



The Friday Update

Bringing you a summary of weekly news from City Hall

May 12, 2000

CITY OF COOS BAY

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BAY AREA OPTIMISTS CLUB RECOGNIZES LAW ENFORCEMENT – The Bay Area Optimist Club recognized local law enforcement officers this week at a luncheon awards ceremony. Coos Bay Officer Lance Bjornerud attended as the recipient of an award from Coos Bay Police, based on his twenty years of law enforcement work and for the good work he has performed over a long period of time. He has been a K-9 handler, Field Training Officer, Firearms Range Master, Empire's 1st COPPS officer, and the coordinator of the first "Citizen's Police Academy" held at the Coos Bay Police Department.

COOS BAY K-9'S TO GET VESTS – Thanks to a very generous donor, Coos Bay Police K-9s, Caesar and Rex, will soon be outfitted with custom fit ballistic vests! These vests are designed to protect the dogs while on duty with their police officer partners. It's wonderful to experience the encouragement and support the community gives to their four-footed police officers.

GRANT AWARD – The City of Coos Bay has been notified that it is the recipient of a \$20,000 grant from the Oregon Economic Development Department. These funds were requested on behalf of the residents of Old Wireless Lane in the Englewood District for the purpose of constructing sewer improvements to replace their failing system. This area was annexed into the City last year and the residents have since joined together to form a Local Improvement District. This grant will finance a significant part of the improvements planned for construction this summer.

FIRE CHIEF RAISES MONEY FOR CHARITY – Fire Chief Stan Gibson participated in the local Wal-Mart fund raiser for the Children's Miracle Network this past weekend. Chief Gibson was an honorary checker assistant for the day. By bagging and carrying merchandise out for customers Chief Gibson raised money that will benefit critically ill patients locally and throughout the country.

LITTER PATROL CONTINUES CLEANING DOWNTOWN – The litter patrol has worked in the parking lots south of Anderson and from Bayshore to Third Street. They have weeded and cleaned the lots. Between Anderson and Curtis and between Bayshore and Fourth they have cleaned around each block. The litter patrol is currently working on Anderson and Second up to Central. They also have cleaned the planters on Fifth Street between Commercial and Anderson.

BOARDWALK AQUARIUM – The City is still looking at placing an aquarium on the Boardwalk. Staff has been investigating costs to build the structure that will house the glass container. Current costs for this range from \$8,000 to \$15,000. Additional support members will need to be placed under the Boardwalk to support the weight of the aquarium. The City has been working with Tom Rumreich of Fish & Wildlife.

NATURAL GAS PIPELINE OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULED – The Coos County Board of Commissioners has scheduled the first in a series of open houses regarding the natural gas pipeline for 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 17th in the Planning Department Conference Room at the Courthouse Annex located at 290 North Central, Coquille, Oregon. Coos County citizens will be able to meet and become acquainted with the project managers for the pipeline project. The meeting will be informal and citizens will have the opportunity to ask questions and to share any and all ideas they may have relating to the project.

“This is the first in what will be a number of open houses relating to the pipeline project. The project is still in its infancy stage and, at this point, many questions remain unanswered. We hope by scheduling these meetings on a fairly regular basis and by moving them around to a variety of locations we will be able to keep the public informed of the progress of the project,” said Commissioner Whitty. “We are trying this new format of an informal “open house” for a specific reason,” said Whitty, “we want to accommodate citizens who would much prefer to visit one-on-one when sharing their questions and/or ideas rather than go to a microphone in front of a packed room.”

BUDGET APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL – The Budget Committee held their final meeting on Wednesday of this week to review items that had been redlined for further discussion. The final action of the committee was to approve the budget document as amended and forward to the City Council for adoption. The City Council will hold a public hearing on June 20, 2000 at 7:30 p.m. to take comments on the budget and then proceed with adopting the budget for Fiscal Year 2000/20001.

LABOR TRENDS – The labor Department’s employment-cost index, a closely watched gauge of wage and benefit costs, grew 4.3 percent in the 12 months ended in March, the sharpest increase in more than eight years. Much of the growth reflected rising health-insurance costs and the tight labor market. Last year, total compensation rose 3.4 percent. The size of the surge in compensation cost surprised and alarmed many analysts. Indeed, one of the mysteries of the continuing expansion has been the near-absence- despite exceptionally low unemployment- of large increase in wage and benefit costs. This contradicted long-held economic theories arguing that tight labor markets could force companies to raise their wages substantially to attract and retain workers, ultimately passing those higher costs on to consumers by raising prices. But in recent years, for reasons analysts still struggle to explain, many workers haven’t demanded huge pay raises, allowing companies to avoid having to institute price increases. That dynamic may finally be changing, raising the real possibility that a scarcity of workers in the midst of a booming economy may finally trigger widespread inflation. (Information excerpted from State of Oregon Employment Department)