

BUDGET from A1

communities to encourage job growth and entrepreneurialism by providing guidance for local businesses.

During the June 14 public hearing on the proposed budget, local developer Len Blackstone, Co-chair of the Community Development Corporation Matt Parsons and Chamber of Commerce CEO/President Shauna Neigh implored the council to consider bringing Oregon RAIN to Cottage Grove.

During the city council's discussion of the budget resolution on Monday, councilors praised the program.

Councilor Greg Ervin said he spoke with other cities who have been in partnership with Oregon RAIN and found their impressions to be positive.

"I'm in support of doing this for an initial two years," he said. "[I'm] very interested to see how it turns out and possibly I'd like to be involved in it going forward."

Councilor Kenneth Roberts said that he, though initially skeptical, had a change of heart on the topic.

"I was a 'no' vote on this. I thought it was gambling taxpayer money," he said, but detailed talks he had with people close to the program. "[Now] I think this could be a really good thing - because one thing I remembered was that Microsoft started in a garage. So maybe something like

that can happen here in our community with the proper help from these folks?"

City Manager Richard Meyers further pointed out that there is a \$25,000 grant which the Community Development Corporation and the Chamber of Commerce have received as a commitment from the Woodard Family Foundation to support the program.

The annual cost of the program is \$33,000.

With the adoption of the budget, the city's permanent rate will continue at \$7.2087 per \$1,000 of assessed value, which is estimated to generate slightly more than \$5 million of collectable tax revenue.

As a separate agenda item Monday night, the council authorized an inter-fund loan from the storm drain reserve fund to the street fund in the amount of \$63,880 as \$1.2 million in grant funds for the Safe Routes to School project had been received that day. However, the grant funds cannot be included in the balance prior to the closing of the project, which is nearly finished.

The 2021-22 adopted budget also reflects the repayment of that debt service in the next fiscal year of the same amount (\$63,880).

In other city council news:

Amendment to Comprehensive Fee Schedule

The council officially amended the city's comprehensive fee schedule to reflect the adopted five-

year financial plan proposed by the city's consulting firm FCS Group.

From today, July 1, monthly wastewater rates are estimated to see an average increase of about \$6.45.

The FCS Group plan calls for an increase by 12 percent over the next three years, including this 2021-22 fiscal year, in order to meet future demands of the wastewater system such as a capital improvement to one of the city's clarifiers which has stopped working.

The Cottage Grove City Council adopted the five-year utility rate financial plan on April 12 this year.

Monthly water and storm drainage rates remain unchanged according to the plan.

Funds Reappropriated

A total of \$135,595 were approved Monday night to be reappropriated to various funds within the general fund and street fund ahead of the start of the new fiscal year.

The money was moved from contingency line items due to unanticipated costs associated with personnel, materials and services, and buildings and improvements in the various funds, according to Monday night's memorandum.

In the general fund, \$72,095 in reappropriations included funds moved to the municipal court, main-

tenance department, development department and community promotions department.

Within the street fund, \$63,500 was reappropriated to street maintenance and street capital and improvements/purchases. The fund movement includes \$57,900 for costs associated with the Safe Routes to Schools project.

As the funds are being reappropriated within the various funds and departments, the net impact on the budget's bottom line is zero.

A link to the full accounting of the reappropriations can be found on the agenda page of the city council's June 28 meeting on the city's website.

Appeal to Reconsider Herbicides

During public comment, resident Annie Odean appealed to the city to reconsider the use of herbicides around the Cottage Grove Armory.

Odean pointed out that the South Lane School District had called a moratorium on herbicides in the past.

"There are a lot of options that are much better instead of using these chemicals," she said, expressing her concern about toxicity and its effects on children in the area. "I think it's very important at this time that we are very careful about what we do."

Free rides offered between Eugene and Roseburg

Umpqua Public Transportation District (UPTD) has started a new bus route called the Lane-Douglas Connector (LDC).

This new service offers safe, reliable, accessible transportation to veterans and the general public in rural communities for better access to healthcare services and shopping opportunities.

Lane-Douglas Connector operates from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays with scheduled stops at the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Roseburg, Ray's Food in Drain, Walmart and PeaceHealth Medical

Center in Cottage Grove, and the Veterans Affairs Clinic in Eugene (LTD bus stop nearby).

The stop in Drain serves as a connection point for passengers of the North Douglas Betterment shuttle.

The route is operated by South Lane Wheels as a pilot project funded by the Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation grant.

For service information and timetable go to: www.southlanetransit.com, or to schedule a ride, call UPTD dispatch toll-free at 888-232-8121.

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ARE YOU A...
YOUTH SLEEPING ON THE STREETS, IN A CAR, OR AT A FRIEND'S?
YOUTH WHO COULD USE FOOD, CLOTHING, OR OTHER BASIC NEEDS?
COMMUNITY MEMBER WHO KNOWS A YOUTH IN NEED?

IF SO, WE CAN HELP!

The Rural Program's drop-in center and street outreach program assists youth age 11-21 who are experiencing homelessness, unstable housing, or who have run away. We support youth in navigating adolescence and creating solutions to improve the quality of their lives.

Services include:

- A safe space to be during the day
- Basic needs: meals, food boxes, hygiene items, and clothing
- Support reaching goals
- Street outreach across the Cottage Grove area

All services are completely free.

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