

DEADLINES

NEWS DEADLINES
For inclusion in the Wednesday edition of the *Itemizer-ObsERVER*:

Social news (weddings, engagements, anniversaries, births, milestones) — 5 p.m. on Thursday.

Community events — Noon on Friday for both the Community Notebook and Community Calendar.

Letters to the editor — 10 a.m. on Monday.

Obituaries — 4 p.m. on Monday.

ADVERTISING DEADLINES

Retail display ads — 3 p.m. Friday.

Classified display ads — 11 a.m. on Monday.

Classified line ads — Noon on Monday. Classified ads are updated daily on www.polkio.com.

Public notices — Noon on Friday.

CORRECTIONS

The *Polk County Itemizer-ObsERVER* is committed to publishing accurate news, feature and sports reports. If you see anything that requires a correction or clarification, call the newsroom at 503-623-2373 or send an e-mail to nadams@polkio.com.

WEBSITE

The *Polk County Itemizer-ObsERVER* website, www.polkio.com, is updated each week by Wednesday afternoon. There, you will find nearly every story that appears in the print version of the newspaper, as well as some items, including additional photos, that do not appear in print due to space limitations.

The *Itemizer-ObsERVER* is also on Facebook and Twitter. Watch for breaking news, links to stories, sports scores updates and more.

WEATHER

RECORDED	HIGH	LOW	RAIN
Jan. 12	53	41	1.01
Jan. 13	55	41	33
Jan. 14	45	41	25
Jan. 15	51	40	.09
Jan. 16	53	41	.60
Jan. 17	50	40	.94
Jan. 18	54	38	.34

Rainfall during Jan. — 4.28 in.
Rain through Jan. 18 — 4.28 in.

Wage increase recommended

Compensation committee OKs 4 percent to commissioners

By **Jolene Guzman**
The *Itemizer-ObsERVER*

DALLAS — Polk County's Compensation Board — the three nonelected citizen members of the budget committee — recommended all county elected officials receive a 4 percent hike in pay come July 2016.

The one exception may be Polk County Sheriff Mark Garton, who by law has to be the highest paid in his office. He will receive 4 percent or whatever it takes to keep his salary at the top of the sheriff's office.

This is a recommendation only and comes months before the real work on the 2016-17 budget begins. Last year the board, which had met in May when the budget was approved, decided to move its meeting to Jan. 13 this year.

That means its recommendation will be included in the budget and discussed when the rest of the financial plan is debated this spring.

Final approval of the recommendation is up to the Polk County Board of Commissioners, which last year approved raises for the clerk, treasurer, assessor and sher-



Hansen

iff, but declined to increase their own pay.

The 4 percent figure isn't what County Administrator Greg Hansen recommended. He said elected officials salaries in Polk County continue to fall behind those in neighboring and similar-sized counties. The gap ranges from 2 percent behind for the sheriff to lagging 19 percent for the commissioners.

To make up ground, he recommended increases of: 8 percent for the commissioners; 4 percent for the clerk; 3 percent for the sheriff; 5 percent for the assessor and setting the salary for the treasurer at \$1,000 following what could be a dramatic change in responsibilities for that office (for more on that see "Polk treasurer to be redefined" on page 3A).

District Attorney Aaron Felton is a state employee

and his salary is paid by the state.

While many other counties do, Hansen recommended not providing additional income for Felton.

"My continuing recommendation is not adding a supplement to that because I think it's the state's job to

pay its employees adequately," he said.

Compensation board member Vern Wells supported Hansen's suggestions, but the other two members, Blair Wasson and Norbert Hartmann, were hesitant to give the commissioners that big of a raise.

Hartmann said doing so may erode voter support for future levy measures, including a second public safety levy.

"If we do this, we are setting ourselves up for a very hard sell on the public safety levy the next time around," Hartmann said. "I know that you will never catch up if you don't start doing something, but I also know the political issue if you do it."

Polk treasurer to be redefined

By **Jolene Guzman**
The *Itemizer-ObsERVER*

DALLAS — Polk County Treasurer Linda Fox will not seek re-election to a fourth term in office and with her retirement may come a change in the office's job requirements and salary.

In Polk County, which is required by law to have a treasurer, the job includes being the county's financial manager. Administrator Greg Hansen said voters made a wise choice in electing Fox, who is a certified public accountant and had experience in governmental financial matters before taking office.

"She inherited a lot of duties and took on a lot of duties because she's gracious and she is very good at what she does," he said. He's not confident the county will always be that lucky.

At the county's Compensation Board hearing Jan. 13, Hansen recommended the financial management part of the treasurer's job, and the associated salary, be separated from the elected office. That way it

could be filled by a professional with the needed credentials.

"I still feel strongly, when you have a \$60 million organization, you don't really want to roll the dice on your finances," Hansen said. "That's my position. It has nothing to do with anyone who may be running for the position."

Dallas resident Dave Weston, a candidate for the office, told the board, and the Polk County Board of Commissioners, that his experience in the private sector qualifies him to take on the duties of the treasurer.

"I hope that you don't feel that the county is stepping off a cliff here after the wonderful service that Linda has given this county," Weston said.

The compensation board agreed with Hansen's recommendation and made one of its own: setting the treasurer's monthly salary at \$1,000 and creating a stipend of \$5,850 to pay for a financial manager.

Hansen said the final decision is up to the commissioners, who will discuss the issue further on Tuesday.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Get training for nonprofit boards

CORVALLIS — Members of nonprofit organizations board of directors may participate in "Nonprofit Organization Board Training," to be presented from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday at the Oregon State University LaSells Stewart Center in Corvallis.

Workshops will be presented by IRS and Oregon Department of Justice specialists; nonprofit attorneys and nonprofit CPAs; university faculty and nonprofit consultants. The event's keynote speaker is by Ellen Rosenblum, Attorney General for Oregon.

For more information or to register and pay fees: www.nonprofitsteward.org.

Kicker will be on 2015 tax returns

SALEM — There will be a "kicker" issued for this year, but won't be any kicker checks issued as there have been in the past.

A more than \$402 million tax surplus was confirmed by the Office of Economic Analysis during the first week of October.

The surplus triggered a tax surplus credit, or "kicker," for the 2014 tax year.

To claim the kicker, you must file a 2015 tax return. To calculate the amount of credit, multiply your 2014 tax liability before any credits, except credits for taxes paid to other states, by 5.6 percent. Detailed information on how to claim your credit will be in the 2015 Oregon personal income tax return instructions.

For more information: www.oregon.gov/dor.

How's that New Years' Resolution "working out" for you? We've got the answer!

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* The current Annual Percentage Rate of 2.50% applies to a fixed rate advance made under the home equity line of credit agreement ("HELOC") with a maximum 15-year repayment term, 60% loan-to-value ("LTV") ratio and minimum FICO score of 740. These terms apply only to HELOCs secured by a senior lien trust deed. This HELOC has a fixed rate conversion option. Borrowers may convert all or part of their variable rate ("revolving") balance to a fixed rate with repayment terms up to 25 years. The APR on any revolving balance portion is variable and is currently as low as 3.12%. The maximum variable rate adjustment is 2% annually and 5% for the life of the loan. The fixed and variable APR each member pays will vary based on lien position, LTV and FICO score. Third party fees range from \$200-\$1,300 for credit limits of \$50,000. Rates and terms are available for LTV ratios up to 80%. Rates are subject to change without notice. All HELOCs are subject to credit approval.

Please, recycle this newspaper.

What's coming up?

Plan on picking up your *Itemizer-ObsERVER* in February—good stuff and no fluff!

February 3rd

The Big Game!

We'll be publishing all the local spots to catch the game on February 7th!

February 3 & 10

Sweetheart of a Deal

Our full color Valentine's Day page to make shopping for your loved one easy!

February 17th

Money Talks!

We're passing along what it says! Want to get the most for your money? Then you'll want to read this section!

February 24th

Babies of 2015

The cutest babies ever born live here in Polk County and we'll show you!

Need the newspaper delivered to your door? Invite us in with a subscription. Only \$27 a year! Call 503-623-2373.

Or visit us in person or online at www.polkio.com

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