

Council meets without legal notice

A quorum of the Vernonia City Council met with the Vernonia Planning Commission in a study session on January 17 at the Scout Cabin. Mayor Sally Harrison, and Councilors Randy Parrow and Shirlee Daughtry were present, despite the fact that the city had not complied with legal notification laws required for public meetings. Perhaps in an attempt to meet requirements, the meeting was stated to be an emergency meeting. An emergency meeting can legally be held with less than 24-hour notice (however, no public notice was given) as long as the emergency reason is stated. This meeting was held with no notice and no statement of the emergency.

The meeting was to discuss the recovery process, the fact that the Corps of Engineers was preparing a draft flood map (since completed and

available for viewing) at the FEMA office in City Hall, initial discussions of 'substantial damage', flood development permits and mitigation.

It was stated that a flood plain permit should have been in use since 1988 for all development within flood prone areas and that this permit process will be implemented for all outbuildings, plantings, long term storage of equipment or materials and anything else on a site that can affect flood plain management or water movement.

This was a work session to prepare for the joint council meeting/public hearing on these issues that will be held, starting at 5:00 p.m., at the Vernonia Community Church today, February 7. At that meeting/hearing, council will be discussing adoption of ordinances addressing substantial damage and enacting flood damage prevention provisions. Anyone

Town hall topics include maps and mitigation

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in Louisiana. These units are manufactured homes that will be sited in Vernonia for six months to a year so those displaced have a place to stay while doing repairs, etc.

A new flood study has been completed that will help the city (and county for those outside city limits) determine which houses may need to be raised or otherwise be subject to hazard mitigation. The new flood maps showing the 'base' flood level (previously called the 100-year flood plain) is available at City Hall and there are FEMA representatives available to interpret it.

Residents were cautioned

whose home may cost 50 percent or more of Real Market Value to bring back to pre-flood condition may be affected by decisions made at the meeting/hearing.

not to start elevating houses before going through the Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC) or Hazard Mitigation processes. ICC refers to the \$30,000 for elevating homes (or moving or demolishing homes) available for those with flood insurance and is a second claim made through the insurance agent. Hazard Mitigation is handled through the State of Oregon.

Marc Farmer, General Manager of West Oregon Electric Cooperative (WOEC), told those present that it has been determined that WOEC cannot legally 'forgive' the amount of the electric bill in excess of the normal bill as they were hoping to do. Instead, members will be allowed to pay the 'normal' bill amount and carry the additional for a time period and WOEC is searching for grants and donations to help offset (see additional information in Power of

the People column in this issue).

Columbia County Commissioner Tony Hyde shared the good news that a prescription drug card, good for 20-40 percent discounts, is available for Columbia County residents. "Look for them," said Hyde.

A representative from Columbia Community Mental Health provided a 24-hour phone number (1-800-294-5211) for those needing someone to talk to. There are also people available at the Vernonia Community Learning Center on Mondays and Thursdays.

Vernonia School District 47J Board Chairperson Kim Wallace asked those present to, "Dream Big, Thing Big" about ideas for the schools and then email or share them with Superintendent Dr. Ken Cox or bring them to the next board meeting, February 14.

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Community Calendar

VERNONIA

Alcoholics Anonymous	Mondays & Thursdays	6:30 p.m., Head Start Bldg.
American Legion Post #119	2nd Thursday	7:00 p.m., 627 Adams Avenue
Arts & Crafts Society	2nd Thursday	2:00 p.m., City Library
Booster Club	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., VHS Library
Boy Scout Troop 201	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., Scout Cabin
Boy Scout Troop 860	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., LDS Church
Cemetery Beautification Comm.	2nd Thursday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
CERT	4th Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-3018
Chamber of Commerce	2nd Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-6081
Community Coalition	2nd Monday	12:30 p.m. School District Ofc.
Cub Scout Pack 201	Scout Cabin	For Info Call 503-429-4250
Friends of the Library	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Vernonia Library
Girl Scouts, Neighborhood 4-2		For Info Call 503-819-0143
Hands On Art Committee	1st & 3rd Thursdays	4:00 p.m., City Hall
Izaak Walton League	3rd Thursday	For location call 503-429-7193
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., Buckhorn Restaurant
Municipal Airport Committee	4th Thursday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Narcotics Anonymous	Saturdays	7:00 p.m., Head Start Bldg.
Pioneer Museum		For Info Call 503-429-3713
Public Works Committee	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Cares Directors		For Info call 503-429-1414
Vernonia City Council	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Community PTA	3rd Thursday	7:00 p.m., WGS Library
Vernonia Grange	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., Grange Hall
Vernonia Health Center	2nd Monday	6:00 p.m., 510 Bridge St.
Vernonia Learning Center	1st Wednesday	6:00 p.m., VLC
Vernonia Parks Committee	3rd Wednesday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Planning Comm.	1st & 3rd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Pride	3rd Thursday	1:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Ridge Riders	Last Thursday	7:00 p.m., Senior Center
Vernonia RFPD Board	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia School Board	2nd Thursday	6:00 p.m., District Office
Vernonia Sr. Center Board	2nd Friday	1:00 p.m., Senior Center
Vernonia Transfer Station	2nd & 4th Saturdays, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.	Behind VHS
Vern. Volunteer Ambulance Assoc.	1st Thursday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
WOEC Directors	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., WOEC

MIST-BIRKENFELD

M-BRFPD Board Business Mtg.	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-BRFPD Board Workshop	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Ambulance Drill	1st & 2nd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Fire Drill	1st & 2nd Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Helping Circle	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B SAR Drill	3rd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Volunteer Assoc.	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
Natal Grange	2nd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Natal Grange Hall
T.O.P.S.	Mondays	6:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
Upr Nehalem Watershed Council	For date call 429-2401	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station

BANKS

Alcoholics Anonymous	Fridays	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
Alcoholics Anonymous	Wednesdays	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
American Legion Post #90	2nd Tuesdays	7:30 p.m., Main Street Post
Banks City Council	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., City Hall
Banks Fire District #13	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Station 13
Banks Library Commission	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Banks Planning Commission	Last Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Banks School Board	2nd Monday	7:30 p.m., Jr. High Library
Banks Youth Group	Sundays, Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., UMC Youth Bldg.
Chamber of Commerce	1st Thursday	12:30 p.m., Fire District Office
CPO 14	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Friends of the Library	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., Brown Derby
Sunset Park Assoc.	3rd Wednesday	8:00 p.m., Gun Club
T.O.P.S.	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Administration Bldg.

COLUMBIA COUNTY (All meet in St. Helens unless otherwise noted.)

Board of Commissioners	Wednesdays	10 a.m., Courthouse
Citizens for Senior Justice	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Sunset Park Church
Columbia Soil & Water District	3rd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., NRCS, 2514 Sykes
County Fair Board	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Fairgrounds 4-H Bldg.
County Parks Commission	3rd Monday	6:00 p.m., 1054 Oregon St.
Mental Health Advisory Comm.	3rd Tuesday	10 a.m., 2nd Floor, Courthouse
Comm. on Children & Families	3rd Thursday	5:30 p.m. OSU Ext., 550 N. Hwy. 30
Local Alcohol & Drug Plann. Comm.	2nd Tuesday	3:00 p.m., 2nd Floor, Courthouse

Organizations and meeting dates not listed may be included by calling 429-9410 or by mail to The INDEPENDENT, 725 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR 97064.