

# The INDEPENDENT

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## Opinion

### Some thoughts on City Administrator hiring

Yesterday, Mayor Harrison and the Vernonia City Council interviewed three applicants for interim city administrator. They still have before them the job of finding a match between an applicant for the real job and the needs of the position and the community. Once they have a list of applicants to interview, the job still sits in their laps (or theirs and others chosen to sit on the hiring committee) to pick the best one for this community. What will they be looking for?

First off, a city administrator must have the communication skills to listen, listen, listen; to the Mayor, the council, their staff, and the community. A closed mind is not going to communicate effectively.

Here's what Mike Sykes, former Vernonia City Administrator and now City Manager of Forest Grove, suggested as necessary attributes for a successful administrator, "Someone who understands generally the wide spectrum of services that a city needs to provide. The person really needs to be open-minded and able to facilitate change by being inclusive and getting the input of everyone in the community. They need to coach, mentor and work with the city council on all the critical issues and keep them informed and engaged."

Second, applicants should have education and/or experience in public administration at some level, in areas of budget, finance, labor negotiations, personnel experience, community relations, working with or in government.

Does the person need to live in the city? Well, yes, according to the job description. And that's for a good reason, so they'll have a vested interest in what happens in the city. The last time, though, council decided that if the applicant so requests, living in the school district is good enough.

The city administrator works under the supervision of the city council. The council must give clear direction and then needs to closely supervise to make sure that direction is being followed.

Finally, how long will a city administrator serve our city? Statistics indicate that the average is only 3-5 years before either the city's or the person's needs change and there is some type of parting, sweet or not. There's no such thing as a permanent administrator so anyone on a city council can expect to help hire one.



### Ike Says . . .

By Dale Webb, member  
Izaak Walton League, Nehalem Valley Chapter



Hey, did you get out to the Fishing with KURL event? I made it down to the lake to observe the crowd. The lake was full of boats like I remember after Vernonia Lake was filled and stocked with fish years ago. The concert at Hawkins Park was great and the fireworks display had some new things. For being an event that was put together at the last minute, it turned out well

The Cutthroat trout opener in local streams was both a success and a failure. My sources reported catching between 50-80 fish per pole, trout lengths in the upper ranges measured 18-22 inches and all fish in healthy condition. So why do I say this is a failure? Participants also reported seeing very little effort by other sportsmen on the stream and, while that is great for we locals, it really does hurt the effort to restore a consumptive fishery in the Nehalem system. It seems since the catch and release rule has been in effect so long that a lot of people have just simply lost interest in fishing for Cutthroat trout.

"Why is it important to restore a consumptive fishery?" you may ask. First, the lack of interest in fishing is a concern; many youth in the local area started their fishing careers catching Cut-

throats in the past. With the lack of participation comes a lack in interest in our environment and the need for protection of our resources. Secondly, the need for the catch and release rule in the Nehalem watershed is simply not warranted. While there is a general lack of science with regards to Cutthroat trout, there is no compelling evidence that there is a shortage of Cutthroat trout; in fact the evidence would point to abundance. Third, the over-abundance of Cutthroat trout may very well be suppressing other salmonid fisheries in the Nehalem system. Cutthroat trout are voracious feeders on juvenile salmonids, especially the larger Cutthroat trout. By protecting these larger trout we may very well be causing a gauntlet of hungry mouths through which Coho, Steelhead and Chinook fry and fingerlings must pass on their journey through early life. Oh well, what a problem...too many fish and no competition.

I managed to get out to one of my secret streams this year. The stream looks a lot different from what I remember in the past. There was a lack of deeper holes and the streambed appeared heavily silted in. Yes, there has been logging activity in the area and with this activity have come the beavers. When the dense forest is logged next to the riparian zone, the resulting increase in sunlight spurs new tender growth that the beavers like. My secret stream had beaver dams all up and down it, the only problem was, they were all blown out. Beaver dams make for good fishing, but when they are aban-

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