

Banks Council looks at water fees, trees and parks

Despite having a full special meeting agenda just two weeks ago, the Banks City Council had a busy meeting December 9. Included in the evening was a public hearing on the planning commission's recommendation for updating the long-term population and employment forecast, part of the periodic review process.

City Planner K.J. Won told council that updating the long-range population forecast to year 2024, an element in the city's periodic review, had been completed and approved by the planning commission. A public hearing was held October 28, though no public testimony was offered at the meeting.

Won explained the three components that affect population – births, deaths and net migration. The most influential component on Banks' population is the third element, the movement of people in and out of the city. Won said that the city's population had remained stable through the 1980s, at about 500 residents, and had moderate growth through mid-1990. With the development of Banks Estates and Arbor Village in the late 1990s, Banks' population grew from 625 in 1997 to 1,310 in 1999. The rapid growth of the 1990s is not expected to continue, Won reported, though some growth is expected.

Four methods for estimating population by the year 2024 were utilized and evaluated. The historic population trend, producing an estimate of 4075, was considered overly optimistic, due to expectations of a more moderate rate of growth. The proportional method assumes that Banks would continue to comprise 0.29 percent of the county population, or 2,025.

The remaining methods assume that population growth would occur at an average percentage per year. Two approaches were used. The first applies the county's long-term average of 2.22 percent growth, which would predict a Banks population of 2,303. The final method utilizes a city of similar size and type. According to Won, the city of North Plains is comparable, with similar population size and location for future growth, and is affected by the same economic circumstances and market forces. North Plains recently completed their long-range population

forecast and successfully defended a growth rate of 4.5 percent, based on a study conducted by Metro in 1997. Applied to the City of Banks, a growth rate of 4.5 percent predicts a population of 3,739 for the year 2024, which the planning commission recommended as the appropriate forecast for Banks. An ordinance to adopt the proposed plan amendment will be presented to council in January.

Property Complaints

Prior to the business portion of the meeting, council heard a complaint from former city council member Gary Coffey about the degenerating conditions at the apartments on Wilkes Ave. Councilor Kirk Andrews said that this was the same property that was cleaned up about six months ago at the request of council after complaints had been received. According to Coffey, garbage has not been picked up for over two weeks, extension cords run outside from apartment to apartment and to a freezer sitting in the yard and there are abandoned cars on the lot. Mayor Bob Orłowski told Coffey that they would hear a report from the police department next month after an inspection of the property.

City recorder Debbie Deegan told council that the owner and the property manager of 246 Wilkes Street had been in contact. A representative of the management group met with Orłowski and viewed the property and, according to Orłowski, was appalled by the condition of the property. Some progress has been made in the last month and both the owner and the management group have made it clear that the situation will be corrected. Orłowski recommended that council allow more time to clean up the property and council concurred.

A hearing to determine if a nuisance exists at 110 Depot Street was scheduled for the January meeting. Deegan reported that both the property owner and the person occupying the property have been sent letters asking for the removal of tires, garbage, an abandoned boat, trailer and assorted junk. Deegan said both parties contend that the items belong to a third party who is out of the country. The city attorney will send notification of the hearing to the property owner.

Fees Set

Council approved a fee of \$25 for a returned check and a water service restoration fee of \$25 during normal business hours and \$50 after hours and on holidays. Council also approved a new service application fee of \$25. All three fees will take effect January 10, 2004.

Trees and Parks

Orłowski reported that he and Councilor Katie Murdoch met with several arborists over the last few weeks and received a "very wide range of recommendations" for the pruning and maintenance of trees in Boy Scout Park and street trees. He told council that information is being compiled regarding safety, pruning for esthetics, and maintenance. Murdoch will bring the information to council in January.

Branstire started discussion on a Boy Scout Park committee, saying it could not be combined with the Greenville Park committee at this time because of the nature of the park maintenance agreement. Orłowski told council that some cities lease part or all of a park to an organization to manage and maintain, similar to the Scout Cabin in Vernonia. City Attorney Jim Lucas told council that Arbor Village Homeowners Association could be approached with the idea of changing the membership rules of the park committee to allow the inclusion of both parks. Branstire said that the agreement was too complicated and that she "didn't want to mess with it." She went on to say that the two committees would eventually become a single committee. Branstire said that she wanted to insure that a majority of committee members were from within the city of Banks. Lone Pilate told council that it would be a "terrible mistake" if residents of the surrounding area were excluded from the committee. Council approved formation of a Scout Cabin Park Committee of five to seven members, with the percentage of non-residents to be determined at a later date.

Public Works Building

Public Works Superintendent Tim Grossnickle brought plans for a building to be constructed on the city-owned lot close to the library. The metal

40' x 50' building, with a 20' ceiling, will have one corner of finished space with an office, kitchen/lab and bathroom on the main floor. A second floor space above the office, with outside access, will be finished to provide storage space for the library. The paper recycling station currently on the site will be redesigned to be more esthetically pleasing. Competitive bidding for the building will begin in January.

City Manager Feasibility

Councilor Pete Edison said that he had met with Councilor Ryan Birr and Grossnickle to set objectives and assign tasks for the committee studying the feasibility of hiring a city manager. The committee reviewed a list of Oregon cities with populations between 1000-2000 and agreed to identify the distinction between a manager and administrator. Objectives set by the committee include mapping the current organizational structure, review of hiring criteria for the public works superintendent, and review of city charter. The committee also discussed the long-term financial impact of hiring a city manager. Edison said that committee would meet again in January with the other two members, Mark Ward and Wes Winship, to continue their deliberations.

In other business council:

- Discussed ways to relieve water bills for deployed servicemen. Discussion will continue in January.

- Approved \$20 expense for Orłowski to attend the January 20 Urban Lands Symposium as a panel member.

- Discussed improvement to the city's web page, including the addition of e-mail capacity.

Banks Fire Department Association will begin offering scholarships

Banks Fire Department Association will be offering a scholarship award to Banks High School students. The award equaling at least \$300 will be presented in May of each year to at least one individual. While preference will be given to those students seeking a career in the fire service or emergency medicine, all students are encouraged to apply for the award.

The Banks, Buxton, and Timber communities are encouraged to participate by do-

Christmas lights contest Dec. 19

Banks will be lit up with Christmas lights on Friday, December 19, for the annual Christmas Lighting Contest, sponsored annually by the mayor and city council.

Local businesses donate prizes which will be awarded to the top four lighting displays. The contest is open to both business and residential lighting displays.

This year's three judges will be Mayor Bob Orłowski, and council members Heidi Duckworth and Pete Edison. They will be touring the city, looking for the contest winners on December 19.

The community is invited to enjoy the lights and the holiday spirit engendered by this Christmas tradition.

Banks official symbol chosen

A design submitted by Banks High School senior Lynsey Douglas was the unanimous choice of the Banks City Council as the official symbol for the City of Banks. Over 40 people gathered to judge the six entries. Two of the entries received nearly the same number of votes and both were presented to council.

Douglas will receive \$50 for her design, which pictures three trees and a hill enclosed in a raindrop. The new logo will be used on letterhead, business cards and a new sign for City Hall.

Douglas, 17, is the daughter of Kathy and Stuart Douglas of Banks.

nating to the scholarship.

Donations may be sent to Banks Fire Department Association Scholarship Fund, 300 Main Street, Banks, OR 97106. Any Banks High School student wishing to apply for the award should see their high school counselor.

The Banks Fire Department is committed to excellence in its service and is proud to promote these ideals in its future leaders. For more information, contact Louisa Partain at 503-324-0226.