



City crafts plan to complete its biggest projects

The Columbia Press

A street near you could be repaved, the city's dog park will be improved and the police department will get two new patrol cars.

Warrenton city commissioners and department heads sat down for a work session Tuesday evening to decide what major projects will be funded in the 2018-19 fiscal year.

The Capital Improvement Plan covers major projects that will be completed in the next five years. However, only projects with assured funding are included in the coming year.

"I'm an idea guy, so we'll start out doing that," Mayor Pro Tem Rick Newton said in opening the meeting. Mayor Henry Balensifer was out of town, but participated in the meeting through a phone connection.

Two of Newton's suggestions were "Welcome to Historic Hammond" signs at the entryways to the small town, which is now fully incorporated into the city of Warrenton, and making better use of the electronic reader board in front of the fire station.

Among the highlights in the coming year:

LIBRARY

- Library automation with software, cataloging tools, web hosting,

See 'Projects' on Page 2



Cindy Yingst/The Columbia Press

A bus and large pickup shimmy by each other at Ninth and Main streets.

House of frustration

Homeowner blames city for excessive fees and delays

BY CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press



Above: Dale Adams stands in front of the house that has been a source of frustration and, he says, high city fees.

Left: Adams and his crabbing crew work on a net outside his home.

Cindy Yingst
The Columbia Press

It's a rule of thumb when building a house: increase the budget and double the estimated completion time because something is bound to go wrong.

Dale Adams of Hammond had no idea how wrong things would go.

Adams, who makes his living as a crabber, built his new home off King Salmon Street three years ago. The city required him to spend \$120,000 to extend utilities down the gravel road to his property, he said.

He claims city officials told him other vacant

properties on his street were on wetlands and not buildable, so he had to carry the burden himself. But now those properties are being built up around him and he's received nothing from those who are tying into the utility lines he paid for.

He claims three city employees – none of whom still works for the city -- colluded to get as much developer fee money from him as possible.

A bevy of delays and inspections dragged out the building process.

"They were kicking me around like a beach

See 'Frustrated' on pg 10

Warrenton ponders what to do when good elk go 'bad'

BY CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

Elk are a curiosity for tourists and many residents, but no one should think of them as sweet, docile creatures, a state wildlife biologist told a group attending a town hall meeting.

"Elk don't understand the intention of a person," said Herman Biederbeck of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Nearly all the recent incidents involving negative elk-human interactions were due to improper behavior by a human, he said.

Mayor Henry Balensifer called

the April 12 meeting after receiving queries from locals wanting to know what the city is doing about elk.

The issue became personal for Balensifer when his wife, Kelsey, was running along a city trail when she was charged three times by a bull elk who pushed her into the brambles.

People need to give elk a wide berth from late August to October, which is breeding season, when males can get aggressive, and again in the spring, when females have babies, said Sgt. Joe Warwick, an Oregon State Patrol officer in the fish and wildlife division.

There were three incidents along the North Coast in the past year where

situations involving elk rose to a public safety concern, Warwick said.

The first involved a cow elk with a calf in the grass along a beach access in Gearhart. The elk charged several people walking to the beach.

"The elk was acting within its natural nature," Warwick said.

Eventually, the mother was tranquilized and she and the calf were moved to a more suitable location out of the path of humans. But it took two Gearhart police officers, four state troopers, three ODFW employees and several Gearhart Public Works employees.

A second incident involved a Ham-

See 'Elk' on Page 12