



The Friday Update

Bringing you a summary of weekly news from City Hall

December 15, 2000

CITY OF COOS BAY

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HOLIDAY PROGRAM AT THE LIBRARY FOR CHILDREN – A special seasonal program for children ages 3 to 12 will be held in the library on Saturday, December 16th starting at 11:00 a.m. Storytellers and musicians from the local community will present seasonal stories and songs, with a take-home craft and treats. Theresa Ersine and Jim Thornton will present three special Christmas and Hanukkah tales. Musicians Les Engle and Bill Weaver will lead the audience in singing holiday favorites.

SPECIAL LIBRARY PROGRAM FOR ADULTS – "Reflections: The Inupiat, Yesterday and Today" will be presented by Patricia Simpson on Saturday, December 16 at 2:00 p.m. in the library. Using slides, photographs and stories, Simpson will describe an Alaska people who have survived dramatic changes in their way of life while maintaining their identity and traditions and honoring a cherished past. Simpson, who now lives in Coos Bay, worked for 18 years among the Inupiat in Alaska's Northwest Arctic Borough. She traveled to native villages teaching community development and coordinating regional strategy plans for health, education and social services. Simpson also shares her extensive collection of Eskimo photographs and craft items through a display in the library lobby, throughout the month of December.

LIBRARY ART SHOW – Watercolors by Coos Bay artist Merrie Holbert are on display in the library's main reading room through the end of December.

SMOKE ALARM SAVES HOME – Early Monday morning a Coos Bay couple were awakened by their home smoke alarm. Finding smoke throughout the house the couple left the house and called 911. After finding a rapidly growing fire in the basement fire department personnel were able to quickly extinguish the fire. Although there was significant smoke damage to the house and contents nobody was injured. Without the smoke alarm it is likely that this tragedy would have been much worse. The Coos Bay Fire Department would like to urge everyone to take a few moments and check your smoke alarm. Are there batteries in your smoke alarms? Are the batteries good? Have you tested the alarm lately? For more information on smoke alarms please call the Coos Bay Fire Department at 269-1191.

GOVERNMENT AT ITS BEST – The newly annexed Old Wireless Lane neighborhood is now enjoying additional City services with the recent completion of a small pump station. This project was financed, in part, by a grant provided by the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department and a Local Improvement District formed by the Old Wireless Lane Homeowner's Association. This project serves as an example of what can be accomplished by private citizens, local government and state agencies all working together toward a common goal. The City thanks JBS, Inc., DEQ, OECDD, and Ed Riley, P.E. for their part in making this project a success.

STATE TO CONDUCT SPEED CONTROL CHECK – The Oregon Department of Transportation is conducting a speed zone request on Ocean Boulevard to determine if the existing speed limit of 40 miles per hour is appropriate for the road. All traffic speed changes in the State must go through the State Speed Control Board. The City submitted the request on the behalf of the Shorepines Residents Association. The State is currently conducting traffic counts, radar speed checks and determining if the curves are consistent with the posted speed. The City should have the determination after the first of the year.

NEW LOCATION FOR THE ELKS – On Tuesday, December 12th, the Planning Commission approved a conditional use for the B & P Order of Elks Coos Bay Lodge to relocate in downtown Coos Bay. The new location will be at the southeast corner of Third Street and Central Avenue. The Elks anticipate that up to 100 people will be attending functions on the weekends. We'd like to welcome the Elks in their return to Downtown Coos Bay!

COMING SOON - ELK RIDGE ASSISTED LIVING AND RETIREMENT COMMUNITY – On Tuesday, December 12th, the Planning Commission approved the site plan and architectural review for Phase 1 of a 2-phase assisted living and retirement community. The development will be located on 18 acres south of Ocean Boulevard at the end of 19th Avenue. Phase 1 will consist of 81 units for assisted living and 42 units for senior citizen housing. Construction is expected to begin next spring.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM ANNUAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FORUM – Coos Bay Council President Jeff McKeown was among those speaking to a packed house at this morning's Annual Economic Outlook Forum, held this year at The Mill Casino in North Bend. A summary of his comments and those by others follows here.

S. COAST ECONOMIC OVERVIEW.
JOHN ANDERSON. OR. EMPLOYMENT DEPT.

Regional economist John Anderson delivered a message of encouragement with our S. Coast economy performing better than for some of our more recent years, but with some concerns as the area still has not matched Oregon's performance for unemployment and other key indicators.

Coos County's 2.8-3.0% job growth has actually exceeded Oregon's for the past year, according to Anderson, but this follows 3 years of declines. Most has come from services and trades - in non-manufacturing sectors. Health care employment has shown significant local job growth this past year.

Worker earnings locally rose about 3% compared to 20% statewide. Technology jobs outside the area explain most of the difference.

Coos County's poverty rate this past year has been about 40% below Oregon's average for the same period. This is, of course, a major concern.

The coming year will likely bring an economic slowdown, according to Anderson's predictions, with Coos County's growth rate most likely being in the 1.5% range. Rising energy costs are a major worry, along with rising interest rates.

Airport expansion, Southwestern Oregon Community College program growth, energy and communication growth and local economic development efforts are all encouraging signs for the area in the months ahead, cites Anderson.

LOCAL UPDATES

TOURISM. MARTY GILES.

A \$23 million payroll in Coos County for the 7% of our local workforce in tourism-related employment is nothing to sneeze at, proclaimed Giles. About 10% of the dollars coming into our local economy are from tourism, she noted.

In Bend, estimates are that 70-80% of their new business came from visits to the area through tourism. This

alone is a good reason to support tourism development efforts here.

S. COAST OPPORTUNITY FOR ORGANIZED PROGRESS (SCOOP).
RANELLE MORRIS, MAYOR, CITY OF MYRTLE PT.

Thanks to a Ford Foundation grant, this S. County collaborative effort began in order to benefit Coquille, Myrtle Point, Powers and the Port of Coquille River.

Projects under consideration by SCOOP include: Powers Park, Powers Airport, Coquille Swimming Pool, Myrtle Point Logging Museum and the Sawdust Theatre are all under consideration.

CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COOS, LOWER UMPQUA AND SIUSLAW INDIANS.
FRANCIS SOMDAY II

"Setting the stage for an economic relationship" was his theme. "The Tribes are committed to paying for the city services it enjoys, but can not pay taxes because no government in this nation pays taxes," he emphasized. He sees a \$30 million benefit to the County next year from Tribal activities and that soon authorization will be granted for the Tribe's gaming center in Florence.

The Tribe's 3 major projects:

1. The Alishanee Family Entertainment Center.
2. Restoration Plan / Forest Plan.
3. The gaming center.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS.
JOHN BERMAN & GUY ALVIS.

GUY ALVIS, Oregon Economic and Community Development department spoke with this theme: "Telecom is driving growth in our economy." Locally, Roseburg Forest Products is using advanced telecommunications to increase production and efficiency in its operations. This illustrates that telecommunications is becoming increasingly important to existing non-technology businesses here and outside the area.

Alvis gave a primer about SB 622 and how its \$120 million can bring improvements to schools and local governments in Oregon. He emphasized that our regional goal must be to increase the area's competitive advantage.

JOHN BERMAN, southwestern Oregon Community College, summarized the coordinated technology plan for education produced for our local school districts, ESD and the College.

COQUILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP.
BRADY SCOTT.

The Coquilles make payments in lieu of taxes to North Bend and Bandon, also paying room taxes and supporting a proposal to pay 6% into a fund for community programs.

CEDCO has about 600 employees, with 80 added when The Mill Casino's hotel opened.

Expanded gaming, an improved convention center, a small marina, some retail and a golf course are among CEDCO's plans. CEDCO also just signed a memorandum of agreement with "NOANET" to become a local provider when the Bonneville Power Administration's fiber is operational here.

PORT OF COOS BAY REPORT.
ALLAN RUMBAUGH.

This report included an update on the North Bend Municipal Airport and the Port's efforts to improve air service to the area. Terminal improvements and safety enhancements are being planned. A control tower is needed and under consideration for FAA funding assistance.

One of the Port's major accomplishments last year was the design/build project completed last year for CYBERREP.COM.

Other great news is the \$20 million reduction in the cost estimate for building the natural gas pipeline soon to be built here.

SOUTH COAST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.
JEFF McKEOWN.

The 2 basic tasks for this new private-public partnership have been fund-raising first, and hiring a director, second. SCDC's mission is job creation through industrial recruitment for the benefit of the whole area. "We need to take responsibility for our area," he stressed, closing with a quote from Will Rogers: "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there."

WORKFORCE SURVEY.
ROMELLE RENNER, OR. EMPLOYMENT DIVISION.

Sharing results from this recent Employment Division survey, Ms. Renner revealed that low pay and benefits were cited by local businesses as reasons why it is sometimes difficult to fill key positions on the S. Coast.

Survey results are available online at the Employment Division's WEB site.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: STATE, NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK.
DR. JOHN MITCHELL, U.S. BANCORP.

The country continues in its unprecedented 117th straight month of economic growth, but an economic slowdown seems ahead.

"Consumer and business spending is the wildcard," he proclaimed. Leading indicators have been flat or down for 9 months now, and "soft landing" is the term being used to describe coming events. This year inflation will be in the 3.3-3.4% range and may be less next year.

Mitchell sees interest rates dropping again in the long range.