

Council decides bid process for demolition of damaged homes

The September 21 Vernonia City Council meeting started with a public hearing about bids for demolition of homes being bought out as a result of the 2007 flood. The hearing discussion concerned the type of bid process to be used; a competitive proposal rather than a competitive bid process. That will allow the city to look for a contractor who can offer efficiencies by using one site for debris and salvage from multiple demolitions. This will also allow for more speedy demolitions as, according to Dan Brown, of the Unmet Needs Committee, all the demolitions will need to be completed in 90 days and there will probably be seven homes in the first group to be torn down. The council unanimously agreed to "accept the findings of the public hearing" and adopt the bidding process indicated.

After the hearing, Mayor Sal-

ly Harrison presented 'tokens of the city's appreciation' to Jeff Burch for working for four and a half years as public works supervisor with no director, to Sergeant Mike Kay for stepping in as interim police chief and "doing a magnificent job" and to city employee Joann Glass who "has worked many hours since the flood and been indispensable". The Mayor then gave a bouquet of flowers to Heidi Burch (Jeff Burch's wife) in thanks for "putting up with all Jeff's call-outs" away from his family.

Mayor Harrison read a submission from Dawn Carr saying how much she appreciated the services of emergency personnel in Vernonia after her sons accident and said she, "feels very secure with police and hats off to Kay and Conner."

City Administrator Bob Young handed over the keys to a state surplus truck to Public

Works Director Bob Ruhl and Supervisor Jeff Burch. Young said Mike Kay helped the city get this truck.

Chief of Police Frank Grace told council that the City of Cornelius had donated a Crown Vic to the city and it will be used as an unmarked police car. Grace went on to tell council that at the year's first football game there was only one minor in possession of alcohol arrest and he attributes the reduction to the visible police presence and their work with the schools.

In other business, council; • approved Scott Laird's request of \$400 from Parks Committee contingency as "Casey (Mitchell) is planning to get fish in there (Vernonia Lake) for Salmon Festival."

• approved the second reading of Ordinance 862 approving the city's urban growth boundary expansion to include the new schools property.

• heard that Young has now interviewed two potential interim financial directors to replace Susan Spicer-Pond.

The next city council meeting will be held at City Hall on October 5, starting at 7:00 p.m.

No change in 2010 minimum wage

Oregon Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian announced, on September 16, that the state's minimum wage will remain \$8.40 next year. Due to a decline of 1.48% in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from August 2008 to August 2009, the minimum wage will hold steady for the first time since Oregon voters enacted Ballot Measure 25 in 2002.

"Under the circumstances, a steady minimum wage is good for Oregon's businesses and working people," said Commissioner Avakian. "While the economy still struggles, workers will be able to continue taking care of their families while maintaining their purchasing power and contributing to the

recovery. At the same time, employers who are in difficult financial situations can breathe a little easier because their labor costs will remain constant."

Oregon minimum wage law, codified in ORS 653.025, requires an annual adjustment based on inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) is charged with adjusting the minimum wage for inflation every September, rounded to the nearest five cents. The law specifically ties Oregon's minimum wage to increases in the CPI, leaving no option for a reduced wage when the CPI declines.

See Minimum Wage, page 21

Community Calendar

VERNONIA

Alcoholics Anonymous	Mondays	6:30 p.m., 410 North Street
Alcoholics Anonymous	Thursdays (Big Book Study)	7:00 p.m., 410 North Street
American Legion Post #119	2nd Thursday	7:00 p.m., 627 Adams Avenue
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
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	1:00 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	9:00 a.m., Main Fire Station
Upr Nehalem Watershed Council	For date call 429-0869	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	6:00 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.