

City manager hiring committee makes recommendation to council

After spending two Saturdays interviewing potential city managers, the hiring committee made its recommendation to the Banks City council at their December 12 meeting. Council agreed with the recommendation and asked Mayor Mike Lyda to extend an offer to Don Whitman, pending background and reference checks. The salary to be offered is \$54,000. Whitman has been a city manager for about 15 years and currently lives in Kansas.

Four candidates were interviewed by panelists from the council and the community. The questions were scored by each panelist and the scores averaged. Whitman was clearly the strongest candidate based on his scores.

Council looked at possible budget scenarios created by City Recorder Jolynn Becker that showed how police services could be funded at different levels before the end of the fiscal year. By drawing from the contingency fund and reallocating monies that were not going to be expended this year, police services can be paid for until the levy becomes effective. Council voted to fund police services for 50 hours per week.

Councilor Teri Branstitre, who is also the police commissioner, will contact Washington County Sheriff's Department and start a contract with them as soon as possible.

Last month, council looked at adopting a single resolution to handle hiring contractors in emergency situations and for jobs under \$5000. Council decided this month to make two separate resolutions, both of which passed as written.

Councilor Jason Short told council that parks committee president Christy Greagor had met with the Banks Community Foundation and that they are pursuing fundraising to install a play structure in Greenville Park. It is not yet determined how bidding and construction will be handled. Maintenance of the structure and how to transfer ownership of the project to the city are also being looked at. Councilor Pete Edison proposed that it was time for the city to take over the park from the Arbor Village Homeowner's Association. This option will be looked at again.

Fred Evers received an evaluation and council voted to increase his pay. His job description is being revised to reflect

his increased responsibilities. He has become certified in Water Distribution 2 and can now oversee the whole of the water system for the city.

Council also voted to increase Becker's pay.

Interior repairs and painting at the library have been completed, the council was told. Some of the roof repairs have been made and some of the exterior painting has been done. Contractors are waiting for another significant dry spell to complete the work.

Council reviewed a chronology and plan of action from the planning commission regarding the Maddie Kay Café. The Café continues to keep its garbage dumpster in a location that does not comply with what the planning commission had approved. The Café has also failed to screen equipment on the roof, as required by the commission. The planning commission intends to institute legal proceedings to enforce compliance, including legal action. Once the city has police services again, the citations can be filed.

Council approved a liquor license application from the OLCC made by Oriental Garden Inc. The restaurant will be located in the shopping center and is asking for a full on-prem-

ises sales license. James Kwong, the restaurant owner, will meet with the planning commission next month. The restaurant is scheduled to open in February.

Water rights lawyer Colm Moore updated council on progress made on the city's water rights. He recommends that the city hire a licensed hydrologist to look at ground wa-

ter levels because the state previously rejected a groundwater application from the city due to declining ground water levels.

The city should receive a certificate for their water right to the springs in the next few weeks. This will replace the current permit and make the water right permanent.



Another scene that was replayed all around the area after the recent storm is this one of linemen working on downed wires.

Washington County takes debris

From page 14

Storm debris is still impacting some rural roads. High water remains on some county roadways. Fog and icy conditions have challenged travelers in Washington County recently.

Roadway users are advised to proceed with extreme caution.

Updated road and lane closures are posted on the Washington County Roads Web site: www.wc-roads.com.

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