

Vernonia council is heading for decision on the city's water rates

At Vernonia City Council meetings on February 21 and March 5, two appointments to committees were made. Jim Buxton and Mark Brown were both appointed to the Emergency Preparedness Committee.

The new Ordinance 880 on city committees received its second reading and became effective, at the February 21 meeting. The ordinance outlines the composition of committees, how they are set up, how many members number, the makeup of members, officers, and how committees in-

teract with the council. At the March 5 meeting, Resolution 10-12 specified a few differences for the Emergency Preparedness Committee.

In other business, council:

- Approved a request to FEMA asking that the asphalt at the old West Oregon Electric Coop site, at Maple St. and Adams Ave., be left in place for parking purposes.

- Discussed the recommendation from the Public Works Committee to adopt water rates based on a multi-meter system with a base rate, and a flat rate for additional gallons of water

over the 2,000 included in the base rate. There was discussion of whether the recommendation included approval of a proposed tier structure or not, but since it was not specifically mentioned by the committee, the majority of council would like to use the model without tiers. Jim Tierney stated he felt committee did approve tiers and council was not accepting the committee's recommendation and that Councilor Bruce McNair was "pushing" for his belief. McNair said he was concerned because one member of the committee who had done

a lot of work on the study was unable to attend the meeting where the recommendation was sent to council and apologized to Tierney, saying, "I didn't serve you well and I apologize," saying he got carried away with what he saw as an unfairness to that one committee member. Council then agreed to a workshop and meeting on March 12 to finalize this issue, and asked the city to prepare more data for them.

- Adopted Resolution 06-12 making revisions to the city's personnel policy handbook.
- Heard a presentation by

Dave Fuller, a Columbia County Sheriff's Deputy, who is running for Sheriff in the next election.

- Approved Resolutions 07-12 and 08-12, primarily house-keeping issues necessary to continue being able to use Community Development Block Grant funds.

The next meeting will be March 12, at 7:00 p.m. on water rates. The next regular council meeting will be March 19, at 7:00 p.m., at city hall.

Vernonia amateur radio operators receive new ham equipment

On Monday, March 5, Dave Morrisson, ARES Emergency Coordinator and RECES Radio

Officer, delivered an amateur radio donation to the Vernonia Fire Station. The fire station

houses the Vernonia Amateur Radio (ham) station. ham radio continues to be a valuable re-

source during power outages and emergencies in Columbia County.

Morrisson wrote a successful federal grant and brought the first delivery to Vernonia, where it was handed off to one of the ham operators, Tom Moss. Jim Buxton is currently the primary Vernonia ham operator and is on the Vernonia Emergency Preparedness Committee. The grant allowed for the purchase of a VHF Go-Kit (a self-contained unit), a long range radio and other ancillary equipment. This is the first time Vernonia has had the

long range capability. Additional similar setups will be going to Clatskanie and Mist-Birkenfeld.

"We have been trying to put amateur radio equipment in each of the Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) in the county and this is the starting point," Morrison stated. He went on to say this equipment isn't in any way a replacement for "all the good work done by 9-1-1 Communications. It's just more potential, even 9-1-1 has ham radio equipment available."



Left to right; Dave Morrisson, the ham radio equipment he got for Columbia County by writing a successful grant, and Vernonia ham radio operator Tom Moss who accepted the donation on March 5 at the Vernonia Fire Station.

Road fixes get help from Sen. Johnson

From page 4

tions to improve safety in 18 areas, ranging from physical hazards near the road to winter driving hazards, however there was never clearly identified funding for these improvements.

Senate Bill 1543 reallocates excess funds from the 2009 Jobs and Transportation Act to projects of regional importance, including a \$9.5 million

improvement to Cornelius Pass Road and an allocation of \$5 million to complete the Sellwood Bridge Interchange.

"This legislation is particularly important considering the Federal Highway Administration's report on needed safety improvements to Cornelius Pass," said Johnson. "We shouldn't wait for another tragic loss of life before we fix what is widely considered one the

most dangerous stretches of road in Multnomah County."

Johnson expressed particular appreciation for Senator Bruce Starr (R-Hillsboro) for his leadership on SB 1543. Cornelius Pass Road runs through both Senate Districts 16 and 15 and their joint work on this important bill is a testament to bipartisan cooperation. SB 1543 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

Meyer's Auto Body, Inc

"Give us a crack at it"

503-429-0248
493 Bridge St, Vernonia, OR