



The Friday Update

Bringing you a summary of weekly news from City Hall

October 22, 1999

CITY OF COOS BAY

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CITY COUNCIL APPROVES ROAD “EXCHANGE” WITH ODOT – Tuesday evening the City Council approved the long-debated “road exchange” proposal that had been presented to them several months ago by the Oregon Department of Transportation. An agreement will now be executed between the City of Coos Bay and the State of Oregon to turn over to the City of Coos Bay the jurisdiction of 23 lane-miles of State highways within the city limits, in exchange for ODOT paying the City \$4.8 million in cash over the next three years. ODOT will additionally be retaining responsibility for any slides that could occur on the Coos River Highway through Eastside, and cover up to \$26,000 in costs related to changes to traffic signals in the City. The latter might be necessary to improve traffic circulation downtown.

Affected “highways” include Ocean Boulevard, Newmark, Cape Arago Highway and Coos River Highway – all within the city limits of Coos Bay.

“The State has spent practically nothing maintaining these roads within our city,” said City Manager Bill Grile after the landmark decision Tuesday night, “and with State highway funding priorities as they are, ODOT’s limited funds are going to be spent on major system corridors like Highways 38 and 42,” he added. “This is a great opportunity for the citizens of Coos Bay.”

Tuesday night before the Council’s vote, Mayor Verger commented that there is always the possibility that at some point in the near future that ODOT would have formalized its policy to not prioritize maintenance of these city streets in its system, thus leaving Coos Bay with the problem, but not the \$4.8 million to do anything about it.

Coos Bay will be investing the proceeds as they arrive in order to accrue interest earnings, which in turn would be used to further city street improvement priorities. One major capital project that will be closely examined would have Newmark improved from Walmart westerly to the Ocean Boulevard “Y.” No immediate action is planned to proceed with this, however, and much careful thought is planned so as to stretch the \$4.8 million as far and as long as possible.

LOCAL OFFICIALS AND BUILDERS SCRUTINIZE THE STATE BUILDING CODES PROGRAM

LAST NIGHT AT CITY HALL – Local officials, including Mayor Joanne Verger and State Representative Ken Messerle, builders, contractors and interested citizens spent two hours at City Hall last night meeting with Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services Director Mike Greenfield and his staff to critique the State building codes program, offering suggestions to make it more functional. The session was the last of nine that have been held around the state, with director Greenfield describing the Coos Bay meeting as one of the best in coming up with specific suggestions for changes and improvements. Coos Bay Building Codes Administrator Joe McClay participated in the session, as did Community Services Director Bill Finney and City Manager Bill Grile. Jane Cummins, senior staffer with the League of Oregon Cities, also attended, and has been monitoring the agency’s other meetings as well.

Mayor Verger, while thanking the state officials for coming to Coos Bay, stressed also that the recommendations presented to them must be seriously considered in order for the State's self-examination of the program to have real meaning. Amen.

THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING . . . THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING! – The Coos Bay-North Bend Rotary Club and the Bay Area Rotary Club invite you to meet a delegation of Russian entrepreneurs who are visiting Oregon's Bay Area as part of the Productivity Enhancement Program (PEP), run by the Center for Citizen initiatives. PEP brings Russian business leaders to the United States to study with their American industry counterparts. The recipients of the training will then return to Russia to pass on the knowledge they have gained, creating a multiplier effect.

The program is premised on the experience of the Marshall Plan, which rebuilt Europe after World War II, and demonstrated to the world that a change in surroundings can change thinking. "Until you take the Russian entrepreneurs out of their native environment, they can't see all of the possibilities", says Sharon Tennison, President of the Center for Citizen Initiatives.

During their visit eleven non-English speaking managers of Russian wood processing facilities will learn about all aspects of the American wood processing industry in a training program organized by the Southwestern Business Development Center. These Russian managers will also meet with local businesses related to the process of wood and the marketing of wood products. If you are interested in learning more, or if you have Russian language competency, you may call the Coos Bay/North Bend Promotions and Convention Bureau at 541-269-8921.

[Article courtesy of Beve Saukko, CB-NB Promotions and Convention Bureau.]

INVITATION TO A RECEPTION FOR THE VISITING RUSSIANS – A public wine and cheese reception for the visiting Russian delegation will be held from 5:30 - 7:00 PM at the Coos Art Museum on Tuesday, November 9th. The event is being sponsored by the Coos Bay-North Bend Rotary Club and the Bay Area Rotary Club, and is open to the public.

SOUTH COAST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL PROPOSAL TO BE PRESENTED – Last Spring a series of economic forums were held in Coos Bay to gather together ideas for encouraging job growth on the South Coast. One offshoot of these forums was formation of a "Livability Committee" to 1) explore what other regions had done to stimulate economic development, 2) pick and choose from the best of those, and 3) draft a proposal for an organization to help foster a healthy economic environment on the South Coast.

A proposal for a South Coast Development Council has been completed and the Livability Committee would like to present it to those who participated in the economic forums and to other interested citizens. The presentation will be made on November 4, 1999 at 7 p.m. at Eden Hall at SWOCC. The committee hopes to see you there – your input at this meeting is the next important step toward implementation of the ideas discussed at the economic forums.

Those serving on the Livability Committee include John Stephens, Roseburg Lumber; John Sweet, Sause Bros.; Allan Rumbaugh, Port of Coos Bay; Timm Slater, Weyerhaeuser; Nikki Whitty, County Commissioner Jeff McKeown, Coos Bay City Councilor; Janet Ruben, North Bend City Councilor; Arnie Roblan, FONSI; and John Briggs, North Bend City Councilor.

OUTDOOR BURNING – Even though the burning ban has been lifted within the city limits fire season remains in effect. Conditions are still dry and the winds strong at times. Outdoor burning is permitted at this time as long as the City's burning regulations are followed. Please call the fire department at 269-1191 for a copy of the regulations.

OREGON COAST MUSIC ASSOCIATION WINE TASTING THIS EVENING! – The Oregon Coast Music Association and interior designer Rita Todd-Kornbau invite you to an after-hours party at 6 o'clock this evening, October 22nd, at Design Renaissance, 160 South 2nd Street in Coos Bay (between Headlands and Security Bank on 2nd St.) Festivities include wine tasting with a variety of premium wines courtesy of Thomas & Sons; Cajun hors d'oeuvres by Chef Jardin Kazaar; music by trumpeter Steve Krajcir, harpist Lynda Cole, and the Con Brio Trio. Tickets are \$10, available at Design Renaissance and at Checkerberry's. Or call Design Renaissance, 269-2577. All proceeds from the event help pay for the 2000 Oregon Coast Music Festival. So join Festival friends and supporters for an evening of gustatory and social fun!

PROPOSED COQUILLE TRIBE DEVELOPMENT – Coquille Tribe Cultural Resources Coordinator Don Ivy and Consultant John Mitchell, Mitchell Nelson Group, Inc., met with City staff on October 15th to discuss the development of a golf course, which would be open to the public, RV park and residential area on tribal land south of the Empire district. It is proposed that the golf course and RV park will be accessed off of Cape Arago Highway at Wisconsin Avenue.

MINGUS PARK LIGHTING – Phase Two of the Mingus Park Lighting Project has been completed along the west side of lake from the shelter to Choshi Bridge. One light was added by the shelter and another one was added in the play area to the south of the shelter. The City will be working with Pacific Power and Light to remove the old wooden poles and lights. This will eliminate the overhead wires and anchor lines that can cause problems during the winter storms. The City will be looking at additional funding in the future to light Choshi Gardens and on up the hill to North 14th Street.

Y2K FORUM BROADCAST ON PUBLIC ACCESS TELEVISION – In case you missed the Y2k forum earlier this week, the program will run at various dates and times on Falcon Cable channel 14 in the Coos Bay - North Bend area. The forum provided information to Bay area residents about the City of Coos Bay's preparations for the year 2000. The City of Coos Bay will continue to provide information to the public as Y2k Plans are monitored and updated. During the evening of December 1, 1999 updates will continue until 3:00 A.M. on January 1, 2000 or until the Emergency Operations Center is deactivated. Live updates on New Year's Eve will be posted on the Internet at: <http://www.coosbay-pd.net/y2k.htm>

K-9's ON DUTY IN COOS BAY – It only took a couple of days for the K-9's in Coos Bay to prove successful. The K-9's have been used to locate theft suspects and recover stolen property their first week "on the job" in Coos Bay. Congratulations to K-9's Rex and Caesar, and their handlers.

FAREWELL DETECTIVE SPARKS – A farewell reception was held for Randy Sparks as he moves on to accept the Undersheriff position at Columbia County. At the reception Randy expressed thanks to the City of Coos Bay for the opportunity of having worked for the police department. Randy stated he will miss all the fine people here, adding that Coos Bay Police Department is "the best" and that he has gained a lot as a result of having worked here. He stated the high degree of professionalism at Coos Bay Police Department and the excellent training received as being invaluable to him personally and of great benefit to the people we serve.