



# The Friday Update

Bringing you a summary of weekly news from City Hall

August 10, 2001

**CITY OF COOS BAY**

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**CITY PURCHASES THE BAY AREA RESCUE MISSION PROPERTY IN EMPIRE** - In one of the most significant and important decisions the City has made in the past six years, Tuesday night the Coos Bay Urban Renewal Agency voted unanimously to approve purchase of the Bay Area Rescue Mission properties in Empire - ALL four of them. The decision will be a surprise to most in the community, but negotiations have been quietly underway for about three years, commencing with a request from former Mission director Stan Ellis who had initiated the proposal by approaching city manager Bill Grile and offering to sell the Mission's holdings in order to find a better location for a new Mission. Pastor Bill Parham, who heads the Mission program, continued the discussions with Grile and Tuesday night the decision was made.

Under the terms of the transfer, the Agency will pay the Mission \$255,000 for four separate properties including the building the houses the Mission dorm, kitchen and thrift store, another building used as a warehouse and known as "The Topits Building," a third building easterly down Newmark that has been used as an office, and finally a vacant lot west of the dormitory building. The City also agreed to lease back to the Mission, at the Mission's request, the building housing the dorm and also the office building. It will pay the City \$1200 per month for the former and \$1.00 a year for the latter. The \$255,000 sale price was based on an appraisal completed over a year ago by fee appraiser Marineau and Associates.

Details concerning the location for the new Mission have not been released by the Mission Board or Pastor Parham. However, the city manager explained to the Council that a discretionary zoning permit called a "Site Plan and Architectural Review" is required before the Mission can occupy its new building. That decision will follow after a public hearing before the Coos Bay Planning Commission. In laymen's terms, the only issue before the Planning Commission will be "how" the use operates on the property, NOT whether it can be allowed at the site selected for the new Mission.

Following the Agency decision Tuesday night, a small crowd on hand offered a round of applause for the action that had just occurred. And by the way, the three-year lease-back is so that the Mission can undertake a professionally managed fund-raising program. Proceeds from this will be used to remodel and improve the new Mission building.

**CITY ALSO PURCHASES CROWLEY MARATIME PROPERTY IN EMPIRE** - Last month the Coos Bay Urban Renewal Agency closed a deal with Crowley Maritime, and today the public can look forward to the redevelopment of an acre of choice waterfront property adjacent to the Empire Boat Ramp. What will it be used for, some have asked. That's yet to be decided. An application for federal funds to help finance a master plan for that property and the old Bay Club property overlooking the site is under consideration. Interest is growing and there will be many opportunities for public input before a decision to proceed with any specific plan is made. Tuesday night a newly formed "Empire Historical Wayside Support Group" approached the Agency with great information and a much-welcomed offer to help. Great, we say! Please keep your eyes peeled for news about this exciting opportunity as events begin to unfold this fall.

**FISCAL HEALTH IS EXAMINED IN SURVEY OF CITIES** – Cities are more concerned about their financial resources than they have been since 1994, and large cities are especially pessimistic about their financial futures. Those are some of the results of the National League of Cities' annual survey of city fiscal conditions. Last year, 27 percent of surveyed cities reported concern about financial resources. This year, that number rose to 44 percent. The cost of employee health benefits was the factor most often cited (89 percent) by cities as having a negative impact on their budgets. When asked to forecast their economic health in 2002, 54 percent of cities were pessimistic. That figure is up from 37 percent who were concerned in 2000, and it is the highest percentage since 1994. Among the largest surveyed cities (over 300,000 in population), 78 percent expect 2002 to be worse than 2001. However, the survey also showed that cities are planning well for hard economic times. Ending balances as a percentage of expenditures leveled off in 2000 at 18.7 percent, which is the highest percentage reported since the annual survey began in 1986. High ending balances are often used to fund rainy day reserves. The survey was conducted last March and April for NLC by Michael Pagano of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. It was sent to all cities with populations over 50,000 and to a nationally representative sample of cities with populations between 10,000 and 50,000. The 325 cities that responded represent a 31 percent response rate. For an executive summary of "City Fiscal Conditions in 2001," visit [http://www.nlc.org/nlc\\_org/site/newsroom/nations\\_cities\\_weekly/display.cfm?i](http://www.nlc.org/nlc_org/site/newsroom/nations_cities_weekly/display.cfm?i)

**HISTORIC DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE** - Looking to volunteer in your community? The City of Coos Bay has five openings on the newly established Historic Design Review Committee. The committee is to act as an advisory body to the City of Coos Bay Community Services Department, Planning Commission, City Council and, if requested, the Urban Renewal Agency for the City of Coos Bay. Applications are available from the city manager's office at city hall or by calling 269-8912. Deadline for submitting an application is 5 p.m. April 15<sup>th</sup>.

**BLACKBERRY TREATS AND GOODIES GALORE** - The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Blackberry Arts Festival is Saturday, August 25 from 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Sunday, August 26 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in downtown Coos Bay. Featuring arts, crafts, jewelry, photography, painting, woodworking, entertainment, blackberry treats, food and more. The festival is sponsored by the Coos Bay Downtown Association and organized by the Bay Area Jaycees.

**COOS BAY / NORTH BEND ROTARY CLUB PRESENTS 7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL OREGON COAST AIR FAIR** - Saturday, September 1, 2001 at the North Bend Municipal Airport from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Featuring monoplane and jet aircraft aerobatics, helicopter aerobatics and comedy act, aircraft static displays and flybys, skydiving exhibitions, rotor vs motor airplane car race plus ABATE of Oregon motorcycle exhibition and classic car & truck show and competition. The City of Coos Bay commends the Coos Bay / North Bend Rotary club for it's involvement each year in bringing the air fair to the south coast. For additional information contact the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce at 800-824-8486 or (541) 269-0215.

**AIR FAIR SEEKING VENDORS** - AirFair organizers are seeking unique food and aviation related vendors for the AirFair audience. Vendor applications are available by mail at PO Box 1175, Coos Bay, Oregon 97420. For more information contact Brian Newton, AirFair Vendor Coordinator at 267-9595 or email at [mbnewton@earthlink.net](mailto:mbnewton@earthlink.net).

**PRAISE DUE FOR AFSCME UNION EMPLOYEES** - The AFSCME Safety committee reports as of August 2, 2001, AFSCME Union employees have had 170 days free from job-related injuries. Congratulations and keep up the good work!

**LOCAL LEGISLATORS TO SPEAK AT LUNCH FORUM** - Bay Area Chamber of Commerce presents a lunch forum featuring Representative Joanne Verger, Representative Wayne Krieger, Senator Ken Messerle and moderated by Governmental Affairs Chairman Rick Howell of South Coast Education Service District.

Items to be discussed include 2001 happenings in the 71<sup>st</sup> Legislative Session, accomplishments during the session, what is left to be done and the local legislators impressions of the session. The lunch forum will be held on Wednesday, August 15, 2001 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at The Red Lion. Cost is \$9 for Chamber members and \$12 for non-members. Reservations are required and can be made by calling 269-0215.

**COUNCIL APPROVES SPRING 2002 PAVING PROJECT** - At its meeting Tuesday evening, the Council approved staff's recommendation to move forward with planning a paving project in the Marshfield High School neighborhood for immediately after school finishes next spring. Prior to completing the street project, sewer lines under the street will be televised to determine if sewer improvements are necessary, and those repairs will be completed if funds are available.

Funds for the project come from the Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation Program. Funds allocated to the City of Coos Bay are being exchanged with local dollars from Tri-Met so that the project can be managed following local contracting guidelines, instead of the intensive federal administration guidelines.

Street sections that make up the base bid will include: 10<sup>th</sup> Street from Lockhart to Ingersoll, Johnson from 7<sup>th</sup> Street to 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street from Ingersoll Avenue to Ferguson. Alternates to be completed if funds are sufficient include Ingersoll between 4<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Kruse between 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Street between Lockhart and Kruse.

**SOUTHTOWN PROJECTS** - Community Services Director Shanda Shribbs briefed the Council at its Tuesday, August 7<sup>th</sup> meeting on two projects that staff are currently working to develop in the Southtown area that may lead to future Urban Renewal projects. The first project would further develop South Front Street in the block between Ingersoll and Johnson, near the Safeway Store. The development is in response to the planned Oregon Federal Credit Union.

Staff is also working to develop a project that would make further improvements to the industrial area near Lockhart between Highway 101 and 7<sup>th</sup> Street. It is felt that with some infrastructure improvements, property owners and business owners in the area would be more inclined to increase investment in the area and increase jobs. The potential project includes a new pump station and collection lines. An additional signal at Highway 101 and South Front Street and paving South Front Street from Highway 101 to Lockhart, South 1<sup>st</sup> Street from Highway 101 to Lockhart and Lockhart from South Front Street to South Broadway are also being considered as a part of the plan. Staff will be continuing to develop the project and to determine potential funding sources for project components in the months ahead. Please contact Community Services Director Shanda Shribbs at 269-8918 if you have questions.

**BOARDWALK AQUARIUM IMPROVEMENTS COMING!** - The Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians is joining the existing partnership between the City and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to further develop the interpretive portion of the boardwalk aquarium. The Tribe has agreed to use existing grant funds to assist the city by contributing artwork commemorating the tribal way of life on the water for the front of the aquarium and to assist with design and installation of interpretive panels for the other sides of the aquarium. The Coos Bay Urban Renewal Agency will match the Tribes' contribution to assist with the interpretive panels. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will coordinate the information to be provided on the interpretive panels. City staff and volunteers with the ODF&W Step program continue to clean and improve the Aquarium exhibit on a regular basis.

**EMPIRE AREA TO JOIN DOWNTOWN IN BANNER DISPLAY** - The Urban Renewal Agency voted on Tuesday evening to purchase banner arm retrofit kits and seasonal banners for the light poles on Newmark Avenue in the Empire area. There are 54 light poles that will be retrofitted to accept banners similar to those on display in downtown. Both areas will have a set of five different banners to use periodically throughout

the year: Spring, Patriotic Bunting, Music theme, Festival theme and Christmas/Winter theme. The positive experience that downtown has had in displaying the banners led the Agency to request staff to find out if the light poles on Newmark could be retrofitted. It is expected that the poles will be retrofitted and banners ordered in time for the winter holiday displays.

**CITY SETTLES TWO OUT OF THREE EMPLOYEE UNION CONTRACTS** - The City Council ratified contracts for the City's AFSCME and Police Officers' Association unions last Tuesday evening. Yet to be settled is the Firefighters Association contract. The settlement with the AFSCME union is for a three-year contract for an amount equal to a 5% salary increase. The Police Officers' Association settlement is for a three-year contract with a 5% salary increase each July 1<sup>st</sup> and an additional 2% increase each January 1<sup>st</sup> for dispatchers. Settlement with the Police Officers' Association was an arbitrated award and the City must pay one-half the arbitration expenses.

**COOS ART MUSEUM SECURITY UPGRADES** - Officer Rod Schweitz of the Coos Bay Police Department recently reviewed the security systems at the Coos Art Museum with Reed Lockhart, Museum Director. Officer Schweitz recommended several improvements to the security system at the museum—some of a general nature and some specific for the current Harley Davidson exhibit. The City Parks crew has implemented several improvements based on Officer Schweitz' recommendations and there will be future improvements.