

Audit report shows future fiscal problems; workshop on flood planning

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nouncement by Mayor Sally Harrison that no public comment would be allowed during this meeting due to the need to finish the agenda by 7:30 p.m. in order to start a workshop with Columbia County Commissioners, Columbia County Flood Relief and the council, to discuss establishing a Hazard Mitigation policy.

The first new item of business on the agenda was a report by Thomas Glogau, CPA, from the city's audit firm Grove, Mueller & Swank, P.C. and City Finance Director Dick Kline. Kline deferred to Glogau, who told council, "The reason the city exists is to do those things that citizens cannot do on their own, such as run a police department." Glogau went on the explain that city budgets are made up of two types of funds, government and proprietary. Government funds are subsidized by property and other

taxes, while proprietary are essentially self-supporting (such as water and sewer funds). The summary of government activities on page 12 of the audit, according to Glogau, showed that \$1,780,000 came in to the city and \$1,900,000 went out but that \$404,000 was transferred in from proprietary funds leaving a net of \$300,000. He ended that part saying, "the General Fund is in some financial stress."

Glogau then explained the business (proprietary) type funds on page 14 of the audit, saying that some of this money was used for infrastructure so the decrease in the funds was somewhat offset by an increase in the city's assets. Looking just at normal operations, \$1 million came in and \$900,000 went out, which would leave enough for this year's debt service. But, due to the city using \$2.9 million this year for Phase I of the sewer system, next year's debt

service will require \$624,000 (instead of the \$284,800 this year) and by June of 2009 the debt service will be \$824,000. Glogau went on to say, "So all else being equal, if you had \$100,000 extra this year and need \$500,000 more by 2009, the leftover amount doesn't look so good." The difference can be made up by finding efficiencies or raising rates, Glogau said, and, "It's the citizens' responsibilities to pool together and cover these costs." His final statement was that there were seven journal entries he did not expect and three that were to clear up previous issues and that, "The books were in pretty good shape this year."

In other business, council;
• approved liquor license renewals for Cedar Side Inn and Black Bear Coffee Company,
• approved the appointment of Dan Brown and Heather Lewis as Flood Plain Administrators so they can interpret the

FEMA maps for citizens,
• heard that city employee Bree Eckertson had asked for and received a donation of 1,000 pounds of grass seed from Burlingham Seeds. The seed will be used at Spencer Park.

At 7:30 p.m. council began a workshop began with County Commissioners Tony Hyde and Rita Bernhardt, Columbia County Flood Relief (Jim Tierney gave the presentation). Lots of information was given and Tierney suggested the decision on Hazard Mitigation directions needed to be along the lines of whether council wanted to take a minimalist or an interventionist approach. The interventionist approach would cause more homes to be considered 'substantially damaged' than can be funded and would be less politically positive, while the other approach would not safeguard as many from the next flood. The suggestion was also made that a direction that results in

most or all of the flooded homes being moved or raised over the next 75 years would, in the long run, get this community out of flood problems.

Tierney acknowledged that the schools, Blue Heron apartments and the sewer ponds created conditions that increased water backup into the neighborhoods surrounding Rock Creek and that the junction of Vernonia Lake with the Nehalem River created a situation that increased the water level on the tree streets and Mist Dr.

A number of funding sources that may help with flood mitigation were also discussed. No action was taken at the workshop; council will need to consider which approach to take.

The next meeting will be a study session with council and staff on March 24 at 7:00 p.m. The next regular council meeting will be at City Hall on April 7, at 7:00 p.m.

Community Calendar

VERNONIA

Alcoholics Anonymous	Monday	6:30 p.m., 410 North Street
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., 410 North Street
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.