

County commission grants Dallas money

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — The Polk County Board of Commissioners decided Tuesday to award \$17,000 in economic development funds from video lottery dollars to the city of Dallas.

That is the full amount the city expected before the board required Dallas, and the cities of Monmouth and Independence, to apply for the funding through a newly developed grant program.

The cities had included the funding in their 2015-16 budgets with the expectation that the county would distribute the funding the same way it had in the past. Only after those budgets were adopted — and in Dallas' case, some of the money spent — did the county inform them of the new process.

County Administrator Greg Hansen provided the commissioners with three options: deny the request, which he strongly recommended against; reimburse the city for the \$5,500 it spent before the grant pro-

gram was established; or provide \$17,000 with the caveat that a future application may be reduced by \$11,500, the difference between what was spent and what was given.

In a letter to the commissioners, Dallas City Manager Ron Foggin said the city had been spending the money on marketing materials. He said he suspended spending after learning the city may not receive the funding and would have to apply for it.

"If the county awards the city the Economic Development Grant, we will continue with the marketing plan," Foggin wrote.

Commissioners Mike Ainsworth and Jennifer Wheeler were in favor of giving the city \$17,000 because of the confusion over the change in the program.

"I think we changed the rules in the middle of the game," Ainsworth said.

Commissioner Craig Pope suggested giving the city up to \$10,000, but didn't object to the final decision.

Hansen said he will hand-deliver the check to the city within a week.



Polk County Fire District No. 1/for Itemizer-Observer
A field fire burned five acres and caused two people to be evacuated on Saturday, but due to a quick response from firefighters, there was no major damages or injuries.

Two evacuated during field fire

No major damage, no injuries in fire on Saturday

Itemizer-Observer staff report

POLK COUNTY — Two residents were evacuated, but major damage and injury were avoided in a field fire Saturday on Zumalt Road.

At about 2 p.m., the owner of the property called 911 to report his field was on fire. Firefighters from Polk County Fire District No. 1, Southwest Polk, Falls City, Dallas Fire & EMS and Oregon Department of Forestry responded and had the fire under control in about an hour.

The fire burned approximately five acres and caused

minor damage to the deck of the house on the property.

Polk No. 1 Capt. Mike Rusher said the first priority was to protect the homeowners and their home.

Fire officials said the fire started while the homeowner was mowing the grass around his residence.

Deputies from the Polk County Sheriff's Office assisted notifying other residents in the area of a possible evacuation.

Only two residents in the immediate area of the fire were evacuated and were able to return to their home.

An engine from Salem

Fire and an ambulance from Falck assisted with staffing Polk County Fire District No. 1's station while crews battled the blaze.

No injuries were reported. Fire officials remind residents that during fire season, it is critical to create "defensible space" around homes of 30 to 100 feet.

Suggestions include clearing all flammable vegetation by raking leaves, dead limbs and twigs; removing leaves and rubbish from under structures; removing dead branches that extend over the roof; and mowing grass regularly and in the mornings.

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 email to ementzer@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, Twitter and Instagram. Watch for breaking news, links to stories, sports scores updates and more.

WEATHER

RECORDED	HIGH	LOW	RAIN
July 19.....	78	57	.00
July 20.....	NA	NA	.NA
July 21.....	84	55	.00
July 22.....	77	59	.T
July 23.....	79	57	.00
July 24.....	89	54	.00
July 25.....	89	59	.00

Rainfall during July — 0.45 in.
Rain through July 25 — 21.75 in.

regarding this fire that leads to the arrest and conviction of the suspect.
Anyone with information: tip line at 1-800-452-7888.

Falls City schools to test for lead

FALLS CITY — The Falls City School District Board approved on July 18 transferring \$3,800 out of contingency to pay for state-required lead testing.

The money will be transferred to the operation and maintenance of buildings fund to pay a contractor to collect samples and send them for testing.

The expenditure wasn't included in the 2016-17 budget because the state request had not been made when the spending plan was developed.

Falls City will test 59 faucets and drinking fountains, following the state's request that every outlet be tested.

"It's everything that we think we can drink out of," said Falls City Superintendent Jack Thompson.

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4	7	8	3	2	6	9	5	1
5	3	2	1	9	4	8	7	6
9	1	6	5	7	8	4	2	3
2	6	7	8	1	9	3	4	5
1	8	5	7	4	3	2	6	9
3	4	9	6	5	2	1	8	7

Sheriff searches for arsonist

Itemizer-Observer staff report

FALLS CITY — The investigation continues into a fire in Falls City that has been determined as arson.

On Friday shortly after 3 a.m., the Polk County Sheriff's Office, along with the Falls City Fire Department, responded to a fire at an unoccupied house at 279 Mill St. in Falls City.

Based on the initial investigation, it was determined that the fire was started intentionally, the sheriff's office said.

Polk County Sheriff Mark Garton said the former ten-

ants had been evicted prior to the fire and no one was injured in the incident.

"I can't really say much more as it is an active investigation," Garton said.

The Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office and the Oregon State Police Arson Unit responded to assist in the investigation.

The sheriff's office is seeking any person who may have information about who committed this crime.

In conjunction with the Oregon State Police, a reward has been offered to any person who has information

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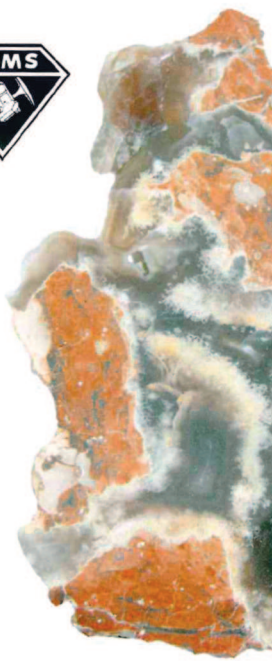
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