

EDITORIALS

A tale of two fire districts' contract

We've been watching as negotiations between the Falls City Fire Department and Southwest Polk Rural Fire District have carried on and declared at an impasse. Monday, Falls City residents attended a Southwest Polk board of directors meeting and spoke their concerns about not having Southwest equipment in Falls City.

They have valid concerns — longer response times, for one. It takes longer to get to Falls City from Rickreall or Dallas than from Main Street.

Some on the Southwest board of directors have said they will not give up on re-establishing a contract between the two agencies.

Falls City personnel and volunteers fear the contract presented late last year was an attempt by Southwest Fire to take control over administrative duties. It's true that the contract would essentially make Falls City Fire Department officially part of Southwest. Falls City's Fire Station would become a Southwest station as well as the city's station, rather than a joint station. Other sticking points included issues with training and accreditation of volunteers, money, and "cultural differences."

Residents demand a compromise. A compromise is what's needed here, but the way Falls City residents speak at meetings and on Facebook, we're not sure they are looking for a compromise, something that requires give and take from both sides to make work.

They are concerned about the safety of their homes and families, and pointing fingers at Southwest's fire chief and board of directors without looking to the people in charge of Falls City's department.

It takes two to tango. Southwest cannot be expected to be the only agency to give into demands or requests. Falls City will need to decide what's important to it and if it is important enough to continue to dig in its heels.

Calling for a third-party mediator is a good start. Southwest Fire Chief Fred Hertel said that mediator should have knowledge about fire and EMS departments and procedures.

We think a marriage counselor would work fine.

PUBLIC AGENDA

Public Agenda is a listing of upcoming meetings for governmental and nongovernmental agencies in Polk County. To submit a meeting, send it at least two weeks before the actual meeting date to the *Itemizer-Observer* via email (ionews@polkio.com).

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 10

- **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, first floor conference room, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
- **Independence Heritage Museum Commission** — 4 p.m., Independence Heritage Museum, 112 S. Third St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
- **Monmouth Library Advisory Board** — 7 a.m., Monmouth Public Library, 168 Ecols St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
- **Monmouth Parks and Recreation Board** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.

THURSDAY, JAN. 11

- **Polk County Fire District No. 1 Board** — 6 p.m., Central Station 90, 1800 Monmouth St., Independence. 503-838-1510.
- **Falls City City Council** — 6 p.m., Falls City Community Center, 320 N. Main St., Falls City. 503-787-3631.

FRIDAY, JAN. 12

- **Monmouth Tree Advisory Board** — 7 p.m., Monmouth Senior Center, 180 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.

TUESDAY, JAN. 16

- **Polk County Board of Commissioners work session** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, first floor conference room, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
- **Independence Historic Preservation Commission** — 4 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
- **Monmouth City Council** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
- **Dallas City Council** — 7 p.m., Dallas City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 17

- **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, first floor conference room, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
- **Monmouth Planning Commission** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.



Dallas deserves answers to firing

I am amazed at the amount of money Mr. Foggin will receive monthly for the next nine months. At \$15,425.20 per month, that comes to a total of \$138,826.80.

I do understand Mr. Foggin gets the monthly pay until he finds another job or the maximum of nine months.

With this kind of pay guaranteed for nine months, why should he look for a job?

I feel the taxpayers of Dallas are entitled to the reason Mr. Foggin has been terminated and why he is getting such a generous severance package.

How much does a city manager get paid, especially the size of Dallas?

How much did Mr. Foggin get paid per month when he was working for the city?

It now appears the city is paying Mr. Ellis to be interim city manager, and how much is he being paid per month?

Where is the city of Dallas coming up with the money for this extra expense?

It is time for the residents of Dallas to let the city council know they should be accountable, especially for all expenditures.

Red Flaska
Dallas

Editor's note: Ron Foggin was paid \$12,035 per month, plus benefits, as Dallas' city manager, as reported in a Dec. 7, 2016, story in the Itemizer-Observer about his 2016 evaluation.

The difference between his former monthly salary and his monthly severance is the cash value of his benefits. Foggin was terminated at his 2017 evaluation for no cause, as reported in a Dec. 6, 2017, Itemizer article. On Dec. 13, 2017, the Itemizer reported that Greg Ellis accepted the job as interim city manager for Dallas at a monthly pay rate of \$12,000.

Dallas loses more than bank location

News of the April 3 closure of the Dallas branch of Bank of America is more meaningful to this community than many realize.

While Bank of America is a national banking giant, the Dallas branch is the last branch on a tree that started from two locally-owned and appreciated banks: Dallas City Bank and Dallas National Bank.



The latter was started by the Woods family that, in successive generations, has been in one person or another in the insurance business here.

Dallas City Bank was started by the Cravens who, in later generations, were also in the insurance business.

During the Depression in the 1930s, Dallas National Bank became part of Dallas City Bank. It subsequently changed its name to Polk County State Bank. At that time it was owned by the Williams family that bought the Craven interest in the institution.

The Williams family went on to Portland and started the Oregon Bank while maintaining ownership of Polk County State. Later he made the Dallas bank part of the Oregon Bank. Ultimately that firm with branches statewide was sold to Security Pacific Bank from California. Later Security Pacific was absorbed by Bank of America — it, in fact, was later purchased by Nations Bank of Charlotte, North Carolina, which changed its name to Bank of America.

The closure of this bank branch ends a long line of successful service to the community under local, regional and national ownership. It's a piece of history that should not be forgotten.

Dave Weston
Dallas

Volunteers help 'cheer's' success

The old adage "It takes a village" definitely proves true for the success of Christmas Cheer.

Through the incredible

outpouring of goods, time, monies and love from the Dallas community, Christmas Cheer 2017 was able to provide amazing food boxes to over 310 local families.

Many businesses, organizations, churches, area schools and wonderful community members donated more food and financial support than ever before.

Christmas Cheer culminated on Christmas Eve morning with a pack-out that included over 400 community volunteers helping to sort, shop, package and deliver food boxes to our families.

It is truly a day of Christmas Cheer as people come alongside old friends and new ones to give of their time and energy to improve the holidays for those in need in the Dallas community.

Due to the tremendous support of many kind-hearted people and the success of the annual Dallas Glow Run, Christmas Cheer has been able to work hand in hand with other local organizations that help curb hunger in our community throughout the year.

This year Christmas Cheer is actively supporting a local grass roots organization, The Kindness Club, in their effort to feed school-aged children from our school system.

Christmas Cheer also helps to meet the needs of homeless families as well as other community members going through difficult times.

Thank you to everyone who supports us through their gracious donations of time, energy, money and food.

We certainly could not do it without our community's

support.

Sue Lamb
Dallas Christmas Cheer
Board of Directors

Dallas Fire brings holiday to Dallas

Dallas Fire & EMS has the honor of helping Santa and the Dallas Area Chamber of Commerce decorate the town each year for Christmas.

We couldn't do it without the assistance of Dallas Fire & EMS and chamber volunteers, and specialized lift trucks and volunteers from Pacific Power and JRE Electric.

The decorations have been carefully stored until next winter and, don't worry, they will be checked, repaired, and all lights that are out will be replaced before they go back up.

We want to extend a special thanks to Dallas motorists for your patience and caution as we install and take down the decorations — the safety of our crews and you is our No. 1 priority.

If you want to help defray the cost of the decorations and their maintenance, please make a donation to the Dallas Area Chamber of Commerce.

Eriks Gabliks
Deputy Fire Chief
Dallas Fire & EMS

Polk Fire No. 1 provides kindness

We want to thank the Monmouth ambulance EMT for their kind expertise skills and services. What a wonderful service we have in our community. Many thanks to all of you.

Clara and Chris Spradling
Independence

WANT TO WRITE A LETTER?

Letters to the editor are limited to 300 words. Longer letters will be edited.

Election-related letters of all types are limited to 100 words. Writers are limited to one election-related letter per election season. Election letters from writers outside of Polk County are not accepted.

Each writer is restricted to one letter per 30-day period. Letters that are libelous, obscene or in bad taste will not be printed. Attacks by name on businesses or individuals will not be printed.

Letters to the editor that are obvious promotions for a business, products or services will not be printed.

The *Itemizer-Observer* does not guarantee the accuracy of facts presented by letter writers; dissenters are welcome to respond.

Letter writers who disagree with other published letter writers should maintain a civil discourse and address the subject, not the author.

Letters that quote facts or use quotes from third-party sources must include the original source in the letter. These original sources might not be printed, so might not count against the overall word count (100 for elec-

tion related letters, 300 for other letters), but will be required so the news room may double check claims made in letters.

Letters, like all editorial material submitted to the newspaper, are edited for length, grammar and content.

Letters must include the author's name, address and telephone number. This includes letters submitted via the *I-O's* website.

Names and cities of residence are published; street addresses and telephone numbers are used for verification purposes only.

Letters must be submitted

from individuals, not organizations, and must be original submissions to the *I-O*, not copies of letters sent to other media.

Letters of thanks to businesses, individuals and organizations are limited to 10 names.

The deadline for letters to the editor is 10 a.m. Monday. Letters submitted may not be retractable after this deadline.

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