 9:30a.m. - Worship, 10:45 Wed. Prayer - 6:00 p.m. -Wed. Ministries 1-8 Grade 7 p.m.

## CROSS ROAD ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Corner of 10th & Maple- 541-997-3533 Sunday Services are 9am and 11am and on Facebook live and KCST at 11am Wednesdays at 7pm

https://www.florencecrossroadag.org/church-online Other platforms update after the service. florencecrossroadag.org office@florencecrossroadag.org

## FLORENCE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

2nd & Ivy - 541-997-2961 - Non-Denominational Service is on Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Sunday Service also streaming live at 10:00 am at florencechurch.com

## FLORENCE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Pre-Denominational (Romans 16:16) 1833 Tamarack Street (2 blocks east of Hwy. 101 on 18th St.) Bible Study: Sunday 10 a.m.; Worship: Sunday 11 a.m. www.churchofchristflorence.org

## FLORENCE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

1318 Rhododendron Dr. • 541-997-2523 Sunday Service 11am (Children Sunday School) Mid-Week Activities, all ages.

## FLORENCE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

4445 Hwy 101 (South of Fred Meyer) - 997-3951 Worship on Saturday 11:00 A.M. Adult/Children's Sabbath School 10:00 A.M.

#### FLORENCE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

87738 Hwy 101 at Heceta Beach Road RUAUU? All are welcome to explore the answer. Until it is safe to meet in person, Sunday Worship Services are available 24/7 on our website: www.florenceuuf.org

#### FLORENCE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2nd & Kingwood • (541) 997-6025 Link to Sunday services at www.florenceunitedmethodist.org or find us on Facebook.

#### **FOURSQUARE CHURCH**

1624 Highway 101 (next to A&W) -- 997-6337 Pastor George Pagel - Something for the entire family. Sun. Services: 10:45 a.m. Wednesday Bible Study returns this Fall. Website: florence4square.com

## **NEW LIFE LUTHERAN E.L.C.A.**

21st & Spruce Streets—997-8113 Interim Pastor David Brauer-Rieke, All are welcome. Sunday in-person worship service@ 10:30. Also available to you on website www.florencenewlifelutheran.org.

## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE SIUSLAW

3996 N Hwy 101 541-997-7136 Internet and in person Sunday services at 10AM, Call the church for details. Reverend Greg Wood All Welcome. Come as you are.

## **RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)**

"War is <u>still</u> not the answer." FCNL We meet Sunday's at 11am in our homes. Call 408-482-1141 or 541-997-4237 for locations.

#### RESURRECTION LUTHERAN CHURCH, L.C.M.S. Worship Services 10am 1st & 2nd Sundav

and 8am 3rd & 4th Sunday 85294 Hwy. 101 S. - 997-8038 DVD of Weekly worship service available. www.puppro.wixite.com/rlcflorence

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