



NEWSLETTER



CITY OF YACHATS

April 2004

FROM THE MAYOR

WHY?

Why is it that government at all levels, including the Yachats City Council, pass resolutions and ordinances after what they consider to be careful thought and deliberation, and yet some people consider them stupid or mean spirited? The primary goal and perception on the part of the legislative body is that it is creating "law" that will make people's lives safer, more pleasant, or less invasive to their neighbors and/or the environment. It has been the intention of this council to pass as few restrictions as possible, dealing only with issues that can be enforced. Judging by correspondence received recently, misunderstandings have arisen from recent legislative changes and other actions taken by the council.

Why did the council recently add language to the nuisance ordinance to provide that during particularly dry periods the City may require that certain types of vegetation must be removed or disked under to eliminate potential fire hazard? Why does the ordinance make provision for the City to abate the nuisance if the owner does not, and ultimately for the City to place a lien against the property for the cost of that abatement? An anonymous critic complained in writing, calling the council "Nazis" and inferring that the City's intention was to take property from its rightful owner. This is an unfair accusation and highly inaccurate. It is in every property owner's best interest that the City have in place a **last resort** action to take in cases where dangerous conditions exist on private property that can be a hazard to all.

Please note the emphasis on the words "last resort", meaning at the point when every other effort to encourage the property owner to take care of their responsibility has been exhausted. Any lien placed under those extreme circumstances would be to defer the cost to the taxpayers for the abatement, and would be satisfied at the time that the property is sold.

Why does the council spend so much time thinking and talking about water conservation with all of the rainfall that we get? No, our water system is not in bad shape, although replacement of old water distribution pipes to improve water efficiency is a high priority. We produce water that is chemically purer than rainwater, but our water supply is limited. As Yachats continues to grow we will need to locate additional water sources or make better use of the water that is available to us. More storage is a solution, but a costly one. On the other hand, according to our consultants, if we reduce the amount of water we consume by as little as 16% we can avoid millions of dollars in construction costs. This will keep our water rates from escalating. We will always have expenses for repair, replacement and improvements to the system, but it would be a misconception to think that the system is broken.

Why are councilors involved in the "View the Future" group. Those of us who are involved are involved as private citizen volunteers. We take our time to listen to the plans, which appear to be striving for a "win/win" scenario with Boise in regard to the area to be harvested just south and east of town. We are not questioning the landowner's right to harvest. Our concern is that the "Gem of the Oregon Coast" maintain as much natural beauty as possible.

Why not learn more about how your local government operates? Please join us at our monthly work session held each second Monday of the month, 9:30 a.m., or the regular council meeting held on the second Thursday at 2:00 p.m. All meetings are posted at the Post Office, local bank, and the Commons bulletin boards. If you cannot attend a meeting, write or call with your concerns. Please let us know who you are so that we can have a conversation with you. We volunteer our time to serve this community and we consider difference of opinion to be a healthy ingredient essential to its growth and improvement.



New Parks and Commons Commission Member Appointed

Will Reed was appointed to serve on the Parks & Commons Commission, filling a term ending December 2006.

Reed has been a part time resident of Yachats for quite a while and wants to be active in the community now that he is here full time. Welcome!



Public Works Director's Report

At the April 8, 2004 meeting, John McClintock introduced Mark Wilson, the new sewer plant operator. Mark came to the City of Yachats from the Netarts Sanitary District on the northern Oregon coast.

McClintock reported:

- Water efficiency is back up to 75%. Funding for leak detection has been added to the budget proposal for 2004-2005.
- The public works department is still waiting on the permit from ODOT for the work along Hwy 101.
- The electricians and the power company have been doing some extensive work on the pump stations.
- The City has received ten additional equivalent dwelling unit allowances from the Department of Environmental Quality.
- If the proposal is approved by State Parks, Dyer Partnership will be engineering the improvements to Yachats Ocean Road. State Parks will pay for the project.
- The work on the Library building foundation will begin within the next two weeks. A french drain will be constructed in that area to correct problems due to standing water and prevent future problems.



Library News

- Annette Howarth will continue to act as Library Manager until December 2005.
- A book sale will be held on May 29. Donations in good condition are appreciated.
- The Commission is looking at the possibility of changing the hours of operation. They want to make the Library more available to children getting off the bus in the afternoon.
- Foundation stabilization work at the Library will begin within the next couple of weeks. It may be necessary to close part or all of the building during the construction period. Watch for notices at the Library.



Announcements

- State Parks has removed the picnic tables along Yachats Ocean Road, but they will be replaced with new ones.
- The April meeting of the Community Issues Forum will be held on April 22 at the Oregon Department of Transportation District Office at Ona Beach. The topic will be Fire and Emergency Services. The public is invited to attend.
- The City has received a copy of the geotechnical report commissioned by the County for the rehabilitation of the bluff where it has been washing away near the intersection of Fourth Street and Ocean View Drive. The copy is available to the public at City Hall. The rip-rap project will be quite extensive and that is one example of how complex the issue of bluff protection can be.



Notice of budget committee meeting

A public meeting of the Budget Committee of the City of Yachats, Lincoln County, State of Oregon, to discuss the budget for the fiscal year July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005 will be held at the Civic Meeting Room, Yachats Commons. The meeting will take place on the 4th day of May, 2004 at 5:30 p.m. The purpose of the meeting is to receive the budget message and to receive comment from the public on the budget. A copy of the budget document may be inspected or obtained on or after April 23, 2004 at City Hall, 441 Hwy 101 N., between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Additional meetings have been scheduled, if needed, for May 10 and 11, 2004. The purpose of these meetings will be to review the budget document and receive public comment. These are public meetings where deliberation of the Budget Committee will take place. Any person may appear at these meetings and discuss the proposed programs with the Budget Committee.

Yachats City Budget - Year to Date Comparison

Fiscal Year July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004

<i>Reporting Through</i>	<i>3/31/04</i>	
Program	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Administration	\$542,118	\$429,601
Library	\$16,503	\$12,542
Little Log Church & Museum	\$8,423	\$4,145
Parks & Commons*	\$86,905	\$57,890
Streets	\$138,613	\$93,825
Water	\$510,600	\$375,357
Sewer	\$351,138	\$230,638
In Reserve for Future Uses	\$1,649,360	\$1,010,670
Debt	<u>\$128,426</u>	<u>\$96,207</u>
Total	<u>\$3,432,086</u>	<u>\$2,310,875</u>



Low Income Waiver on water bills

Yachats Code allows the City Recorder to grant a partial waiver if the consumer is eligible.

A waiver of 50% of the monthly base water charge may be considered by the City Recorder based upon written request by the user, and documentation of eligibility for low income assistance from the State of Oregon. Based on the current base rate that waiver is \$11.50 per month.

If you meet the criteria, and would like your case considered contact the City Office.



Don't Forget To check

City Code requires that each homeowner install a hand valve on their side of the meter. This hand valve should be used to turn the water off when the house will be left empty to prevent cold water damage or unauthorized water use. But installing them is not good enough if they can't be used. Moles and other small animals digging around the meter, leaves and other debris, or mud can all cover up the hand valve making it difficult to find or use. RIGHT NOW, while you are thinking of it... **make sure your hand valve is accessible.**



Building Permit Questions

City staff frequently receives questions regarding the need for building permits for various home improvement projects. There are some types of projects that do not require a permit. Fences not over 6 feet high; accessory buildings not over 120 square feet or a height of 10 feet tall; patio covers; porches; sidewalks; driveways; and some decks are examples.

While these projects do not require a building permit there are many other factors that need to be considered before proceeding. A quick visit with the City Planner before you start could eliminate problems and additional expenses "down the road." Some things can be confusing. For example a deck less than 30" high does not need a permit, but if it is more than 8" high it must be considered when determining total lot coverage. Lot coverage, easements, set-backs, and safety concerns are some of the things that the Planner should be consulted regarding.

Larry Lewis, City Planner, is in Mondays and Tuesdays from 9:00 to 4:30 and is available to discuss your plans before you start.



Landscaping

Planning with water conservation in mind is especially easy here on the central coast. Many native plants thrive in this area so you can green plants and colorful flowers instead of just cactus.

The native plants are resistant to the wind, slugs, and animals. Resistance to wind is the most important factor when considering water conservation. Wind robs the plants of moisture and if the plant is not hardy, extra watering is necessary.

Planning is the most important part of successful conservation landscaping. Begin by deciding if you want to entertain, have privacy, provide area for children to play, or have a garden. You must also consider the areas where sun, shade, terrain and drainage will affect the plants you choose.

A local landscaping architect or nursery can help you with information for a specific area, but the following tips are true everywhere:

- A tree's shade lowers air and soil temperature, this in turn reduces the moisture requirements of nearby plants.
- Reduce grassy areas whenever possible and separate it from other plantings so it can be watered separately.
- Place plants with high water requirements in areas that receive a lot of water naturally.
- Slopes and hills should have a ground cover or spreading plant that keeps erosion down.
- Place shrubs away from the house's foundation watering may damage its foundation.
- Mulches cover and cool the soil and discourage evaporation.
- Soil improvement allows for better absorption and retention of water.

- Group plants with similar water needs together to avoid water waste and reduce maintenance.

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