



The Friday Update

Bringing you a summary of weekly news from City Hall

January 22, 1999

CITY OF COOS BAY

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LEAGUE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ARTICULATES "THE CITY AGENDA" - Dick Townsend, executive director of the League of Oregon Cities did an outstanding job articulating "the city agenda" in the LOC's January 15th Legislative Bulletin. "Without a doubt, communities are the foundation of the economic and human service base throughout Oregon. Our legislative priorities this year focus on four areas: Transportation funding; Infrastructure funding; PERS reform; and, help for At-Risk Youth. These are solid examples of the issues that local governments face - with solutions that clearly require state participation," he said. "(Oregon has) a state-local system, in which cities and the state are partners in service to Oregon citizens," he added. "With the exception of transportation funding, this will be the first session in several years in which city representatives have sought significant state financial aid to help solve local needs," Townsend continued. "In 1997, the League Board acknowledged that Ballot Measure 47 would impact state programs as well as local. Accordingly, League representatives did not seek any new significant financial help from them. Rather, Oregon's communities 'soldiered on' using their own (diminished) revenues (but) in 1999, however, we must acknowledge our local funding shortfalls."

And that's the truth!

MAYOR VERGER TESTIFIES BEFORE SENATE GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE -

As published in the January 15th League of Oregon Cities Legislative Bulletin:

"Joanne Verger, Mayor of Coos Bay and President of the League of Oregon Cities, presented the League's four top priorities at the first hearing of the Senate General Government Committee. The top priorities include: Transportation; Infrastructure; Youth At-Risk; and the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). President Verger and League staff were well received by the Committee. Members of the Senate General Government Committee include: Senator Verne Duncan, Chair (R-Milwaukie); Senator Cliff Trow, Vice Chair (D-Corvallis); Senator John Lim (R-Gresham); Senator Marilyn Shannon (R-Brooks) and Senator Frank Shields (D-Portland)."

CITY AND COUNTY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS KICKOFF FIRST SENATE

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE HEARING - As published in the January 15th League of Oregon Cities Legislative Bulletin:

"Testifying at the first meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee, League President and Coos Bay Mayor Joanne Verger stated that "city transportation needs have reached a critical level and without additional funding, the existing system will continue to deteriorate." Mayor Verger thanked Committee Chair Marilyn Shannon (R-Brooks) for beginning the Committee's work by focusing on local government. Mayor Verger continued "local government is a partner with the Legislature in governing Oregon, and the League wishes to work cooperatively in developing solutions to Oregon's transportation problems."

MARSHFIELD STUDENTS TO HELP CITY HALL WITH NEW CHANNEL 14 PROGRAMS -

Mayor Joanne Verger announced this week that Marshfield High School Jim Baird and a team of students will be working with the City to produce four television airings this spring in a new effort to provide the community with interesting and useful information about Coos Bay and its happenings. The shows will be a "public affairs" production, with the first to be filmed next month concerning a topic yet to be announced.

The City of Coos Bay is committed to public access television and will continue working to use this

technology as an opportunity to inform the community.

IT'S COMING ... - What's coming? The public unveiling of the City of Coos Bay's new rebuilt WEB page is now just right around the corner. WEB surfers and repeat visitors will like the fresh new look, new features, and rapid location of key information that will be available on the new page. Stay tuned. Err ... stay on line!

CITY ASSEMBLES ECONOMIC ADVOCATES FOR FORUM ON DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

- It was a gathering of eagles Tuesday morning at the Red Lion when Mayor Verger and the City Council met to hear accomplished economic development advocates offer advice about how best to promote job creation in the bay area. Fifteen highly respected and successful, mostly private sector, panelists included John Stephens (past C.E.O. Roseburg Forest Products), Bill Lansing (Menasha Corporation), Guy Williams (Security Bank), Rod Stalcup (Stalcup Trucking), Larry Hink (Coldwell Banker), Harry Davis (Davis Oil), Hal Graham (Graham Oil), Andy Nasburg (Seaboard Properties), Glenn Thomas (Thomas & Son Trucking), John Sweet (Sause Bros.), Greg Stevens (The World), Pete Johnson (North Bend Medical Center), Jon Richards (Southwestern Business Development Center), Howard McKee (Bandon Dunes Resort), and, last but not least, County Commissioner Nikki Whitty.

There was little disagreement in the message presented. Our local economy needs help. Area leadership needs to pull together and focus its job creation efforts and seek new approaches to success since old ones haven't worked. One possibility is for the public and private sector to pull together and hire a high-power business recruitment executive to aggressively seek out and pursue local business development and plant sitings here. The individual would be accountable to either a new organization, or perhaps an existing one.

If a new partnership such as this does not emerge in the near future, the City of Coos Bay will have to pursue job creation without the help needed for success. Tuesday night, Mayor Verger commented, "Frankly, I don't look for that to happen," indicating her belief that some form of new partnership is expected.

Plans are underway for a second meeting to advise the City Council of its options. This one would include a panel comprised of existing organizations working locally to improve the economy, with nearby cities invited to attend. The City will persevere! Stay tuned.

CHAMBER TOURISM COMMITTEE BRIEFED ON FRONT ST. MASTER PLAN

- Yesterday morning the city manager attended the Chamber's Tourism Committee meeting upon invitation to make a presentation on the Front Street Master Plan. The meeting was well-attended and enthusiasm about Front Street redevelopment potential was high. Following up on one suggestion, the City will be putting together a display on it's tourism related projects for the Governor's Tourism Conference, which will be held in Coos Bay in April.

H.M. BARK ENDEAVOUR TO VISIT COOS BAY! - The tall ship H.M. Bark Endeavour, a replica of Lt. James Cook's 18th century sailing vessel, will be arriving at the Coos Bay Boardwalk for ten days of tours at City Dock this summer. Mark your calendars and don't miss this one! July 9th through July 19th. Endeavour is three times the size of the tall ship Lady Washington, which has become a favorite visitor at City Dock. We'll have lots more to tell you about Endeavour before this summer, but for now, why not pay a virtual visit to this beautiful ship?

For more information <http://www.barkendeavour.com.au/newsbuilder/endnews.html>

CHRISTMAS TREE PICKUP - The Fire Department picked up approximately 500 Christmas trees in this years pickup effort. The trees are being offered to the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife for stream enhancement projects. This popular yearly pickup project gives the department a chance to work with many families in the community in helping to remove this after holiday fire hazard.

POLICE CONTRACT SETTLED; FIRE UNION BARGAINING AT IMPASSE – This week the City Council settled contract talks with the Coos Bay Police Officers' Association, agreeing to a 2.0% raise this year with second and third year increases of 2.0% to 4.0% based on the nation-wide consumer price index. A handful of other contract issues were also agreed upon in the bargaining, which lasted several months. Late last year the City also settled its bargaining with AFSCME, which was awarded a smaller increase than that granted to the police association.

Bargaining with the Coos Bay Fire Fighters Association is at impasse. The City is willing to settle this contract with an economic package equal to that granted to police, "but not a nickel more." Clearly, the City Council and city manager remain extremely disappointed that a settlement with CBFFA has not been possible, as was the case with the City's other two bargaining units. The fire contract is proceeding to binding arbitration.

Coos Bay's department heads and exempt employees have received no salary increases at all for the past 18 months, and none have been discussed with the City Council to date.

FAREWELL TO OFFICER SCOTT VINCENT – Coos Bay Police Officer Scott Vincent has accepted a position with the Bend, Oregon Police Department. Officer Vincent has been an outstanding Officer at Coos Bay, having served in a varieties of roles within the department including Motor Cycle patrol, instructor for the DUII Impact and Safety Belt awareness courses, and lead instructor for the Reserve Officer Training Academy at Southwestern Oregon Community College. Scott will be missed at Coos Bay, we wish him well in his new assignment at Bend.

PARKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULED – The City's parking committee will hold a meeting on Thursday, January 28th at 6 p.m. in the council chambers at city hall. The public is invited to attend; the committee is seeking input from citizens doing business or shopping in the downtown area. For more information contact the police department at 269-8914 during normal business hours.

BIKE PATH GRANT -- The Coos Bay Urban Renewal Agency authorized an application for funding through the Oregon Department of Transportation to construct a bike path above the retaining wall on Broadway opposite the Timber Inn. City staff were informed this week that ODOT will not fund that application. That's really regrettable.

EASTSIDE BOAT RAMP -- On a brighter note, the bids to pave the parking area and construct restrooms at the Eastside Boat Ramp will be opened next Tuesday, January 26. Presentation of the bid information to the City Council for their action should follow at the Council's February 2, 1999 meeting.