

Vernonia City Administrator Haack takes helm for first full meeting

The Vernonia City Council meeting, on September 19, saw Bill Haack seated for the whole meeting for the first time as a regular City Administrator, rather than an interim.

The meeting started with a presentation by Aaron Miller, principal of Washington Grade School, on opportunities for the school to work with the city on city enhancement projects as part of the schools Rural Sustainability Programs. These programs will include native plant restorations, tree planting with the Upper Nehalem Watershed Council, and will take "a little load off the city" maintenance-wise. Miller will work with Haack on specific projects as they come up.

George Bellingham of the Vernonia Ridge Riders spoke from the floor, asking permission to place three poles at the driveway entrance to the horse arena in Anderson Park. The

poles will hold signs listing their events and stop people from entering the area during events. Mayor Josette Mitchell asked Bellingham to obtain a flood plain permit and talk to the City Planner about the plans.

The council approved a \$950 expenditure by the Vernonia Police Department for a new computer system that will hook-up to the Portland Police system, provide better information, and allow for the needed reporting to the state.

Council approved an agreement with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) that gives 15 feet of right-of-way to ODOT to expand Bridge Street for the new school. The right-of-way will reduce the front lawn of the Vernonia Pioneer Museum.

A subcommittee of the Airport Committee had asked for approval to remove some trees

at the airport. Council decided to send it back to the committee for a more detailed work plan before making a decision.

Haack reported to council on a meeting he had with DEQ, along with the city engineer, on the necessary upgrades for wastewater treatment. He said DEQ steered him to a plan that would use gravel/sand exfiltration from lagoon 3. If feasible, this direction might save \$2 to 3 million dollars and eliminate the need to have another lagoon built. Additionally, the city will look at anaerobic bacteria additions that may increase the efficiency of the lagoons.

A new checklist for home occupancy was put forward by Haack to handle a problem that is showing up when flooded homes go into foreclosure and new owners haven't been given information about the need to elevate, move or tear down those homes. The checklist will

help assure that, when these homeowners come in to get utility service, they are made aware of the other items required to meet FEMA floodplain

requirements.

The next regular meeting of city council will be October 3, at 7:00 p.m., at city hall.

DEQ fines NW Natural in Col. Co.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality issued a \$4,500 penalty to Northwest Natural Gas Co. for discharging wastewater to Eilertsen Creek in Columbia County without a permit. The discharge occurred during a natural gas pipeline replacement construction project along U.S. Highway 30 this spring.

During a May 2011 inspection of the pipeline construction site, DEQ observed turbid, sediment-laden construction dewatering wastewater from the site flowing into Eilertsen Creek. Discharge of wastewater from construction sites is authorized under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination

System 1200-C general permit and may occur only within specified permit limits. Northwest Natural Gas did not have such a permit for its construction work and thus was in violation of state law.

Turbidity in construction dewatering wastewater can harm aquatic life and other beneficial uses of public water when discharged. The permit requires permittees to implement control measures and monitor wastewater runoff in order to protect water quality and monitor the amount of pollutants discharged.

Northwest Natural Gas Co. did not appeal the penalty and has paid it in full.

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 Tuesday	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 Tuesdays	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	7:00 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 Plan. Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211