



The Friday Update

Bringing you a summary of weekly news from City Hall

February 18, 2000

CITY OF COOS BAY

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STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS GIVEN – Mayor Joanne Verger presented her State of the City Address Wednesday morning at the Chamber of Commerce monthly Forum. Reviewing the events and accomplishments of 1999, from the arrival of the New Carissa to Y2K, Mayor Verger's address was positive and upbeat. North Bend Mayor Golder also presented his State of the City Address at the Forum which is currently being shown on the Government Access Channel 14. Mayor Verger's address is also available on the City's web site.

GRANT APPROVED FOR MHS FIELD AND TRACK PROJECT – The City Council approved a \$25,000 grant to School District 9 to help fund improvements for the Marshfield High School field and track project at their regular Council meeting Tuesday evening. The funds will come from the economic development budget line item in this year's budget, and the Council also supported budgeting \$25,000 from hotel/motel tax funds for Fiscal Year 2000/2001. For some time Marshfield athletic events have had to be scheduled inland (at the University of Oregon or Oregon State University) where all weather artificial turf stadiums allow events not possible due to the "slip and slide" condition of the field at Susick Stadium. This results in loss of income for local business in two ways: (i) local sports fans and families leave the area to attend events in other communities, and (ii) fans and families from other communities don't come to Coos Bay because events rightfully scheduled for here have to be rescheduled to dryer, safer fields.

MINGUS PARK POOLHOUSE – With the final touches now in place at the new pool bathhouse, activities are in full swing. A Grand Opening has been planned for Saturday, March 4th, at 1:00 p.m. Following the ceremony, a "free swim" time is being offered to the public until 3:00 p.m. Come join in the fun and witness the success of your tax dollars at work.

MAYOR VERGER CHALLENGES THE COUNTY URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY TO JUSTIFY ITSELF – This morning at the Coos County Urban Renewal Agency Meeting Mayor Joanne Verger strongly suggested that the organization take a hard look at its status as a taxing district. After five years there has never been one single infrastructure project completed by the Agency which is soon to be no longer in debt, as required by Oregon law in order to keep tax revenues collected from properties located within the urban renewal district. Additionally, Mayor Verger asked the Agency this morning for an accounting of budgeted administrative expenses "for accountability and protection of the agency members," which are restricted from spending urban renewal property taxes for general governmental expenses not directly related to the urban renewal program.

"The County urban plan was well done," said Mayor Verger after this morning's meeting, "but the urban renewal projects (listed in the plan) have never been undertaken for one reason or another". Accordingly, Mayor Verger suggested that since affected taxing districts -- principally Coos County, North Bend Public Schools, Southwestern Oregon Community College and the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay -- are all suffering from falling revenues, the public would benefit by simply dissolving the urban renewal district and redirecting the tax proceeds to where they will do more good. ORS 457.450 requires urban renewal agencies to turn over to the county treasurer funds over and above those needed to cover an agency's debt, with directions that those dollars are then to be distributed to those taxing districts included within the boundaries of the urban renewal district.

There was little agreement about Mayor Verger's concerns this morning among agency members, including new Agency Chair and North Bend Mayor Lee Golder, but all members including Mayor Golder are new to the Agency Board. Port of Coos Bay general manager Allan Rumbaugh argued that the agency remains in debt since it has contracted with the County to undertake projects, but the fact remains that not a single infrastructure project has been completed since the district was created in 1986. The Agency has funded a countywide water study and a Port of Coos Bay North Spit property plan, but these have been the only major "investments" undertaken by the Agency since its inception -- aside from expenditures for management overhead, auditors and attorneys, and the County Watermaster's Office.

The agency agreed to invite Coos Bay city manager Bill Grile to its next meeting to explain the history of the Agency and some of the technical aspects of urban renewal. That meeting is scheduled for March 17. Grile authored part of the Agency's urban renewal plan when it was prepared 14 years ago while employed as Coos County planning director and also served on the Agency Board for a period of time, including a stint as Agency vice-chair.

Following this morning's meeting, Mayor Verger asked Mr. Grile if he could produce an estimate of just how much money would be returned to the other taxing districts affected by the County Urban Renewal Agency should its urban renewal district be dissolved. According to Mayor Verger, the Agency has about \$350,000 in cash reserves before paying the Agency's last bond payment which is about \$98,000. The Agency collects about \$70,000 a year in property taxes, principally from properties that would otherwise be paying these same dollars to support the general funds of Coos County, North Bend Public Schools, Southwestern Oregon Community College, the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay and other special districts.

SECOND MEETING HELD WITH MADISON STREET SCHOOL – Planning for the safety of children traveling to and from Madison Street school continued this week at a meeting School officials, police department members, parents, and citizen members. A recommendation from the committee will be present to the Coos Bay City Council at their regular meeting on March 7, 2000.

PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR EMERGENCY SYSTEM FOR COOS BAY – City Manager Bill Grile, Police Chief Chuck Knight, and Fire Chief Stan Gibson are jointly working with Exposure Plus to develop an emergency notification system for Coos Bay. The system similar to the *Reverse 9-1-1* system in Lane County is designed to allow telephone broadcast warnings to local residents in the event of large scale disasters, safety warnings, and other official uses. City officials are excited about developing a system which will enhance the safety of our citizens.

CITY EMPLOYEES BROWN BAG LUNCH TO ISRAEL – City Employees this week we treated to a slide show by Police Chuck Knight. Chief Knight and his wife, Dalette recently returned from a vacation in Israel. In light of the current Israel - Syria peace talks the presentation was very timely. Chief Knight and his wife have also presented the slide program to local church groups in the Coos County area.

DOWNTOWN PARKING RECOMMENDATION ADOPTED – The City Council reviewed the Police Department's report and parking survey at their meeting last Tuesday. The surveys were conducted from October 1, 1999 through January 20, 2000. During this time parking enforcement was suspended in downtown parking lots with continued enforcement of the 90-minute parking regulations for on-street parking. The report indicates the existing parking regulatory scheme is ideal for employees and has not been shown to harm downtown shopping. By unanimous vote the Council approved the recommendation to continue with the current parking enforcement.

A decision on the Anderson Alternative, which would provide two-way traffic from Bayshore to Second Street, was postponed until such time when the Downtown Association completes a survey of businesses.

NEW CALL LOGGING SYSTEM INSTALLED – The City of Coos Bay recently purchased a new digital call logging system for the Coos Bay Police / Fire Dispatch center which also houses the North Coos County

9-1-1 Center. The new digital recorder will allow for immediate retrieval of archived radio and telephone transmissions sent from or to the dispatch center. The recorder is critical for compliance with State record laws and other uses such as court room testimony.

SUMMER OF 2000 SAFETY TOWN PLANNING – Summer is still a few months away, however Anita Miller in the police department has already started planning for this years “Safety Town.” Details will be announced when available.

OREGON 2000 ONE AND TWO FAMILY DWELLING SPECIALTY CODE – Effective April 1, 2000 the 1998 Edition of the International One and Two Family Dwelling Code, as published by the International Code Council, Inc. with errata through March 31, 2000, and as further amended by the Building Codes Division, is adopted as the Oregon 2000 one and Two Family Dwelling Specialty Code. Code requirements in effect at the time a plan review or permit application is filed shall control the construction under the application unless the applicant agrees to be controlled by subsequent changes.

INMATES HELP WITH CLEANUP – Inmates from Shutters Creek Correctional Facility worked along Ocean Boulevard on Thursday picking up litter and trimming bushes back off of the sidewalk. The Inmates have done a lot of work for the City in the past. They have worked in the parks, along the highways and at the wastewater plants performing various functions. A lot of work can be performed in a small amount of time due to the 10-12 person crews that Shutters Creek provides. Thanks again Shutters Creek.

EMPIRE BOAT RAMP GRANT APPROVED – In late-breaking news as the Friday Update goes to press, the Oregon State Marine Board took action today to approve funding to be used for repair of the wave-damaged floating dock structures at the Empire boat ramp. This is very welcome news! Further details in next week’s edition of the Friday Update.

LABOR TRENDS – **U.S. Labor Department Issues revised 2008 projections** The Bureau of Labor Statistics has updated its labor force and employment projections out to 2008. A half a dozen service industries are expected to account for nearly half of all the new jobs created during the next ten years (from 1998). The fastest growing industries include health services, business services, social services, as well as engineering and management services. Nationwide, the share of total employment held by manufacturing is projected to continue to decline, dropping by nearly 90,000.

The fastest growing source of job growth by occupation will be in the professional specialty category (27%), followed by technicians (22%) and service occupations (17%). The professional category is expected to add the most jobs (5.3) between 1998 and 2008. Services occupations are projected to increase by 3.9 million, while executive, administrators, and managers will ring in with 2.4 million more jobs.

Of the 20 fastest growing occupations nationwide, eight are in computer-related occupations, and another eight are in health care. The final two are social and human service assistants (53%) and securities and financial services sales agents. (Information excerpted from State of Oregon Employment Department)