

Council adjusts water rate for multi-unit dwellings

At the February 17 Vernonia City Council meeting, council again looked at the handling of water bills for multi-unit dwellings with a single meter. Interim City Administrator Jim Johnson showed council bills from two such units and the effect of the change on those bills. Johnson told council that the effect of the water bill changes on residential customers resulted in an increase of about 25 percent. Council approved a change for multi-unit dwellings on a single meter to \$226.00 per month for the first 2,000 gallons of water used per unit, plus \$1.25 for each additional 1,000 gallons of water used. Council also added another category for mobile-home parks on one master meter. These changes will decrease the impact on these customers so they are closer to

the approximately 25 percent increase other customers received in November. The category changes are retroactive to November.

Councilor Randy Parrow raised an issue from the last council meeting, saying that the \$8,700 dollars saved when Interim Chief of Police Mike Kay got donated cameras, rather than the ICOP cameras budgeted, should go back into the general fund for reallocation, rather than being used by the police department for other needs. Kay responded that some of that money was for the retrofitting the cameras, but that he and Johnson would provide an itemized list of needs to council at the next meeting.

Kay told council that the \$125,000 grant that the Vernonia Drug Free Coalition was awarded will fund the equiva-

lent of a one-and-a-half person position and would be used to offset police time spent on drug prevention and intervention services. Any time used from this fund will be accounted for by separated hours used on timecards so the money can be correctly allocated. Kay also reported that OSSOM (Operation Student Safety On the Move) has been restarted in Vernonia with 43 students joining.

In other business, council; • heard from City Planning Consultant Carole Connell and Planning Commissioner Dan Brown on the Planning Commission's goals and discussed the best ways for the Planning Commission and the council to work together.

The next council meeting is scheduled for March 2, at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Site selection criteria questioned

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the economy in Vernonia, where many residents are living in homes still unrepaired from the December 2007 flood, and others are still displaced, living in FEMA trailers or in other locations.

Among those asking questions about site selection was Dick Titus, who said he had consultants in the fields of architecture, engineering and construction look at the Knott Street site, one of the locations on the original, long list. His consultants calculated that it would be less expensive than the others, Titus said, and suggested that it be looked at again. Asked by the school board chair, Kim Wallace, if he was representing the property owner, Titus said "No, I'm not representing anyone except myself."

Discussion ensued, with questions and responses from

the audience, members of the site selection committee and the school board about site criteria and whether Knott Street should get another look. As the questions subsided, board member Ernie Smith presented a motion to review the Knott Street site, but the motion died for lack of a second. Saying "I don't represent the state, I represent local people," Smith kept pressing the issue. Wallace interrupted, saying the discussion had ended, and a clearly frustrated Smith left the meeting.

Tomorrow, February 20, the site recommendation will be presented to the full Oregon Solutions Team in a meeting at Portland State University.

The information will then be presented at a Town Hall meeting sponsored by the school district, to be held Monday, March 2, at 7:00 p.m. in the middle school cafeteria.

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	2nd Wednesday	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	2nd Thursday	2:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Ridge Riders	Last Thursday	7:00 p.m., Senior Center
Vernonia RFPD Board	2nd Tuesday	6:00 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, 3rd & 4th Tuesday	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	1:00 p.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 Tuesday	Times vary, 1054 Oregon St.
Mental Health Advisory Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211
Comm. on Children & Families	3rd Thursday	5:30 p.m. OSU Ext., 505 N. Hwy. 30
Local Alcohol & Drug Plann. Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211

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.