



## WEEKLY DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

OCTOBER 05, 2014

### ADMINISTRATION / UTILITY BILLING

- 4 New sewer/ water accounts for the month of September and 1 for the month of October
- Pertaining to the Water/Sewer bills issued on September 27, (and that were due on October 10<sup>th</sup>) a Late Fee will be added (as per City policy) on Tuesday, October the 14<sup>th</sup>. Subsequently, should the bills still remain outstanding, PW crew will proceed with Shut offs on October 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- A letter was sent out with the utility bills to residents that in the past have left town in the winter and been charged a monthly fee of \$5. The City Council adopted Ordinance 825 implementing new options for "snow birds". The letter explained that the resident can either have their water turned off while they are away paying \$35 to have it shut off and \$35 to have it turned back on. Also, they can simply leave the water on and pay the regular base rate of \$131.00. During staff meeting, and while reviewing the process, staff raised the question on how to address the repo homes and empty lots that have been paying the 5.00 inactive fees as demanded by the older policy (most of these meters are currently off, and the city charges the fee to read the meters and charge the administrative fees) and if these should be considered in the same way as we consider snow birds accounts.. Currently we are notifying banks that owns these homes, in order to receive payments of utilities.

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

- September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – October 02<sup>nd</sup>, 2014 the Vernonia Police Department responded to (52) calls for service. This slower week has allowed staff an opportunity to catch up on other priorities.
- Columbia County 911 (CCOM) tracks calls for service and incidents for Columbia County Law Enforcement and well as other agencies from July 01<sup>st</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year. According to their records, the Vernonia Police Department (VPD) had a total of (2761) Calls for Service/Incidents during that time period. In addition, (VPD) made (391) Traffic Stops.
- Our Department is still working on the illegal dumping / trespass case that occurred at the transfer station. As of October 01<sup>st</sup>, 2014, one of the four individuals identified has paid 1/4<sup>th</sup> the amount of the bill. Upon completion of the investigation, the case will be forwarded to the Columbia County District Attorney's Office for Review.

- Staff has received a few nuisance complaints in the 400 Block of A Street. The Nuisance Violation process has been started on the two residences and they will be given until October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014 to correct the problem(s). If the problems go uncorrected, the Police Department will issue citations to the person responsible for the properties.



- **PATROL VEHICLE UPDATE:** The City should be finalizing the financing this week. If all goes as planned, the vehicles will be at (ERS) in North Plains on Monday having Police Radio's and Mobile Mounts removed and ours installed. (VPD) will provide more details when we get closer to putting the vehicles in Service.
- The Department has been working for some time at drafting policies updates. The project is still currently in progress. Unfortunately, other priorities have not allowed time to work on it much this week.
- As previously reported the department has been accepting applications for Reserve Police Officers. As of October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, we still have only received two applications. Since funds were only available for two positions, we will stop taking applications at the end of the week and schedule testing for the two applicants.
- The new Police Department Webpage was activated on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. We are still making some adjustments and are working out some bugs. You can review the page at [vpd.vernonia-or.gov](http://vpd.vernonia-or.gov). If you have any suggestions on ways we can improve the page, please send us an email (Either at the Police Department or at City Hall).

## FINANCE / HUMAN RESOURCES

- Auditors from Grove, Mueller & Swank were here on Monday and Tuesday to perform the annual audit of financial statements and procedures. Staff was able to provide all requested information and the audit went smoothly. We should have a draft of the audit report by months end.
- Finance Administrator prepared semi-monthly payroll and accounts payables. Check runs are done twice each month for payroll and accounts payable on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Finance Administrator checked in with Drew Davis (USDA) to get clarification regarding paperwork that needs to be processed for the loan the City is receiving to finish the Waste Water project. A loan resolution will need to be adopted by the City Council in order to receive USDA funds. A resolution was created and will be presented to Council on October 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Finance Administrator also prepared the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Waste Water Treatment Plant Project for Council approval. This will also be presented on the 6<sup>th</sup>.
- We received three applications for the open Librarian position this week. The position advertisement is scheduled to be open for one more week (Until October 12). We are optimistic that there will be a good pool of candidate to choose from.

## PUBLIC WORKS

- Public Works staff has begun locating water meters for the ground truthing project this week and will be continuing through next week as time allows. This job was started by volunteers from the Public Works Committee so that all the relevant information relevant to all water meters in town are properly entered into the new billing system. The staff is recording meter serial numbers, meter size and location.
- Modifications to the raw water pump station are still in the works as time didn't allow completion of this project last week. The pumps currently function, but one of them does not stay primed after being shut off.
- Public Works staff assisted the airport by delivering rock from the lake to the Vernonia Airport. They plan to have volunteers help spread the gravel to have a level spot for the pilots lounge. The pilots lounge is one of the old FEMA trailers that was listed as surplus by the County after the Flood Relief Center moved out of town.
- A water leak was repaired on a customer water service located on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Public Work staff (Kari and James... our temporary employees) took care of the project . The leak was caused by a rusted out galvanized fitting.
- Public Works crews will continue to flush and inspect sewer main lines next week as time allows. Also on our priority list is the task to begin the locating of water valves, exercising them and making sure they are accessible to use when needed. These two project swill resume next week. Open ditch and culvert cleaning will also be occurring in the next couple of weeks to prepare for the coming rains.
- Public Works Foreman will be on vacation the week of October 6 – 10, returning to work on October 13<sup>th</sup>.

## PLANNING / BUILDING

- The Building Department has given a final approval for the Monument that was placed at Spencer Park.
- The City Council will be making a decision, at the City Council Public Hearing October 6, 2014, on the recommendation from Planning Commission for the Zone Change for the Lincoln Grade School property.

## LIBRARY

- The "Book Discussion Group" met on September 29, 2014. The group discussed the book "A Town Like Alice" and had a lively discussion about it. The next book the group will discuss will be "A Tale For The Time Being" by Ruth Ozeki. The book discussion group always has room for more people wanting to read the book of the month and join in on a discussion about the book once a month. The next meeting of the Book Discussion Group will be October 27, 2014 at 5:30 at the Library.
- The preschoolers enjoyed story time with Nancy on September 29, 2014. The books about pumpkins were enjoyed by the children and parents alike. Five preschoolers attended story time. October 6, 2014 is the next story time at 10:30.
- October 8, 2014, is "Baby Time – Story Time". Come have fun with Shannon Romtvedt . Library staff is organizing different activities such storytelling, bubbles play, songs, rhymes and other plays and games. The activities are mostly focused on kids between the age of 0 and 3, but older children are welcome too (bring along an older brother, sister or friend). The "Baby Time – Story Time". Group meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 11:00 – 11:30 am.
- The Stamp Club meets once a month. Stamp Club is for young and old alike to get together and share knowledge about the hobby of stamp collecting. First Thursday of every month at 4:30 is when the club gets together.

- We would like to thank the Friends of the Library for buying a storage cabinet for art supplies: "Thank you very much ...it was very kind and gracious of you...and greatly appreciated". The cabinet should arrive soon. The Friends of the Library will also be helping with the cost of having two Oregon Humanities speakers coming to our library and give some interesting presentations and guides us through exciting and stimulating conversations . The library looks forward to welcome the speakers next Spring for patrons to enjoy. Through future Weekly Departmental Updates (but also through our posting at the Library and on the Library Website) we will keep you posted with information about the speakers and the subject they will discuss. Everyone is welcome. If you need more information about this activity, please don't hesitate to contact our staff.
- Up keeping of the Library building is (almost) a never ending activity. After taking care of the grounds during the past weeks, we have focused our attention to the painting of the building. Finally, with the good weather collaboration we were able to complete the outside painting of the upper trim of the building. The painter did a wonderful job. It looks great.
- Now a piece of "Circulation statistics": 401 pieces of material was checked out at the library during the week of September 22, through September 26.

#### CITY CLERK / ADMINISTRATION

- The City Recorder attended the September 29<sup>th</sup> City Council general work session. The Council had a discussion on the request brought to them by the Senior Center Board to use the Vernonia Community Learning Center as their thrift store while their new building is being built. Council did not make a final decision until the Senior Center Board and the Project Manager, Jim Tierney meet on October 9<sup>th</sup> with City Administrator, Gian Paolo Mammone to review the details of using the building.
- Today, October 3, 2014 is a very special day here in Vernonia as it is Shirlee Daughtry's Birthday. Happy Birthday Shirlee! May you have many more!

#### CITY ADMINISTRATOR /ADMINISTRATION

- The City Administrator, Mayor Mitchell and Dan Brown (Community Action Team) met to discuss the request of the Vernonia School District to release funds pertaining to the New Spencer Park Project that were held in escrow. The issue will be presented to City Council for consideration and resolution at the October 6<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting.
- Beginning Monday the 29<sup>th</sup> the internet connection at City Hall was intermittent and at times completely down. By Wednesday the internet was completely down. Ben Fousek (GIS Consultant ) assisted the IT consultant in determining that the problem was originating from the library. Staff has determined that 4 of the 8 computers at the library were infected with malware that was maliciously attacking the City's internet connection. The 4 offending computers were disconnected and the CPUs placed in the library office. A thorough investigation of other computers in the organization and a review of the security of City Hall's and VPD's networks disclosed that networks are completely secure and only share an internet connection with the library. Staff investigation strongly suggests an outstanding and systemic failure of the organization and the library to establish and implement routine/good practice policies and protocols to use and protect the computers, network and to enforce them systematically. Among others, staff findings reported: The library has used unknown and undocumented IT support. ISOutsource's contract does not include the library. The computers are running a Home Edition of the Windows 7 operating system. Anyone can install software and change OS settings. There are no protections against malicious software.

During recent staff Meetings City Administrator and Department Heads were made aware of the fact that some Library patrons routinely disregard time limits (for computer use), install games and other software, and blatantly disregard City/library policies in front of staff, and ignore direction to follow the policy without repercussion. In some cases, young adults have used intimidation of library staff. City Staff is reviewing policies and protocols on how to better protect the

organization' personnel and property. Once the investigation is completed, staff will prepare drafts for improved policies and protocols, and recommendation will be presented to City Council for review and implementation.

- The City Administrator and Mayor Mitchell met with Dan Brown (Community Action Team) to review financial documents pertaining to the closing of the transaction for the transfer of the Old Vernonia Health Center (record and close the escrow) and review the timeline and guidelines for the demolition of the building. Dean Larson Inc. the contractor that will be working on the demolition of the building is in the process of testing the building for asbestos and lead. Demolition of the Old Vernonia Health Center building will need to be completed by October 31, 2014.
- City Administrator met with Dan Brown to review progress of work at the New Spencer Park. Also, Staff was made aware of concerns that there was a potential "geese problem" at the park....geese eating the grass seeds....
- City Administrator attended City Council Workshop to discuss and define short and long term strategies for the use of the Vernonia Learning Center. Members of the Senior Center Board, and Jim Tierney (Executive Director Community Action Team) were in attendance. The Council met with representatives of the Senior Center to discuss the request of the Senior Center Board to use the Vernonia Community Learning Center during construction of the new facility (Senior Center/thrift store). Also the Council discussed the fiscal situation of the Learning Center and started strategizing about potential uses/activities to make the Learning Center a viable entity again. City Council directed the City Administrator, Gian Paolo Mammone to meet with the Senior Center Board, and Jim Tierney to draft potential guidelines for an agreement that would allow the Senior Center to utilize the Learning Center building. City Council will make a final decision after specific recommendation from this meeting
- City administrator met with Larry Snethen (Lake Park Host) to discuss current conditions, operations, concerns and possible improvements necessary to improve the Lake Park and its operations. Conversation focused on immediate necessary repairs and improvements, as well as projected long term ones.
- City Administrator attended staff meeting. Conversation focused (among other things) about assessment of organizational operations, and improvement of functions and protocols.
- Just a reminder that this Saturday will be "Salmon Day" in Vernonia
- The next Council Meeting is Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm.
- City Administrator and Police Chief Conner met with Paula Hanson to hear concerns about locals and tourists biking on the sidewalks. Staff is in the process of collecting information. Among other issues relevant to downtown this issue under consideration for potential improvements.
- Last...but not least... We were informed of the fact that there was a nice surprise for the City of Vernonia...  
... Please see next page... and .... Here is a preview.....

# Sunset

.... Congratulations Vernonia...



## [Top 18 spots for fall color](#)

Go on a foliage tour of the West at our favorite places to soak up the season's golds, crimsons, and more

- [Ukiah, CA \(pictured\)](#)
- [Flagstaff, AZ](#)
- [Vernonia, OR](#)
- [Maroon Bells, Aspen, CO](#)
- [Bridgeport, CA](#)

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**Vernonia, OR:** Bike through this riverside town to soak in phenomenal fall colors. Pedal, walk, or ride horses through the fall-colored forests along the Banks-Vernonia State Trail.



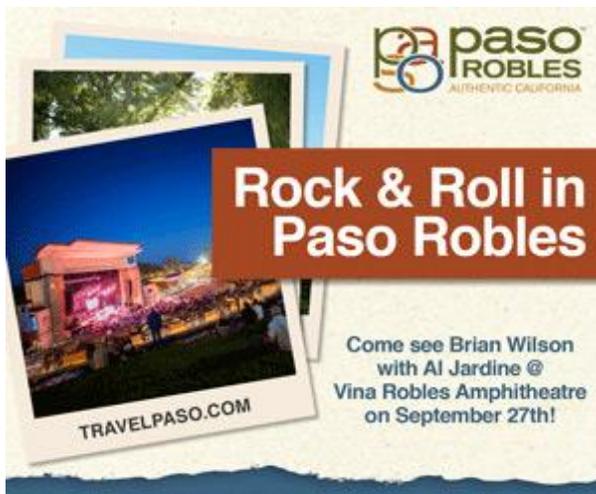
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