

# School Board splits on site plan vote

Banks school board business meeting May 11 was only 23 minutes long, including presentations by elementary students. Heather Ferrigan's first grade students performed two songs with choreography as a debut performance of their Talent Show act. Sixth grade teacher Shannon Dotson told the board that she had assigned the topic "Which alternative energy source is best for Banks?" After studying a wide variety of sources, students Courtney Ragsdale and Kinsly Rowan wrote convincing essays which Dotson read to the board, about the future use of methane from local cows. Dotson told the board that these two students convinced her to change *her* mind (she previously favored geothermal), the assignment goal. Additionally, sixth grader Oteka Todd read a moving poem she wrote about "The Place That I Remember".

Prior to the business meeting, the four members of the board present (Angi Duyck was unable to attend) revisited two items previously approved by the board: the school calendar and the decision to hold off spending money to complete a facility site plan. The workshop concluded with an executive session to discuss key personnel.

Will Moore brought up the subject of the site plan, saying that he knew of three examples, including the softball association, that have money and

volunteers ready to begin construction. The board has requested that these privately funded facilities be included in the facility site plan, but has postponed completion of the plan. Moore said that, because the money to finish the plan could come from the Buxton fund, there was no reason not to spend it, as it has no effect on the school operating budget. A rather heated discussion ensued, with chairman Duann Lundsten saying he "can't fire a teacher and build a shed at the same time" and Morris replying that "not every single thing [needs to be] tied to the gloom and doom of the district." Board members were split, with Lundsten and Nordholm supporting the decision to postpone the plan, while Morris and Kathy Edison favor spending \$7500 to finish the drawings. The topic will be placed on the agenda for the next board meeting.

Every decade or so, Labor Day falls on September 7th. Schools in Oregon have traditionally started after Labor Day. Since the state began mandating the number of required instructional hours, beginning after Labor Day extends the school year well into the middle of June. Nordholm asked the board look at that decision again, in response to public inquiries he received, though he was unable to attend the April meeting. Other board members and administrative staff present confirmed that all had conver-

sations with students and parents about the problems for families and the beginning of fall sports season when school starts after Labor Day.

Nordholm asked the administrative team to explain what had tipped their recommendation in favor of an earlier start. High school principal Jim Foster said that ending the school year on June 18 (starting after Labor Day) would make it difficult for year-end reports, and that it could conflict with teachers' ability to begin summer term continuing education classes. Shelley Mitchell, student services director, said that the early start calendar had two more full five-day weeks than the late start calendar. Since the calendar adoption in April, close-by districts have adopted a calendar beginning after Labor Day. Foster said that ending in mid-June conflicted with FFA state competition and other possible state or national level competitions. Board consensus was that beginning the school year after Labor Day was in the best interest of students, and agreed to change the calendar to the later start.

The board revised the budget calendar, with the budget committee's first meeting on May 28. The board may also call a special meeting for the

public hearing on the 2009-2010 budget. Questions about these public meetings may be

directed to the district office at 503-324-8591.

# Council reviews Depot St. parking

From page 12

A second reading was held regarding an amendment to the city's ordinance identifying and regulating dangerous dogs.

Hough told council that, as part of the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has set aside five million dollars for a Small Cities Economic Stimulus Program. Council earlier this year identified the repaving of Oak Way as a high priority transportation project. Council approved a grant application for the ODOT program.

The Transportation Development Tax (TDT) is in place and scheduled to begin on July 1, 2009. In order to participate in the collection and use of the TDT, the city council must adopt a resolution authorizing the administration of the tax. Using a template drafted by Washington County, Council adopted the necessary resolution.

In response to recently restored No Parking signs on the south side of Depot Street, Pastor Brian Shimer of Banks Community United Church has

requested that the parking restrictions be rescinded. After conferring with the Banks Fire District about applicable fire codes regarding street width, the city found that four parking spaces could be created if parallel parking is permitted on the wide end of the south side of Depot Street, but that the narrow part should remain a no parking area on the south side and the curb should be painted yellow. Council confirmed the parking restrictions on Depot Street, but authorized parking on the south wide portion of the street.

Council discussed three Charter amendments. A decision regarding annexation procedures was tabled for next month's meeting; allowing the mayor to vote was declined 4-2; and changing the mayoral term from four years to two years was adopted unanimously.

The next City Council meeting will be held June 9 at 7:30 p.m. in City Hall.

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