

The Friday Update

Bringing you a summary of weekly news from City Hall

October 6, 2000

CITY OF COOS BAY

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FIRE DEPARTMENT HOSTS OPEN HOUSES – As part of fire prevention week October 8-14th the Coos Bay Fire Department will be hosting open houses at the three city fire stations. The open house schedule is as follows: Monday, October 9th Empire Station No.2, Tuesday, October 10th Eastside Station No. 3 and Wednesday, October 11th Central Station No.1. All open houses will run from 6-8pm and will include food and drinks, demonstrations and goodies as well as activities for the kids. Bring the kids down for some real family fun!

BOARDWALK AQUARIUM WORKS THROUGH INITIAL INSTALLATION CHALLENGES – Tuesday evening the City Council expressed concerns about the functionality of the new aquarium on the Downtown Boardwalk. Fish were reported dying and concerns about aesthetics of the “box” were the focus of items discussed. This morning ODFW Tom Rumreich explained that problems with the pump resulted in fish mortality but that these have been overcome thanks to assistance from Farr’s True Value Hardware. “This can be a successful display,” explained Rumreich to city manager Bill Grile this morning. “I just wish folks would be a little patient as we work through these issues,” he continued. About a dozen volunteers assisted Rumreich with the project. Concerning aesthetics, city manager Bill Grile stated this morning that he hoped to find a local artist to volunteer a mural for the aquarium. Any offers out there?

WATER BOARD FLUORIDE RELEASE KNOCKS OUT WASTEWATER PLANT 1 – An unauthorized but accidental release of up to 400 gallons of fluoride into the City sewer system resulted in nearly four million gallons of partially treated wastewater being released into Coos Bay over the weekend. OMI, Inc. -- the contract managers of the City’s wastewater collection and treatment system – did a great job of getting the plant back in operation quickly and the plant has been operating within permit since sometime last Sunday. Tuesday evening Water Board general manager Rob K. Schab appeared before the City Council to apologize for the incident and to stress that a careful review is underway to prevent future reoccurrences of the situation. “I appreciate the diligent effort Rob has taken in response to the mishap,” said city manager Bill Grile earlier this week. “I’m confident we’ll not see this problem repeat itself,” he continued, “since the Water Board is aggressively seeking ways to implement new procedures based on what it has learned from the incident.” The Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality is continuing its review of the incident and has yet to indicate whether it will impose penalty fines against either the Water Board or the City of Coos Bay.

CITY DOCK RECEIVES APPROVAL FOR PUMP-OUT STATION GRANT – Tuesday night the City Council awarded a contract to Chambers Heating & Plumbing to install a sewage pump-out station at City Dock on the Boardwalk downtown. The \$42,000 project is funded exclusively by a grant from the Oregon State Marine Board. The project has been underway by the Community Services Dept. for some time and now nears completion. This will protect the waters of Coos Bay and be a great convenience for boaters using the upper bay.

The Friday Update – October 6, 2000

COUNCIL REAFFIRMS POLICY ON STRIP-PAVING -- Tuesday evening the City Council turned down a request for strip-paving a portion of Edwards Avenue in Empire as part of a proposal by developer Thomas Ehlin. Strip paving occurs when asphalt overlays gravel without curbs, gutters and storm drains to channel water run-off. Yesterday afternoon the city manager and engineering administrator Karen Turner met with Mr. Ehlin to help him put together a local improvement district. "We hope to have found a win-win here," said Ms. Turner. As an alternative to the "LID," City staff is also looking at ways to implement a system to allow the developer to recover costs for street improvements paid for by the developer that benefit other private property owners not participating in the LID. Under this approach, these private property owners would be required to reimburse the developer fronting the costs for the improvements at such time as these other owners seek building permits.

URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY AUTHORIZES BOND SALE – Tuesday night the Urban Renewal Agency authorized the sale of bonds to generate \$1.32 million for the Empire Urban Renewal District. The bonds will carry interest ranging from 4.85-5.50% over a period of ten years. The proceeds will be used to advance several urban redevelopment projects in the Empire area and will be repaid by urban renewal taxes generated from property within the district. No ones taxes will increase a single penny as a result of the action! REPEAT: No ones taxes will increase a single penny as a result of the action! Questions? Contact the city manager or finance director Janell K. Howard.

NEW BAYSHORE STREETScape PROJECT REMAINS UNDER CONSIDERATION – A project to install period lights and perhaps paver bricks along the sidewalk on the west side of Bayshore in the Theater District downtown remains under consideration as a result of direction given the city manager Tuesday night by the Urban Renewal Agency. Staff will be developing additional details before returning to the Agency for additional direction.

SOUTH COAST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MAKES PROGRESS – City Councilor Jeff McKeown briefed the City Council Tuesday night about progress being made by the newly formed South Coast Development Council (SCDC). McKeown, who also serves as Chair of the Board of Directors of SCDC, reported that the organization is looking at a proposal by marketing firm Chapin Concepts for a plan to accomplish SCDC's marketing objectives. The plan would cost in the vicinity of \$40,000, he advised, and would not replace efforts to hire a permanent individual or firm to spearhead the SCDC job-creation drive.

COOS BAY FIRE DEPARTMENT RECEIVES AWARD – The Fire Department is please to announce the receipt of the 1999 Life Safety Achievement Award. The Residential Fire Safety Institute gives the award each year. The Life Safety Achievement Award recognizes local fire prevention activities that contribute to reducing the number of lives lost in residential fires. The Coos Bay Fire Department qualified for the award in 1999 because it recorded zero fire deaths in structures during the year.

EMPIRE GATEWAY PROJECT – The Empire Gateway Project is in the preliminary stage of the having a structural engineer provide beam sizing for the structure to the Richard P. Turi's office. Once that is complete the architect can send the beam sizes to a fabrication shop to get estimates on the cost of the project. The City should have those costs back in a couple of weeks.

EASTSIDE FIRE STATION NO. 3 COMPLETES WORK – Work was completed this week at Eastside Fire Station No. 3. The new roof was finished as well as the getting the new front ramp poured. Everyone is invited to come by the open house on Tuesday, Oct. 10th and see the finished project!

The Friday Update – October 6, 2000

FIRE DESTROYS LOCAL LANDMARK – Early last Saturday morning approximately 40 fire personnel from Coos Bay and North Bend Fire Departments responded to a fully involved structure fire at 401 6th Ave in Eastside. Boyd's Market was deemed a complete loss as firefighters worked for 12 hours to completely extinguish the fire. After conducting a fire scene investigation, interviewing the owner, employees and eyewitnesses, the fire department determined the cause of the fire was accidental. The area of origin of the fire was along the north wall of the structure near electrical outlets located in the meat processing area.

STATE HOSTS GOAL 7 WORKSHOP IN CB – The Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) held a workshop on Monday, October 9th at the public library to discuss proposed revisions to Statewide Planning Goal 7 (Natural Hazards). Statewide, the hazards considered by the Goal are: floods, landslides, earthquakes and tsunamis, coastal erosion and wildfires. The proposed revisions result from Governor Kitzhaber's direction to DLCD to review the effectiveness of Goal 7 in reducing risks from natural hazards. The Governor requested this review after the flood and landslide disasters of 1996 and 1997 that caused losses in 27 Oregon counties, including six deaths and over \$286 million in property damage. To summarize the proposed changes, local governments would be required to evaluate the effect (risk) to people and property from developing in identified hazard areas based on new inventories and other information provided by federal, state and local agencies. The Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) is scheduled to make a decision on the proposed changes on November 30th. More information is available on the changes at the Community Services Department in City Hall.

OREGON RURAL BROWNFIELD – Brownfield Development, LLC sponsored and provided a scholarship for a Coos Bay staff member to attend, the 2nd Annual Rural Brownfields Conference in Bend, Sept. 25 & 26. The focus was on the redevelopment and reuse of underutilized and environmentally damaged properties within city limits and urban growth boundaries rather than the continual move by developers to open previously unused properties for new ventures. This challenge for sustainability is supported by many government agencies that can offer monetary and technical support for redevelopment. Case histories of successful conversions to reuse were presented as examples of how this process works. Included among these was the Coos Bay pilot project of the Waterfront Heritage District along North Front Street.

PUBLIC MEETING MONDAY ON LOWER PONY CREEK WATERSHED STUDY – The Lower Pony Creek Watershed Committee will host a public meeting at 7:00 PM on Monday, October 9, 2000 in the North Bend Public Library meeting room to present the draft report of the Lower Pony Creek Watershed Assessment. The Lower Pony Creek Watershed Committee, an organization comprised of public and private stakeholders with an interest in the area, collected funds and contracted with the planning firm Satre & Associates of Eugene, Oregon to prepare the Assessment. The draft "The State of the Watershed" specifically identifies flooding problems (and the conditions leading to them), with additional focus on water quality and fish habitat issues. The consultant will present numerous maps, aerial photographs, and charts illustrating existing and historical conditions in the watershed.

As a part of this meeting the Lower Pony Creek Watershed Committee is soliciting views about desired conditions for the watershed, and suggestions for proposed actions that will assist in meeting these desired conditions. Because the Assessment is a "Work in Progress," public input is both timely and vitally important in determining the direction that the resulting Action Plan will take. For additional information, please call project manager, John Craig (Corps of Engineers, 267-6484), or Jon Souder (Coos Watershed Association, 888-5922).