



OPINION

What next?

Public dialogue is essential to setting City's priorities

BY JON STINNETT
Sentinel editor

Late into an hourlong worksession full of questions last Monday evening, City Councilor Jake Boone asked quite an interesting one.

Asked to choose from a page full of potential projects on which the Council and, by extension, city staff could concentrate in the coming year, Boone wondered what the citizens of Cottage Grove believed should be this community's priorities going forward. In essence, Boone asked, "What do the people want?"

City Manager Richard Meyers said that the notion of an "advisory vote," in which the citizenry would be able to choose from a similar list of priorities on an upcoming ballot, would be next to impossible to execute. City Councilor Mike Fleck countered that it is the Council's job to assess the public's priorities, and the conversation moved on as each councilor registered their thoughts on the most important topics of the day.

And there were plenty to choose from. Meyers spoke of a potential bond to finance road repairs that cannot be handled by the City's general fund. He talked of projects such as the Main Street Refinement Plan and the Armory renovation that he said may receive "piddly grants" but not enough funding to make them feasible in the near future. He talked about an additional city service to accept and dispose of yard debris, a potential tax on recreational marijuana purchases and combating a recent rise in property and other crimes. The potential for the City to be more proactive with regard to the local homeless or transient population was also put forth.

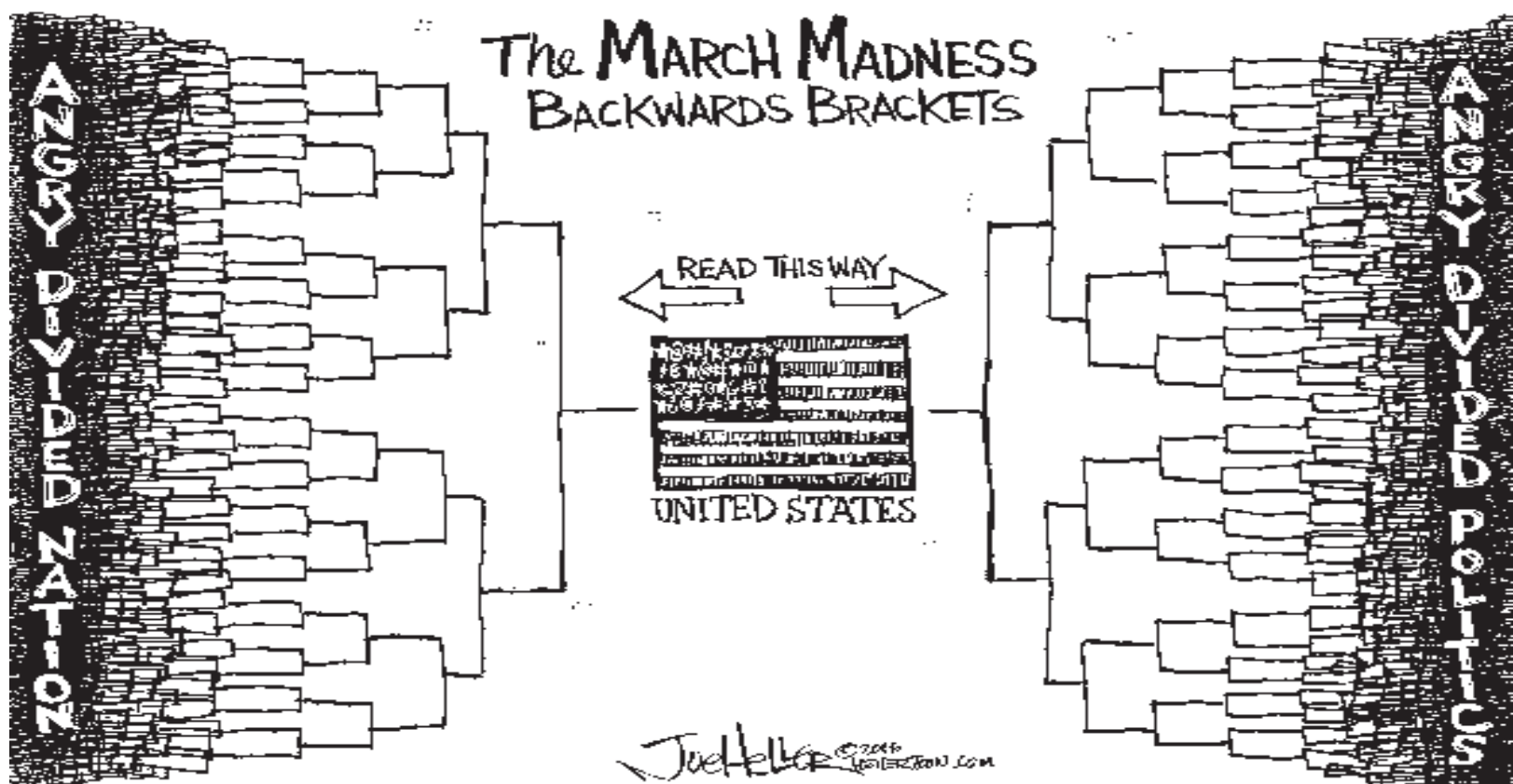
"That's just our list, though there could be more," Meyers said. "We can't do all of these."

In the coming months, this nation, our state, county and local governments will weigh the issues, choose their representatives and utilize the ballot box to set priorities for the future. Here at the Sentinel, we strive to be part of a productive, constructive conversation regarding all things Cottage Grove. That's why, for the next few months, we'll be examining in depth many of the topics raised at last week's worksession, from infrastructure needs to crime, growth, jobs and the economy.

But here is the crucial part — we need your input. Social media outlets are routinely flooded with comments — some thoughtful, others decidedly less so — regarding local issues, but the public feedback in this newspaper has tended to lag behind in volume. Still, it is only through a reasoned and thoughtful exchange of ideas that we — citizens of a fiercely proud community engaged in the act of its own reinvention — can come to truly understand and assist each other in creating the future we all deserve.

So the question, in short, is what do you think? Should reducing crime be our top priority? How do we bring more family-wage jobs to town? How do we finance the many road and other repairs our City needs? How do we proactively, responsibly plan for growth in the coming years?

Again, your input is essential to productive and respectful dialogue, and your thoughts can be directed to cnews@cgsentinel.com. Approached properly, we can assure that come election season, Cottage Grove's public conversation can serve as a bastion of rational, productive debate in times that sorely need it.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Supporting the library and its budget

As a member of the Friends of the Library and someone who has a library degree, I am a great supporter of the Cottage Grove Library. The City is beginning to prepare its 2016-17 budget.

I love our library, its programs, and its service to the community. The most recent Smithsonian Institute exhibit attracted over 5,000 visitors and 700 people to its presentations.

Yet, it has been my impression that our library is under-funded and therefore not providing all the programs and services it could. I did some research of other Oregon cities with populations of around 10,000. Cottage Grove allocated the lowest percentage of its city budget to the library, around four percent. Other cities range from 5.25 percent to as high as 11 percent. I know that our library has to catch up in technology; where it once had 25 computer stations, it now has less than 10. There are other areas that need more attention as well.

I encourage library staff, the City Manager and the budget committee to fund the Library so it can thrive and provide more exciting programs and resources to our community.

Samantha Duncan
Cottage Grove

Support library funding

The City of Cottage Grove is developing its budget for 2016-17. This is an excellent time to support the library and its need for a larger bud-

get. There are needs for the Young Adults programs, technology, and other enhancements to current programs. This is an opportunity to publicly support our library and its programs. If you are a regular patron and appreciate the good work our librarians and staff do, here's a chance to sing their praises. If you have enjoyed some of the special programs (Smithsonian Institute, summer reading, Native American, Children's story time - in English and Spanish) or other features of our library, please take the opportunity to make it public. You may write to City Council members via <http://cottagegrove.org/council.html> and ask them to consider the importance of supporting library funding, particularly in the areas I mention. The library needs your support to stress to Council members the importance of the proposed \$4500 for computer services and supplies. Also, there is \$3000 proposed for funding children's programs and books but no specific funding for young adults.

This is a critical and fast growing area that needs funding. Young adult readers need programs, and funding that should not have to come from children's programs. I think we should be able to fund both of these program needs adequately. This budget season is a great time to make a meaningful contribution to our library as it expands programs and supports our community. Please take the time to call or write to your Mayor and City Council members and express your concerns or interests.

Mary McNamara
President, Friends of the
Cottage Grove Library

Balancing priorities

I am an accountant, so everything must have a certain balance. Most of us are balancing household budgets, family obligations, full-time jobs and many other priorities in our lives. As I sit here reading the newest issue of the CG Sentinel, it strikes me that we need to apply that same skill to our municipal priorities. On the front page are headlines pointing to the Stand Up Meeting on March 8 and the Harrison School bond being voted on this May 17. One is asking for help in reducing the not-so-recent surge in property crimes and thefts in Cottage Grove, while the other is asking us to cheerfully and blindly vote for a \$35.6 million dollar property tax bond to replace Harrison School along with a plethora of other repairs and upgrades within the district.

I'm sure I'm not the only one that thinks we should be balancing these needs better. Why aren't we asking for a public safety bond to add more police officers to curtail the criminal activity that goes unchecked in our town? Our neighborhood has been affected by the thefts too. My husband's gas line on his truck was cut and a full tank of gas siphoned right outside our back gate. Our neighbor had items stolen from a truck while parked in their driveway and another neighbor had parts taken from his classic car.

I can't even walk my dogs along the bike path because transients congregate under the overpasses and will not allow you to pass. When I asked the police department about it, they asked if I could walk in the other direction! We should have a bicycle officer patrolling and keeping loiterers moving along.

Residents are so fed up now that they are willing to take on the task, and that's a recipe for disaster, in my opinion.

In the 50 years I have resided here, I have never seen such a high level of lawlessness in Cottage Grove, and it is very concerning to me.

Yet the other hand, we are being asked for a \$35.6 million dollar bond that I probably won't see the end of in my lifetime. The 20-year bond previously passed for the high school is almost done, and God forbid that I would be able to put some of my wages back in my pocket instead of paying new property taxes. I'm not sure we really need to build a state-of-the-art elementary school in a town that has become so unsafe the question arises if it's a good place to raise kids anymore, should current activities be allowed to continue.

We need to balance Cottage Grove's priorities and get the town back to being the safe and welcoming place I was raised in. If we look at the broad picture, we should be voting for a new school bond of say \$29.5 million...and a new public safety bond of \$7 million so that we can hire additional officers and have a more active and thorough 24-hour patrol. I saw one person's comment state that it would be great to work in a new school...let's not be dazzled. Let's be forthcoming and look to the future and make this a safe town. Until I see that balance, I won't be able to vote in favor of the bond. Not because I don't feel education isn't important, but because I need that portion of my income to hire security for my own personal safety.

Charlene Sayles
Cottage Grove

Cruciferous vegetables are anti-cancer foods

BY JOEL FUHRMAN, MD
For the Sentinel

Nutrition scientists have shown over and over that people who eat more natural plant foods — vegetables, fruits, legumes, nuts and seeds, etc.

— are less likely to be diagnosed with cancer. But are all vegetables equally protective? To win the war on cancer, we must design an anti-cancer diet, which focuses on the foods with the most powerful anti-cancer effects — then we could eat plenty

of these foods each day, flooding our bodies with the protective substances contained within them.



The cruciferous family of vegetables is full of super foods with powerful anti-cancer effects — we should eat vegetables from this family every day. This family includes green vegetables like kale and bok choy plus some non-green vegetables like cauliflower.

Cruciferous vegetables contain glucosinolates and in a different area of the cell, an enzyme called myrosinase. When we blend, chop or chew these vegetables, we break up the plant cells, allowing myrosinase to come into contact with glucosinolates, initiating a chemi-

cal reaction that produces isothiocyanates (ITCs) — powerful anti-cancer compounds. ITCs have been shown to detoxify and remove carcinogens, kill cancer cells and prevent tumors from growing.

Observational studies have shown that eating ITC-rich cruciferous vegetables protects against cancer:

Twenty-eight servings of vegetables per week decreased prostate cancer risk by 33 percent, but just three servings of cruciferous vegetables per week decreased prostate cancer risk by 41 percent. One or more servings of cabbage per week reduced risk of pancreatic cancer by 38 percent. One serving per day of cruciferous vegetables reduced the risk of breast cancer by over 50 percent.

Cruciferous vegetables are especially helpful for preventing hormonal cancers, such as breast cancer, because some

ITC, such as indole-3-carbinol (abundant in broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage), can even help the body excrete estrogen and other hormones. In fact, new research has shown additional anti-estrogenic effects of both indole-3-carbinol and sulforaphane (most abundant in broccoli); these ITCs blunt the growth-promoting effects of estrogen on breast and cervical cancer cells.

Eating cruciferous vegetables produces measurable isothiocyanates in breast tissue, and observational studies show that women who eat more cruciferous vegetables are less likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer: In a recent Chinese study, women who regularly ate one serving per day of cruciferous vegetables had a 50 percent reduced risk of breast cancer. A 17 percent decrease in breast cancer risk was found in a European study for consuming cru-

ciferous vegetables at least once a week. Plus, breast cancer survivors who eat cruciferous vegetables regularly have lower risk of cancer recurrence — the more cruciferous vegetables they ate, the lower their risk.

Within an overall nutrient-dense eating style, cruciferous vegetables can provide us with a profound level of protection against cancer. Don't forget: chopping, chewing, blending, or juicing cruciferous vegetables is necessary to produce the anti-cancer ITCs.

Dr. Fuhrman is a #1 New York Times best-selling author and a board certified family physician specializing in lifestyle and nutritional medicine. Visit his informative website at DrFuhrman.com. Submit your questions and comments about this column directly to news-questions@drfuhrman.com.

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Personal attacks and name calling in response to letters are uncalled for and unnecessary.

If you would like to submit an opinion piece, Another View must be no longer than 600 words.

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