

Banks Council told Banks Municipal Court could start in December

An ordinance establishing an election ordinance was declared an emergency at the October 14 Banks City Council Meeting. With no candidate on the ballot for the city of Banks mayor position and the rules for write-in candidates differing from those nominated for elective offices, the city adopted the emergency ordinance to ensure that the guidelines are equal.

Greg Stone, from the Citizens for Banks Schools, gave a presentation on Bond Measure 34-157, the Banks School District Proposed Solution to provide safe classrooms, add additional classrooms to meet state testing requirements, fire and life safety systems to meet current code and security of student safety, and additional physical education space for student education and community use. The geographic territory of the Banks School District covers 450 square miles.

"This is not a knee-jerk decision," Stone reiterated throughout his presentation, but has been in the works for two years. The \$25.5 million bond measure is "not just a desire or whim," he emphasized, "the State of Oregon went around and evaluated all the schools – Banks Jr. High School rated a minus one on the scale of one through ten."

Councilor Pete Edison interjected that the plan is pretty cool. Student parking, bus turn around, and parent pick up are away from the new learning plaza so the campus gets no

traffic – at no time does a student cross with vehicle traffic while on the campus. Edison noted.

If the ballot measure passes, the construction is slated to commence July 2009, with an estimated completion date of fall 2010. Stone commented that when he was in school, he had a new school built for him and it is now time to build one for our children.

Tours of the school facilities, including a walkthrough of the bowels of the buildings, are available on Thursdays by contacting Superintendent Marv Ott.

Mayor Teri Branstitre encouraged the community to vote on this issue even if registered voters do not vote on other measures – Branstitre reminded folks that they can pick and choose issues on the ballot when they are voting – qualified voters are not required to vote on each and every issue.

A report on preparations for the Banks Municipal Court noted that the court system software is ready and a municipal judge has been appointed. Council approved a resolution authorizing the court to interact with the state courts system and the Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS). Branstitre asked what the projected time period is for the court to be up and running. City staff believe that it can be operational by December or January, with court on the third Wednesday of every month.

Planning Commission Liaison

Sam VanDyke gave an update of issues facing the planning commission. A big issue is difficulty in making up a quorum. VanDyke is one of the commissioners who resides outside the city limits and, currently, is not a voting member because of the way the planning commission ordinance is written. According to VanDyke, the commission held a hearing on September 30 to consider ordinance revisions regarding voting membership and professional restrictions.

In a public hearing, staff presented the planning commission's draft revised ordinance, which would expand the voting make-up of the commission to seven and permit up to two planning commissioners to reside outside the city limits, but within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and the Banks Urban Reserve area. With vacancies on the planning commission, the revised ordinance would make it easier to have a quorum at commission meetings. After closing the hearing, council deliberated and held the first reading of the amended ordinance.

Council approved a resolution to adopt an identity protection policy that complies with

Senate Bill 583, the Oregon Identity Theft Protection Act (OITPA). The law requires that a policy be in place by November 1. The objective of OITPA is to safeguard personal information. It includes protection for Social Security numbers, notification of security breach, and proper disposal of personal information.

At the annual meeting of the League of Oregon Cities, the City of Banks was presented with two gold medal awards, for the city's safety record and wellness promotion, from City County Insurance Services. – one of six cities to receive two gold medal awards. City Manager Jim Hough commented that other cities received bronze and silver awards, but only six cities received two prestigious gold medal awards.

City Recorder Jolynn Becker administered the oath of office to returning City Councilor Ryan Birr and to Washington County Deputy Sheriff Kevin Mitcham.

Deputy Tran appeared to report on police activity for the city for the month of September. According to Tran, there were 33 calls for service within the city, and four arrests; 31 traffic stops resulted in six cita-

tions. Tran introduced Deputy Mitcham who will also be working in Banks. Mitcham is part of the Sheriff's Department search and rescue team, so "if you get lost within the city, I won't help you, I'll call Mitcham," Tran joked.

Council President Pete Edison happily noted increased Banks Library usage, with circulation of 4,659 for September 2008, up 28.45 percent over September of 2007. It was noted that the increase may be a result of the economic downturn.

In other business, Council adopted:

- The first-ever Employee Handbook, an Ordinance amending the title of the Banks Municipal Code, a Resolution endorsing the U.S. Conference of Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, and an Ordinance establishing an election Ordinance.

Council also appointed Stephanie Jones as Banks' representative to the Washington County Cooperative Library Services Executive Board.

The next city council meeting will be November 11 at 7:30 p.m. in City Hall.



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