

Falls City water master plan moves to health authority

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

FALLS CITY — The Falls City City Council approved its draft water master plan Thursday, authorizing it to be sent to the Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Water Resources Department for review.

That process could take months — OWRD has a 90-day comment period after its initial review — but in the meantime, the city can begin looking at funding sources.

Authors of the draft plan, from HBH Consulting Engineers, say the most likely scenario is a combination of loans the city would repay and loans that state agencies will forgive because they technically not allowed to offer grants.

Falls City will not be eligible for a Community Development Block Grant for this project because it plans to apply for one for the sewer system. Government entities can only have one CDBG every four years, said Mayor Terry Ungricht.

That means the city may have to raise rates to pay off loans for needed projects on its "Priority 1A list," those that are most urgently need-

Water Master Plan Projects

Priority 1A: Primarily replacing old pipe. Timeline: within five years. Cost: \$1.66 million.

Priority 1B: Fixing the pressure zones. Timeline: within 10 years. Cost: \$2.1 million.

Priority 2: Pipe replacement, reservoir maintenance and water intake study. Timeline: within 10 to 15 years. Cost: \$848,103

Priority 3: Replacing dead end lines with looping lines that better circulate water for improved quality and other system improvements. Timeline: 15 to 20 years, as funding allows. Cost: \$2.47 million.

Total cost: \$7.09 million.

ed and most likely to be funded. Those improvements are estimated to cost \$1.66 million.

"What we tried to show, in that first five-year period, the first go-around with the funding agencies, that we to get the worst lines taken care of now," said Mike Henry, with HBH. "That's about \$1.6 million, that's still a lot of money and you are still going to need some help from state and federal money to bite that off."

He said based on the funding scenario he expects the city to have, water rates should increase by \$8, to \$57.32, on residential bills in 2018. By 2027, the bill will increase to \$60.67.

"I think \$62 per month is the average water bill now for the state," Henry said.

"You are actually in not that bad of shape."

Priority 1A projects involve mostly replacing old asbestos cement pipe, said Natalie Jennings with HBH.

"There's a lot asbestos concrete pipe, which was a thing in the seventies, which everyone thought was the best technology," Jennings said. "Unfortunately, we found out that it wasn't really that good and unfortunately, it's in a lot of cities in this country, including Falls City."

Replacing those lines will help with the next stage of projects on the "Priority 1B list," which involve evening out water pressure throughout town. Those improvements will cost \$2.1 million, which are not included in the current funding plan.

POLICE REPORT

Information for the police report comes from law enforcement agencies. Not all calls for service are included. The status of incidents reported may change after further investigation. Individuals arrested or suspected of crimes are considered innocent until proven guilty.

DALLAS

Arrests/Citations
None available.

INDEPENDENCE

Arrests/Citations

After an investigation, Ryan Matthew Albert, 19, of Monmouth, was arrested on Feb. 7 in the 100 block of S. 17th St. for incidents reported in September

2016. He was charged with third-degree rape (under 16), third-degree sodomy (under 16), third-degree sex abuse, menacing — use or display of weapons, reckless endangering — disorderly conduct, and unlawful use or carry of a weapon — disorderly conduct.

Michael James Baker, 41, of Independence, at N. Log Cabin and Grand sts. on Feb. 7 for driving under the influence of intoxicants, unlawful controlled substance — prohibited acts, and possession of methamphetamine.

Kristi Lynette Dunlavy, 48, of Independence, at Hoffman and N. Gun Club rds. on Feb. 7 for DUI.

Howard E. Eaton, 48, of Inde-

pendence, at Monmouth and S. Third sts. on Feb. 7 for DUII.

MONMOUTH

Arrests/Citations

Grant William Edwards, 21, of Monmouth, at Gwinn St. E. and Pacific Hwy. S. on Feb. 3 for DUII.

Jose Louis Camero, 38, of Independence, at Clay St. E. and Broad St. S. on Feb. 5 for felon in possession of a weapon.

Lane Michael Crimson, 19, of Monmouth, in the 300 block of Sunset Ln. N. on Feb. 8 for possession of marijuana younger than 21.

Levi Eldon Grass, 31, of Monmouth, at Jackson St. E. and Cottonwood Ct. on Feb. 9 on a warrant for failure to appear.

Polk County fair recap

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

RICKREALL — "Moo at the Moon." That is the theme for the 2017 Polk County Fair, in honor of the Great American total solar eclipse the region will experience on Aug. 21, after the fair's run.

Fair managers are hoping for a year more like 2015 — and not a repeat of last year — for the fair, Aug. 10-12.

"It was the perfect storm in 2015 and the perfect storm in 2016," said Fair Board Chairwoman Anna Scharf at the board's annual work session on Saturday.

Those storms came with opposite results. In 2015, the fair was shortened to three days and other changes were put in play. Those ideas were well-received; the weather was beautiful; and attendance and revenue were up. Last year wasn't as cooperative, as Mother Nature decided to scorch the fair with temperatures nearing 100 degrees.

That likely was the main driver behind an attendance plunge of more than 27 percent and admissions dropping 33 percent, Scharf said. Those declines made another change — charging for parking — the annual event's savior from disaster.

"If we hadn't charged for parking, we

would have been in real pickle," Scharf said. "Because we charged for parking, we were really only down about 5 percent in our overall revenue for gate admission."

Open class exhibits were down, but that could have been a product of a late harvest season that had farmers still working their fields during fair, Scharf said.

In a bit of good news, she added that sponsorships were up 17 percent, which is an indication the fair has strong community support. Thursday night's Roughstock Rodeo also proved to be a big draw.

Scharf said the board is working on more changes to bring attendance and revenue up, including working with the cities to avoid conflicts during fair week and finding a better place to put the entertainment stage.

"We keep moving pieces to try to get the right fit to get revenue up," Scharf said.

Scheduling youth exhibits — which have been increasing — has been a challenge since moving to a three-day fair. Scharf said a schedule with shows on Wednesday before the fair opens will be tested to prevent young exhibitors from having to rush from one event to another.

"It was really chaotic for those kids, and it was really hard for them to enjoy fair," Scharf said.

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