

Hammond: Restoring dignity to historic town

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inary plans for a revitalized Hammond Marina, something that's taken on new meaning since the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers signed a quit claim deed last week, giving the property to the city of Warrenton.

First incorporated as New Astoria in 1899, residents voted to change the name to Hammond in 1915 to match the names of the post office and railroad station. Andrew B. Hammond was a Montana businessman who built the Astoria and Columbia River Railroad from Astoria to Portland in 1898.

Hammond platted the community and began promoting big plans, including a sawmill and port that would take advantage of one of the state's most abundant resources. But he eventually changed course, developing his timber empire on Astoria's Tongue Point.

Hammond remained a rural enclave and, in 1991, residents voted to disincorporate and become part of the city of Warrenton.

"Hammond's got some interesting history and, if we dig that up, we'll come up with a theme, too," Poe said.

Poe and County Commissioner Mark Kujala presented the committee's ideas to Warrenton city commissioners last week.

Development would be completed in three phases, with a funding plan for each.

Major proposals include a \$5 million dock replacement plan, a new pier at the east end with development of the east beach for picnicking and beach volleyball, a new bait shop with a fish-cleaning area, a boat wash facility, a new camping area, and an RV dump station.

A unified theme is essential, too, to give the town and marina a unified feel.



From City of Warrenton's Facebook page

City Commissioner Pam Ackley suggested a Nantucket-like fishing village. Buildings would be encouraged to have shiplap wood siding and be painted in blues, grays and white. A boat-style fish-and-chips food truck and some type of meeting place or convention center would be encouraged.

"This is an exciting and large undertaking, however, it's one this community has fought for on many levels for

City water plant gets pricey upgrade

Warrenton's water treatment plant will get a major upgrade this fiscal year.

City Commissioners approved paying \$941,818 to replace the plant's filters, something it's been expecting.

The plant was built in 2001-2002 and the filtration system needs upgrading every six or seven years. This will be the third filter



Left: Mayor Henry Balensifer and Commissioner Pam Ackley at this week's sign dedication.

Above: A proposal for a sign at the entrance to downtown.

a very long time," the panel concluded in its report to the commission.

In addition to acquiring the marina from the federal government, there are other encouraging signs for Hammond's improving status.

On Tuesday, a sign was dedicated at Hammond Marina, putting it on the Oregon Film Trail map for its part in the movie "Free Willy."

The city is in the process of

replacement; the last one was in 2012.

Each year, \$133,000 is set aside in a special fund to pay for the periodic upgrades, City Manager Linda Engbretson said.

Last week, the commission approved the contract with Evoqua Water Technologies, a Pittsburgh-based company with 170 locations worldwide.

getting approval to dredge the boat basin, removing 75,000 cubic yards of sediment, opening additional space for commercial and recreational boats.

Warrenton's Parks Advisory Board has recommended the city place a welcome sign at the entrance to Hammond's historic downtown and city commissioners approved those plans.

Water and sewer lines are being extended to Hammond, which will increase the capacity of both and provide better options for future development.

Members of the ad hoc committee asked commissioners to make the panel a perma-

nent advisory board and commissioners agreed.

"It's exciting," Ackley told committee members.

Mayor Henry Balensifer said he's already making plans for the city to sponsor a "Free Willy" movie night at the park.

"This is a basis and template for us to start a springboard and dive into it," Balensifer said of the committee's proposals.

"With the corps owning Warrenton Marina all those years, we couldn't really do much," Poe said. "A community center would be a great thing. We could do a lot of different activities in that area. There are so many possibilities."

"I liked the personal approach I received from Ocean View and I'm relieved to think everything will be in order when the time comes."

-from Sherryan Reische



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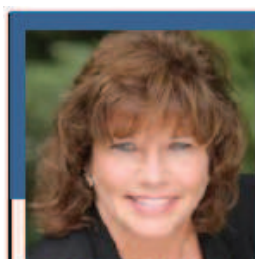
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