

School Board hears criticism on the lack of information made public

The five Vernonia School Board members (Jim Krahn, Cari Levenseller, Phil Doyle, Gienah Cheney and Ed Buckner) attending the April meeting heard harsh criticism concerning a lack of information provided to the public.

Amy Cieloha protested the pessimistic nature of discussions about Washington Grade School, telling the board "not to lose sight of the needs of WGS." Expressing frustration, she said there were things at WGS that "cannot wait 2-4 years," and accused the board of allowing WGS to deteriorate

as a way of forcing voters to support a bond measure. Superintendent Mike Funderburg assured Cieloha that the district was not ignoring everyday problems and invited her to attend the maintenance committee meetings.

Maintenance Supervisor John Lewis usually attends board meetings to discuss his monthly written report in detail, but was not present at this meeting.

The reports have not been made readily available to the public, however. For most of the school year, the maintenance report has been referred to, but not provided to the public. Following the meeting, board chairman Jim Krahn told The Independent that a version of Lewis's report, with confidential material removed, would be made available at the next board meeting.

Geopotential, an environmental and geophysics firm from Gresham, conducted a radar survey of the cafeteria kitchen area in the Washington Grade School basement, finding what appear to be small

voids, about two inches wide, where pipes should be. No large earth movements or sinkhole were found, but the pipes don't appear to exist. According to Funderburg, the building retains structural integrity and solid footings under columns.

Kate Conley was critical of the board's lack of a long-term plan, and the lack of public involvement or feasibility studies. According to Conley, the board made the decision to borrow money, and designed a building isolated from the public. She told the board, "I don't want a Band-Aid that the board has decided to put on!"

Krahn responded that the board has spent a lot of time "balancing expense with value". Krahn said that O'Brien Constructors and the architect, DOWA, would be asked to work with the community to develop a site plan for the future of the district. He continued, "Let's get a plan and let people throw darts at it for a year". Later in an interview, he expanded that, saying he "would have liked it if [the decision to design/build] had not been a board decision,

but there was no other choice."

The board voted unanimously to terminate the contract with Willamette ESD, which was originally guiding the building project. Since the contract was awarded to O'Brien Constructors in January, far more progress has been made on the project, Funderburg told the board, adding that the district has not been satisfied with the services provided by the WESD. O'Brien Constructors and DOWA have been working directly with Funderburg and Dawn Plews. The district expects a savings of at least \$45,000 as a result of managing the job in-house.

In other business, the board:

- Was told by Principal Curt Scholl that a "small glitch" at the Charter School had been resolved and students will no longer be using up bandwidth with streaming audio.

- Approved a policy requiring students to pass eighth grade English and math before entering high school. Short remedial classes will be offered for both junior high and high school students. The district is also work-

ing on a schedule for summer classes that would correspond with dates a principal can be in the building.

- Heard from Sally Harrison that she would volunteer to direct school dramatic production.

- Approved the calendar for 2005-06, with classes beginning after Labor Day. Students will have the day off when Cycle Oregon comes to town, September 16.

- Heard from Cathy Ward, the teachers union representative, that parents are more informed about their students progress. Since full implementation of Grade Machine software, parents receive the equivalent of a progress report every two weeks, but teachers would like to be able to meet with parents throughout the year, particularly on early release Fridays.

- Students will be recognized for exemplary achievement through a student of the month program. Winners photos will be displayed at US Bank.

WEATHER REPORT

APRIL 2005

DATE	TEMPERATURE HI	LO	PRECIP. AMT.
1	54	37	.05
2	53	42	.09
3	49	34	.14
4	52	33	.07
5	56	39	T
6	66	39	.15
7	66	32	.33
8	54	29	T
9	53	29	--
10	52	33	.33
11	49	30	.09
12	46	34	.19
13	51	30	.08
14	52	30	.02
15	53	38	.59
16	55	33	.09
17	50	36	.27
18	55	30	.02
19	63	30	--
20	68	37	--
21	68	39	--
22	74	40	--
23	55	44	.21
24	64	45	.40
25	53	44	.19
26	61	44	--
27	72	46	--
28	65	48	.09
29	58	47	.02
30	60	40	--

Temperature and precipitation amounts are from the official U.S. weather station at the Vernonia water plant. Measurable precipitation in April totalled 3.42 inches.

Amateur radio examinations scheduled for May 15

An Amateur Radio Examination, including the 5 WPM Morse Code, is scheduled for Sunday, May 15, at 1:00 p.m. at the Vernonia Fire Hall, 555 E. Bridge St., Vernonia.

A non-refundable fee of \$14.00 per exam is required. Cash or personal checks on local banks, plus two sources of ID; one a drivers license and another document with a current address must be provided. A non-programmable calculator can be used, after it has been checked.

The FCC requires a social security number or an FRN number which can be obtained in advance at the FCC web site

<wireless.fcc.gov/uls/>, then click on CORES/call sign registration.

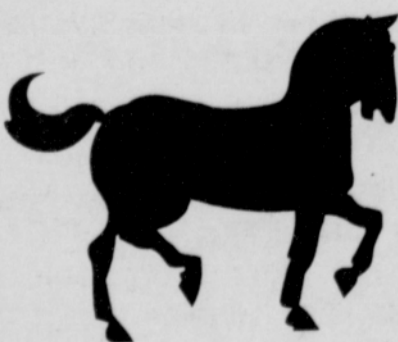
If up-grading a license, bring CSCE certificate which is good for 365 days from the last exam. Check the date for cred-

it towards the upgrade.

The exam is sponsored by the Vernonia Emergency Radio Association, W7VER, which is under the ARES system of Columbia County.

Participants must be prompt

as the doors will be shut by 1:30 p.m and locked. The exam should take about two hours. For questions, call Norm Roberts, KB7CD, at 503-429-2405 or email <kb7cd.norm@juno.com>.



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