

Banks water users again ignore public hearing on rate increase

Attendance at a second public meeting, July 9, on a rate increase for City of Banks water users, was identical to the attendance at the first meeting...zero. Since no one was at the special meeting, it was adjourned shortly after opening, to convene the regular meeting of the Banks City Council.

Health insurance problem averted

The city was recently informed that their health insurance carrier, CCIS, would not renew the policy, effective August 1, 2002. In spite of the short notice, the City was prepared because the council had previously asked for information on alternative policies and

the city's insurance agent, Waltz, Sheriden, Crawford, Inc. (WSC), had already started a comparison of various plans. Representatives from WCS had also met with city employees (on a hot day when the air-conditioning died) to discuss what the employees wanted in their health benefit.

After considerable discussion, council approved a Kaiser medical plan with a standard ODS dental plan for the 2002-03 enrollment year. Councilors Katie Murdoch, Gary Coffey, Ryan Birr and Teri Brandstir voted in favor of the plan; Judy Clifford and Tim Hardie were opposed. The approved plan includes chiropractic benefits and will also allow participants

to "swing-out" of the Kaiser system and choose an outside provider if they desire. The new plan will cost about 35-percent more than the current plan. For purposes of comparison, if CCIS were going to renew the current policy, the increase in the premium would be about 26-percent. However, CCIS will not renew the policy.

Feds approve water plant improvements

Public Works Superintendent Tim Grossnickle told council that administrators from the State/Federal Revolving Loan program had completed their final inspection and verification of improvements at the water treatment plant. Grossnickle said that he was impressed with the administrators' meticulous review of both the supporting paperwork and the physical project.

Grossnickle has also been working with timber consultant Bill Davidson on the recently completed timber cut. The cut included more board feet of timber than had been anticipated and may provide the city with increased income, Grossnickle told the council.

Greenhouse waiver

Office located at the Capital Center, NW 185th and Walker Road, entrance D-1, 1411 East.

A series of six-hour, hands-on workshops taught by OSU Master Food Preservers, will be held on Saturdays, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Washington County Extension

problem solved

A discussion of findings of fact to support the waiver of fees for Banks Elementary School's land use application to build a green house was removed from the agenda. Last month representatives from the greenhouse project appeared before council to ask that the land use fee be waived. When they initially applied to Washington County for a building permit they were told that they would need to get land use approval to build on school property. The city charges a fee of \$850 to cover costs of the process that was waived by city council in June. On the advice of City Attorney Jim Lucas, council was to have a discussion about why the fee was waived in this case in order to narrow the possibility that the waiver could be used as a precedent in the future. However, according to Mayor Bob Orłowski, the county has now decided that the greenhouse is a temporary structure and is a conditional use of the school property. City Planner K.J. Won has the discretion to grant conditional use permits within the planning commission process without charging a fee. There-

fore the discussion was removed from the agenda until Won and Lucas can review the situation to determine if further action needs to be taken by council.

Air conditioning improvements

Mayor Bob Orłowski told council that the city's 14-year-old heat pumps that provided city hall and the police department with air conditioning had failed last month. He had the air conditioning units replaced, at a cost of \$4,326. Orłowski told council that the money was taken from the general fund maintenance budget.

In other business, council:

- Approved a resolution authorizing final payment to Pro-Teck Construction for Wilkes Street improvements in the amount of \$81,122.

- Heard from Lucas that a response had been filed in the Kelley property lawsuit. A future executive session will be held to further update council.

- Authorized Orłowski and Lucas to negotiate a lease with Salmon PCS for property adjacent to the city's water tower as a cell tower site, subject to council approval.

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Extension offers food preserving workshops

A series of six-hour, hands-on workshops taught by OSU Master Food Preservers, will be held on Saturdays, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Washington County Extension

Office located at the Capital Center, NW 185th and Walker Road, entrance D-1, 1411 East.

Class is limited to ten persons. The cost is \$10.00 per workshop, or free with presentation of a current Oregon Trail Card or proof of WIC program participation.

On July 27, the workshop will cover pressure canning vegetables, plus freezing and drying.

August 3, pickles and chutneys will be the topic. Tomatoes, salsa, flavored oils and vinegars will be featured on August 24.

The September 14 workshop will cover canning, freezing and smoking fish and game.

For more information and to register, call 503-725-2040.

Also available through OSU Washington County Extension is Pressure Gauge Testing, on Thursdays, July 25, August 15 and September 12, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. For more information, call 503-725-2300.

The Oregon State University Extension Service Food Safety & Preservation Hotline is available July 15 through October 1 at 1-800-354-7319.

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