



The Friday Update

Bringing you a summary of weekly news from City Hall

March 17, 2000

CITY OF COOS BAY

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STEVE PREFONTAINE's LEGEND LIVES ON! – Mayor Verger and city manager Bill Grile were privileged this morning to accept Superintendent Giles Parker's invitation to attend a press conference at Marshfield High School in honor of former MHS graduate and world-class athlete Steve Prefontaine. The occasion, you ask? Superintendent Parker announced the induction of Steve Prefontaine into the National High School Sports Hall of Fame this year. Go Pre!

WHAT'S YOUR BEST ADVICE? -- Coos Bay is really getting some great mileage out of its WEB site and wants to see it used for more and more public feedback all the time. How about some input from you. What's your best advice? Here's a new survey that is going up on the home page today @ www.coosbay.org.

"The condition of many City streets is a growing concern, yet adequate funding to support increased maintenance efforts has not been available. For many years, but not in recent times, City voters directed the City Council to impose a "serial levy" as a way to generate funds solely for specific major streets maintenance projects. Once streets deteriorate beyond a certain point, replacement becomes the only option since repairs are not possible. It's the old "stitch in time" thing. What's your best advice?

- Don't worry about it.
- Give the voters a chance to say whether or not a streets maintenance serial levy of some amount should be pursued.

How about it ... can we hear from you?

COOS COUNTY URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY HEARS FROM SOME OLD-TIMERS – Former Coos County Commissioner Ed "Doc" Stevenson, former Coos Bay - North Bend Water Board General Manager Phil Matson and Coos Bay City Manager Bill Grile were invited guests at this morning's meeting of the Coos County Urban Renewal Agency. Each gave a brief, ten-minute presentation about the history of the agency and how it evolved to its present "place," or how its funding has benefited local economic development and job creation efforts. These three were involved with the Agency in one capacity or another from its inception in 1985, as was Port of Coos Bay General Manager Allan Rumbaugh, who also spent ten minutes talking about the agency, its evolution and importance. Dennis Beetham, another invited guest, spoke to the agency about how his business has invested \$2.5 million at the North Spit, producing many benefits for the community.

Port manager Rumbaugh said he was initially irritated at Mayor Verger's request for historical financial records related to the Agency's 15-year history, but quickly added that he was grateful for the request now because it has been helpful in gaining perspective and insight about new directions for urban renewal activity. Following the invited presentations, the consensus that seemed to emerge was to spend some time learning more about the Agency's past and potential, starting with a review of the 1986 North Bay Urban Renewal Plan since only two of the Agency's ten member board of directors has a copy of that document.

"It makes sense to me that the Agency should seriously consider amending its plan to allow the funding of infrastructure projects that will attract new jobs and industry to the North Spit," said city manager Grile following the meeting. "I was a member of the Agency Board during many of the years when substantial agency funding went to support environmental studies and water source planning, and I have no regrets about those decisions," he continued, "but today I think everyone's expectations of what the Agency should be doing will be satisfied if more attention can be spent on getting infrastructure in the ground as was the

Agency's original mission."

Mayor Verger and Coos Bay City Councilors Joe Benetti and Don Spangler also attended this morning's meeting. Verger and Benetti are Coos Bay's representatives on the Agency Board.

POLICE DEPARTMENT RECRUITMENT CONTINUES – Fifteen finalists for the position of police officer were interviewed this week by the Coos Bay Police Department. Department staff members were pleased with the quality of applicants interviewed. Paring the pool down to select the finalists for the three open positions will be a difficult task. Chief Knight expressed his thanks to recently retired Sergeant Mike Bishop for assisting in the interview process. Police Detectives will be conducting background checks on the finalists with appointments set for mid April.

METHAMPHETAMINE PRESENTATION SCHEDULED – Chief Knight will join The World Pushier, Greg Stevens in making a presentation to The Bay Area Rotary Club on the Methamphetamine problem on the South Coast at their regularly scheduled meeting on March 20, 2000. The purpose of the presentation is to raise community awareness to the drug problem locally.

CITY REVIEWS EMERGENCY PLAN – The City's Emergency Management Team recently completed a review of the City's Emergency Management Plan. The Emergency Management Plan was developed to provide a framework in which city officials can plan and perform emergency response functions for an emergency or disaster. The plan is reviewed every year and updated as needed.

LABOR TRENDS – The Commerce Department sought to spotlight the importance of information technology to the American economy. It shows that employment growth in the information technology sector was over 10 times higher than all job growth between 1988 and 1996. IT jobs grew 133 percent, compared to 12 percent for all jobs. The unemployment rate is 1.3 percent for systems analysts and computer scientists and a little higher for programmers. Starting salaries for those with an IT degree range from \$35,000 to \$41,000. These starting salaries and the growth in overall wage rates in the sector indicate a high demand for IT workers.

In Oregon, annual salaries based on 1997 data are as follows: Computer Engineers \$40,552-\$107,909, Computer Programmers \$27,827-\$83,857, and Systems Analysts \$34,127-\$83,586. Over 15,000 Oregonians are estimated to work in these three occupations. Read the entire article at the Jerome Levy Economic Institute site, <http://www.levy.org/docs/symposium/sym6-98.html>. It is worth noting that south coast residents have access to some of the best technology training in the state, through new additions to Computer Information Systems (CIS) curriculum at Southwestern Oregon Community College.

(Information excerpted from State of Oregon Employment Department)

EMPIRE BOAT RAMP – The City of Coos Bay has received the plans and drawings from the Oregon State Marine Board and have sent the plans out to dock builders. The bids are to be returned by March 28, 2000. The award of the bid will be at the April 4, 2000 Council meeting and work can begin immediately on the docks and have them delivered to the boat ramp. A contractor will be hired to place the new floats. Coos County Parks has expressed an interest in the old floats. They will salvage the floats and place them in a less hostile environment, such as a lake.

FIFTH STREET PLAZA – In an attempt to create a public gathering place that will encourage public use and serve as a connecting hub between the downtown businesses and City administration facilities, the Urban Renewal Agency has awarded Lon L. Samuels, Architecture & Planning, the design contract for the block of Central Ave. known as Fifth Street Plaza. This right-of-way that lies between 4th and 5th Streets will incorporate the "Time Capsule 2000" burial site as well as period lighting, landscaping, furnishings, walkways, and surface restoration. Lon has successfully designed a number of outdoor spaces: among those close to home are the South Slough Estuarine Sanctuary Visitor's Center and the Powers County Park addition. Stay tuned to this site's transformation.

CITY EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION LUNCHEON HONORS LONG-TERM EMPLOYEES – Mayor Verger, Councilors Judy Weeks and Don Spangler, and city manager Bill Grile paused

from busy schedules at noon today to meet for a pizza lunch in honor of employees celebrating longevity milestones with the City of Coos Bay. Thanks Councilor Weeks for continuing your tradition of honoring those reaching 5, 10, 15 and 20 year anniversaries. Those recognized include:

- **5 Years of Service** (1994)

- Mike Hurley (Fire)
- Joe McClay (Community Services)
- Michele Caldwell (Library)
- Valerie Fisher (Library)
- Amy Munhall (Library)
- Koren Fare (Police)
- Scott LaFevre (Police)
- Jean Rugh (Police)
- Scott Scoville (Police)

- **10 Years of Service** (1989)

- Mark Anderson (Fire)
- Randy Carpenter (Fire)
- Bill Johnson (Fire)
- Rex Bales (Community Services)
- Julie LaPraim (Community Services)
- Jim Rowe (Police)
- Scott Snyder (Police)

- **15 Years of Service** (1984)

- Ron Fredrickson (Community Services)
- Clint Haynes (Community Services)
- Nancy Price (Library)

- **20 Years of Service** (1979)

- Dave Jared (Community Services)
- Terry Woodward (Community Services)
- Doug Hill (Police)
- Darrell King (Police)