



NEWSLETTER



CITY OF YACHATS

January 2004

FROM THE MAYOR

WELCOME TO 2004

The following article, reprinted from "Local Focus" the League of Oregon Cities newsletter, aptly describes what we face in a democratic society. I felt it worthwhile to pass along. Lee Corbin



The Dilemma of Democracy

by Edward C. Harms, Jr., LOC President 1958-59

Providing a democratic government in our society today which is truly responsive to the electorate, and at the same time provides those services necessary to what is sometimes called the common good, truly poses a dilemma for the conscientious local elected official. He or she is trying to serve citizens who have a built-in conflict of interest in that they desire many services and facilities but do not want to pay for them. Many of them have been persuaded and hold dearly to the fiction that those services can be provided without taxes, or at the least, not by taxes that are paid by them personally.

That dilemma requires that those we have elected to serve us, at all levels of government, make choices which may not satisfy or please the more or less transient "will of the people". It requires the courage and ability to make decisions as to what is in the public interest or good, as well as an ability to determine, in fact, what the will of the people actually is when both the public interest and the public will are obscured by self interest and special interests which are usually louder than the true "voice of the people".

As a representative democracy, we elect officials to make those choices, to establish priorities and provide leadership in deciding and achieving community goals. They represent something more than the individual voter. Even those views which are widely held must be balanced in the public official's attempt to find what the public interest really is, or as it is frequently expressed, the common good.

That "common good" has been referred to by some as the very central idea of this country; that because of our self governing system, we're all in this together. As a columnist recently put it, "we all do better when we all do better".

The public official's job is not made easier by frequent expressions of the public which conflict with the concept that such a thing as a "common good" even exists.

Examples abound:

- "Government is not the solution; it is the problem." [Never mind the incongruity of a position that asks us to love our country by hating our government.]
- "The only thing our (state) government has ever done effectively is suck resources out of the private sector."

- "No new taxes!" In the opinion pages of our daily newspapers, tax cuts are frequently equated with patriotism and espousing taxes for any purpose with the lack thereof.
- If a public official dares to suggest (usually after a negative vote on any tax, however unrelated to a present issue) that taxes may be necessary to provide a given service, the letters to the editor columns resound: "What do our elected representatives not understand about the word 'NO'?!"

Some time ago (the problem is not new) an *Oregonian* editorial entitled "More For Less?" pointed out that an extensive survey (8,500 questionnaires were sent out) in one of the larger Oregon cities asked for what was right and what was wrong in the community. Taxes were held to be the most disliked. On the other hand, the ranking dislikes included "deficient city services". After noting it would probably be the same in almost every other community, the editorial concluded:

"Apparently not one citizen spoke up for higher taxes (to improve the services complained of) or for fewer services (to reduce the taxes complained of)."

Certainly this is part of the dilemma of our democracy.

The fact is that it is our government. If we have the will and desire to make it better for the benefit of the entire community we can, if we take the time and energy to articulate, inform, campaign and vote. It is possible to make the system work for us.

You may respond "that is all very well, but how do you do that?" There is no one answer to that crucial question. One thing is certain; it cannot be accomplished by following polls or merely attempting to find what the popular position of the electorate may be at any given moment. Our public officials must be willing to make difficult decisions on how the public interest and the common good will best be served.

George Washington said of this; *"If to please the people we offer that which we ourselves disapprove, how can we afterwards defend it? Let us raise a standard to which the wise and just can repair. The event is in the hand of God."*



Downtown Parking Design Discussed

Councilor Yvonne Wulff reported that as part of the Transportation Growth Management (TGM) planning process several areas were identified where addition parking could be made available without expensive improvements. The areas that were listed as needing simple improvements like signs and gravel included the south side of E. Second, the east side of Prospect, E. Third Street, W Second and Third Streets and on Pontiac.

Wulff said that there are also two other areas that were discussed that would require working with private property owners: The use of these two areas would be more complex since it would mean working on private property and they would require more planning and extensive construction.

City Council directed staff to proceed with the first phase of the parking list, and to prepare a more detailed map and plan, showing the actual spaces, while considering the current standards and requirements.

City Council also voted that it is in the public interest to consider the feasibility of increased parking in the downtown area so they authorized the City Planner to prepare a layout for parking plans on those two private lots that were identified.



Public Works Director's Report

By John McClintock

- The Commons emergency generator will be delivered this week (weather permitting). Public Works is constructing a concrete slab and working with L.H. Morris Electric on the installation.

Wastewater

- The sewer infiltration and inflow project is approximately 95% complete. WW Construction has to complete pressure testing the new pipe, pipe repairs, the new manholes, and all manhole repairs.
- WW Construction also has to deliver to the City a complete video of all work including the interiors of new and repaired pipelines. Last item will be the paving of excavation sites.
- Public Works has been doing maintenance work on the Wastewater Treatment Plant and several of the collection system pump stations.
- The Wastewater Plant is handling higher flows with the wet weather. The infiltration and inflow project should reduce those high flow numbers.

Water

- The Water Plant is running well; however, water efficiency figures are down. Public Works is searching for possible leaks in the system.
- Two small hill slides were repaired on the Reedy Creek access road.
- The Reedy Creek Headworks were cleaned. This is where the raw water is drawn from the creek.
- Still planning to flush the entire distribution system next month. All customers will be notified before start of the flushing process.

Streets

- The Fourth Street Storm Drain/Parking Project is about 65% complete. We should be finished within the next week.
- Public Works has been working a great deal on the trail system. Work was performed on the following locations: Areas behind the Commons, Sixth Street to Ocean View Drive, Sixth Street to Seventh Street and Marine Drive to Aqua Vista Lane.
- Rocks were rearranged along the trail route.
- A portion of the project will be fenced (Marine Drive to Aqua Vista and Aqua Vista to the beach) over the next two weeks.
- During a meeting with ODOT City representatives were informed of significant changes need for the Highway 101 Sidewalk Plan. The City met with contractor Ray Wells concerning those changes. Wells will submit a new cost estimate to the City soon.
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Commissions Adopt Goals for 2004

At the January 8 meeting, City Council received the goals for the coming year from two of the commissions. The Library Commission will be meeting in a special session this month to work on theirs.

PUBLIC WORKS AND STREETS COMMISSION 2004 Goals

1. Monitor the schedule set for sewage collection system and treatment plant improvements in the MAO.
2. Pursue extension of the City's water rights on the Yachats River.
3. Participation in the finalization of the TGM/ODOT Transportation/Parking/Circulation Recommendations.
4. Review the five-year Street/Storm System Plan and budget figures.
5. Make recommendations to City Council on the type of speed-monitoring device to be purchased. Implementation of a Speed-Monitoring Program.
6. Review water and wastewater rate recommendations from Ray Bartlett Study and make

recommendations to City Council.

7. Continue evaluating the noxious weed ordinance.
8. Continued participation and expansion of the Yachats Clean Sweep Program.
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PARKS AND COMMONS COMMISSION

2004 GOALS

1. Adopt and oversee a routine and long-term maintenance plan for the facilities (including equipment & playground).
2. Continued painting of the exterior and interior of the Commons.
3. Oversee maintenance of the trails and grounds of the facilities - Establish a program that allows for volunteer or organizations to adopt a portion of the trail for litter patrol. Cheryle Collins volunteered to compose an article for the City Newsletter.
4. Coordinate joint meetings with Friends of the Commons, Yachats Youth and Family Activity Program, and City Council.
5. Adopt and monitor a budget and explore sources of funding (including grants) for the above tasks.

Tasks for 2004

1. Improve the aesthetic quality of the interior of the Commons
2. Adopt a plan for a trail system within the Commons grounds
3. Help in the planning and development of the citywide trail system
4. Complete the landscaping in front of the Commons
5. Complete the landscaping of the Whale Tail Park
6. Review the Yachats Emergency Plan
7. Adopt and monitor a budget and explore sources of funding (including grants) for the above tasks
8. Explore future construction and funding of permanent storage
9. Improve the aesthetic look of the exterior of the Commons Building
- 10.



In Other City Council News

- Annette Howarth, Chair of the Library Commission, reported to City Council that because of sinking the condition of the library building is becoming much worse. In fact, there are cracks in the building. City Council authorized the Public Works Director to assess the condition of the library building and secure an estimate from a local contractor who is proficient in repairing that type of damage.
- City Council scheduled a workshop/retreat in the Commons in Room 8, on February 19 at 9:30 a.m. John Baker will facilitate. Council will finalize the agenda at their next meeting.
- City Council reappointed Leslie Carter to serve on the Parks and Commons Commission for another three years.
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City Budget Report

<i>Reporting Through</i>	<i>12/31/03</i>	
Program	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Administration	\$542,118	\$367,377
Library	\$16,503	\$9,522
Little Log Church & Museum	\$8,423	\$3,114
Parks & Commons*	\$86,905	\$49,752
Streets	\$138,613	\$40,988
Water	\$510,600	\$298,419
Sewer	\$351,138	\$181,135
In Reserve for Future Uses	\$1,210,960	\$1,036,159
Debt	<u>\$128,426</u>	<u>\$7,960</u>
	<u>\$2,993,686</u>	<u>\$1,994,424</u>

SAVING WATER INDOORS



Never put water down the drain when there may be another use for it such as watering a plant or garden, or cleaning.

Verify that your home is leak-free, because many homes have hidden water leaks. Read your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, there is a leak.



Repair dripping faucets by replacing washers. If your faucet is dripping at the rate of one drop per second, you can expect to waste gallons per year, which will add to the cost of water and sewer utilities, or strain your septic system.



Check for toilet tank leaks by adding food coloring to the tank. If the toilet is leaking, color will appear within minutes. Check the toilet for worn out, corroded or bent parts. Most replacement parts are inexpensive, readily available and easily installed. (Flush as soon as test is done, since food coloring may stain tank.)

Avoid flushing the toilet unnecessarily. Dispose of tissues and other such waste in the trash rather than the toilet.

If the toilet flush handle frequently sticks in the flush position, letting water run constantly, replace or adjust it.

Take shorter showers. Replace your showerhead with an ultra-low-flow version. Some units are available that allow you to cut off the flow without adjusting the water temperature knobs.



Use the minimum amount of water needed for a bath by closing the drain first and filling the tub only half full. Stopper tub before turning water on. The initial burst of cold water can be warmed by adding hot water later.

Don't let water run while shaving or washing your face. Brush your teeth first while waiting for water to get hot, then wash or shave after filling the basin.

Retrofit all wasteful household faucets by installing aerators with flow restrictors.



Operate automatic dishwashers and clothes washers only when they are fully loaded or properly set the water level for the size of load you are using.

Store drinking water in the refrigerator rather than letting the tap run every time you want a cool glass of water.

Do not use running water to thaw meat or other frozen foods. Defrost food overnight in the refrigerator or by using the defrost setting on your microwave.

Kitchen sink disposals require lots of water to operate properly. Start a compost pile as an alternate method of disposing food waste instead of using a garbage disposal. Garbage disposals also can add to the volume of solids in the sewer system, which can lead to problems and higher maintenance costs.

Consider installing an instant water heater on your kitchen sink so you don't have to let the water run while it heats up. This will reduce heating costs for your household.

Insulate your water pipes. You'll get hot water faster plus avoid wasting water while it heats up.

When adjusting water temperatures, instead of turning water flow up, try turning it down. If the water is too hot or cold, turn the offender down rather than increasing water flow to balance the temperatures.



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.

Do You Know Where Your Hand Valve Is?



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. Twice a year, at the same time you change your smoke detector batteries and change your clocks...make sure your hand valve is accessible.



Commons News

By Susan Garner - Commons Coordinator

A new year, a new chance to get involved in your community. The Yachats Commons, our community center here in town, is the site for many events and activities. There are tai chi classes, yoga, group guitar classes, beading workshops, scrapbook classes. A senior luncheon is scheduled for every last Thursday of the month and don't forget you have the chance to dance to our very own Yachats Big Band every first Thursday of the month.

When a new event or a special activity is planned for the community, it is advertised on the readerboard which is now brightly illuminated, thanks to the Friends of the Commons. The readerboard is maintained by the city, with volunteer helpers Barbara and Wes Liston. There is also a weekly Commons calendar posted inside on the bulletin boards of the building and the city's web site.

And you can always call my office at 547-4734 for further information.

Coming up on February 10 at 7 pm, is a meeting for all crafters and artists in the area. This meeting, put on by Oregon Crafted, is to help with technical assistance to artists and crafters and give assistance to promoting their work. For further information, contact Joan Shea at 541-687-8353.

There will also be a meeting on the 12th of February at 6 pm to let the community know what the next phase of the Cape Creek tunnel work will be.

Check the bulletin boards, readerboard and give me a call for information about other events here at the Commons.



Charter Cable Service Update

Customers who experienced service interruptions during the bad weather will need to call customer service to get a credit applied to their bills. The toll-free number for Charter is 866-731-5420

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