

Old and new Vernonia council members and mayor change places

The Vernonia City Council that met on December 20 had a very different make-up than the one that met on January 3. Outgoing members Mayor Sally Harrison, Councilor Cindy Ball and Councilor Catherine Helmer all received certificates of appreciation for their service, at their final meeting. Incoming Mayor Josette Mitchell, and new councilors Willow Burch and Marilyn Nicks, all took oaths of office at their first seating on January 3.

An amendment to extend Bill Haack's contract as Pro Tem City Administrator to June 30, 2011, was discussed and approved at both meetings. At the December meeting, the outgoing council voted to approve the amendment but for a few minutes it looked iffy. When Harrison asked for a motion there was silence. On her second request of, "Do I hear a motion," Councilor Randy Par-

row made the motion which was then seconded and carried. On January 3, the incoming council voted to approve (with Councilor Marilyn Nicks abstaining without explanation) the amendment. The new council had to ratify the amendment because of a provision that an outgoing council cannot bind a contract for an incoming council.

In December Council heard an update from Ben Fousek on the city's GIS project. Fousek reported that there is a possibility that FEMA may use the city's GIS for flood mapping, and that might lower the flood insurance rates by 20 percent.

Councilor Kevin Hudson asked Haack to provide an update on the contract for the police department's K9 officer, at the next meeting.

Haack told council he will be working with the city's financial director to find funds for some

council training and the hiring process for a new City Administrator. More information will be provided at the next council meeting.

In other business, council:

- Approved the second reading of Ordinance 871, making some changes to the handling of the water utility.

- Approved the procedure outlined by the Public Works Committee to move towards hiring someone to do a rate study of water, sewer and system development charges.

- Appointed Kevin Hudson as the 2011 President of the Council. (Council President presides when the Mayor is absent.)

- Approved a liquor license for the New Hong Kong Restaurant.

- Okayed a resolution to transfer funds within the Airport fund to allow the purchase of gravel for the road to Airport

Park.

- Heard from Interim Chief of Police Mike Conner that New Year's Eve was uneventful; the only activity was a couple of traffic stops.

Utility rate studies needed to help assure timely loan repayments

The City of Vernonia Public Works Committee, the City Engineer, and the Interim City Administrator have worked together the past few months to look closely at current utility rates and weigh the need for modification of the rate structure.

Prior to the 2007 flood, the Vernonia City Council and former City Administrator Dick Kline, formed the Vernonia Public Works Committee. It was anticipated at that time that the Public Works Committee would make regular reports

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 18 (due to a holiday on Jan. 17) at City Hall, and will start with a work session at 6:00 p.m. before the regular 7:00 p.m. meeting.

to the public about the City's public works systems and the utility rates that pay for them. It is hoped that these reports can provide the public with some of the complex information that the engineers and the City Council must digest before making decisions that impact utility rates.

From the beginning, the sewer project has been the 800 pound gorilla in the room. For most of the last two decades Vernonia has been under an enforcement order from Ore-

See Rates on page 5

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., Library
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
Izaak Walton League	3rd Thursday	For location call 503-429-7193
Kiwanis Club	2nd & 4th Wednesday	6:30 p.m., New Hong Kong
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., New Hong Kong
Municipal Airport Committee	1t Wednesday	6:30 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 Garden Club	2nd Tuesday	1:30 p.m., Vernonia Library
Vernonia Grange	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., Grange Hall
Vernonia Health Center	3rd Thursday	6:30 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	10:00 a.m., Senior Center
Vernonia Transfer Station	2nd & 4th Saturdays, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.	Behind VHS
Vern. Volunteer Ambulance Assoc.	1st 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	Friday	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
Alcoholics Anonymous	Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
American Legion Post #90	2nd Tuesday	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	Sunday, Wednesday	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
Everybody's Hometown Band	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., BHS Music Room
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.	Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Administration Bldg.

COLUMBIA COUNTY (All meet in St. Helens unless otherwise noted.)

Board of Commissioners	Wednesday	10:00 a.m., Courthouse
Citizens for Senior Justice	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Sunset Park Church
Columbia Comm Mental Health	1st Tuesday	5:30 p.m., 58646 McNulty Way
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