



NEWSLETTER



CITY OF YACHATS

September/October 2006

SAVE YOURSELF TROUBLE AND CHECK THE CODE FIRST.....

by Susanne Smith, Mayor

There have been a number of incidents lately that prompt me to share an important reminder with all property owners in Yachats: Check the City Code Before you install that expensive outdoor light to highlight the waves, make sure that it isn't shining on private or public property. Before you decide to use a property as a vacation rental, be certain that the property meets the necessary criteria for vacation rentals in Yachats. Before you erect a sign, check the code requirements for size, location, etc. Before you conduct business in the City of Yachats, check the requirements for a business license. Avoid frustration and disappointment by being informed. Parts of the Yachats Municipal Code are fascinating. It is available, divided into sections, on the City website (www.ci.yachats.or.us) as well as in City Hall. It is "user friendly" in that sections are tabbed for easy reference. The City Charter is in it, along with sections (which may, admittedly, have limited interest for some folks) such as Administration and Personnel; Revenue and Finance, etc. Of particular interest to property owners might be the sections on Business Licenses and Regulations; Health and Safety (including Nuisance); Vehicles and Traffic; Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places (Driveways & Culverts; Parades & Processions); and the one that seems to be of the most interest to the greatest number of people: Zoning and Land Use. This is our community; we have the right and the obligation to understand how it functions.



WATER AND SEWER RATES ADOPTED

As you may recall, last September the Public Works & Streets Commission made a recommendation to the City Council that a new billing structure be adopted which would tie the base rate to an "Equivalent Dwelling Unit" (EDU) as established using guidelines from the Department of Environmental Quality. At the public hearing many of the business owners said that doing so would force some of them out of business.

Following that public hearing City Council adopted new rates but left the billing structure as it was, and directed the Public Works & Streets Commission to continue working on some kind of structure that would address some of the inequity in the system.

The Public Works & Streets Commission worked on this for the next 11 months and recently forwarded their new recommendation to City Council. The "reworked" billing structure will use a "Yachats Equivalent Unit" (YEU) based on the actual data for this community rather than the DEQ table. The YEU represents the average use by a residential customer and so for most of the homes in town the base rate will remain the same.

City Council held a public hearing on September 14, and adopted the recommended billing structure and rates as follows: \$25 per month base for water, \$35 base per month for sewer, and for each hundred cubic feet (hcf) of water used \$4.00 for water and \$4.50 for sewer; and establish an Yachats Equivalent Unit of 3,200 cf. In the application of the YEU the second multiplier will be implemented at 6,400 and at each 3,200 cf thereafter; each multiplier to equal one base rate. The rates will be effective with the bills mailed on November 1, 2006.

For the average Yachats residential customer, this will mean an increase of about \$7.50 a month.



COMMONS RENTAL RATES ADOPTED

After months of work by the Parks and Commons Commission and a special Commons Funding Task Force, City Council adopted the new rental rates, and a slight modification to the structure.

The new rates will be effective October 1, 2006. Contracts and agreements already booked will be honored at the old rate.



CITY COUNCIL ACCEPTS GRANT FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE COMMONS

Council gratefully accepted the grant from the Friends of the Commons to build a storage area above the boiler room. The exact location and plans will be approved as part of the building permit process before construction begins.



WETLAND RESTORATION by Susanne Smith, Mayor

Many of you have enjoyed a stroll on the Yachats Commons boardwalk, between the spruce forest and the ball field. Maybe you've wondered if the landscape around the boardwalk has always looked the way it does now. The answer is no.

Years ago, this area was mostly low-lying terrain. It filled with water during the rainy season, and the resulting wetland provided a diverse wildlife habitat.

As Yachats grew, the wetland was used as a dumping ground. Low-lying spots were filled with soil and construction debris, and ditches were dug to move water off the site.

Now, the City of Yachats is working to restore part of the wetland. We have a restoration plan, a permit from the Oregon Department of State Lands, and a grant from the Oregon Department of Land Conservation & Development. The restoration project involves removing some of the existing vegetation, excavating two shallow ponds, and changing the shape of the main ditch. The work is taking place as this is written, and will be completed soon.

So, you may have see an excavator, dump trucks, and other heavy equipment moving around back there. It may seem more like destruction than restoration, but the eventual result will be re-established low-lying spots to collect and hold water.

And if you're worried about mosquitoes, here's something to consider. Because the ponds are designed to dry-up in late spring and summer, there should be less mosquito breeding habitat than there is now.

As a safety measure, boardwalk access has been restricted during the project. We apologize for this inconvenience.

You can visit City Hall to take a look at the restoration plan. And if you have questions about the project or would like to volunteer some time to help, please call us (547-3565). We will be happy to put you in touch with a member of the Yachats Commons Park Task Force.



HELP WANTED

The Yachats Community Park Task Force is looking for volunteers between now and October 2007. Volunteers will help plan and carry out projects that involve landscaping, boardwalk and trail extensions, and improving the safety of children's play areas. If you are interested, please call Don Niskanen (547-3706) or Cheryl Waide (547-4821). You may also drop by at the next task force meeting – October 23, 9:00 a.m. in the Civic Meeting Room of the Commons.



PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by John McClintock

- The water system is in great shape. Even though it has been dry, there has been no problem meeting the demand.
- The efficiency was about 91% last month.
- The sewer plant made it through the summer. Some operational changes have been made, and although it entailed some overtime there were no problems even during the holiday weekend.
- The Dyer Partnerships will attend the City Council meeting in October to give an update on the sewer project..
- The Hwy 101 overlay project is complete. ODOT and the contractors are going through the punch list. If anyone has any concerns now would be the time to bring it up.
- Parts of King, East 9th, Horizon and Spruce Streets will be paved.
- The boulders along Ocean View Drive will be removed to the Yachats public works shop, curbs and other improvements and signage will be installed. This work is scheduled to be done within the next 60 days.
- The utility position has been filled Jason Wilson started on September 25.



THANK YOU!

by Susanne Smith, Mayor

You may have noticed that City Hall has been short-handed lately. If you have a chance, please stop in and thank Nancy and Joy (as well as Marie, our temp) for all they have done to keep the City operational. While I'm at it, I'd also encourage us all to, once again, thank our public works crew for all they do to keep water coming to us every day and waste going away. The wastewater treatment plant is continuing to function primarily due to the high maintenance vigilance being exercised by John, Rick, Russ, Jason and David.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

by Susanne Smith, Mayor

If you have a few hours a month to spare, we would welcome your help at City Hall stuffing newsletters and water bills and getting them ready for mailing. We have a much appreciated group of volunteers already but could always use more. If there are a half dozen people, it might take a couple of hours.....this saves on staff time and therefore City money.

Our current crew (big thank yous to all of you!) include Mike and Sue Smith, Marcia and Mike Callahan, Sassy Middaugh, Yvonne and Arnold Faber, Nancy Hull, and Lynne Dimmick. Not all of these folks can be there every time so it is a help to have "back-up" assistance. If this is some way you could help, please call City Hall at 547-3565 or Mike Smith (Coordinator) at 547-4679.



SHERIFF'S TOWN HALL MEETINGS IN OCTOBER

Sheriff Dennis Dotson is continuing the Sheriff's Office Community Outreach in a series of Town Hall Meetings. This is an opportunity for each citizen to share thoughts about law enforcement in Lincoln County. Lincoln County is growing. How should law enforcement address the current and future growth with limited taxpayer dollars? Make sure your voice is heard!

- Tuesday, October 10, 2006 - Depoe Bay Community Center, 220 SE Bay Drive
- Tuesday, October 17, 2006 - Yachats Commons, 441 N. Hwy 101

Tuesday, October 24, 2006 - Toledo City Hall, 206 N. Main St.
ALL MEETINGS ARE FROM 6:30 TO 8:00 P.M.



WILDLIFE

by Susanne Smith, Mayor

Coyotes and bears have been continuing to roam widely recently. I suspect that food is scarcer this time of year and that the bears are preparing for hibernation. It is probably advisable to continue to exercise caution with pets, feeders and garbage. We have seen "sign" at our house west of Highway 101, so they are foraging farther afield than in the past.



Commons News

By Susan Garner - Commons Coordinator

For those of you who have been dealing with the toilets in the women's restroom, be pleasantly surprised. We have new toilets in there! It has been a long time coming, but this will certainly make events here at the Commons more pleasant for the women.

The Commons continues to improve. The folks who brought you the play, saw the need for a dark curtain to keep the light out near the north door of the multipurpose room and so they came up with a design and made one and donated it to the Commons. Thanks so much Robbie and Carl.

Behind the Commons, the flower garden is still blooming away, the Yachats Youth and Family Activities Program is doing a great job at maintaining and watching over the flowers. And behind the garden, the wetlands restoration project is really going strong. Invasive plants are being removed and original wetlands areas are being restored. Next spring we should have lots of frogs and birds out in that area.

We have an amazing community center here with lots of activities and events going on for all sorts of interests. It is so gratifying to hear compliments from people who are putting on the events and those who come to those events. I think we all need to stop sometimes and remember how lucky we are that we have this place in our community. It helps put our town on the map, gives us a real sense of place and great opportunities to have a wide variety of experiences.

Below is a list of some of the events and activities at the Commons in the next month:

- Oct. 5 – Big Band Dance, 7 pm
- Oct. 7 – Flotones, vocal ensemble, 7 pm
- Oct. 14 – Harvest Moon Dance, 8 pm
- Oct. 17 – Sheriff's Town Hall Meeting, 6:30 pm
- Oct. 19 – Movie Night, 6:30 pm
- Oct. 20 & 21, Mushroom Festival
- Oct. 26 – Lunch Bunch, noon
- Oct. 28 – Brushwhacker's Ball, 7 pm
- Oct. 29 – Treon piano students recital, 2 pm

For a further listing of on-going events, go to the Commons website: www.yachatscommons.org or call me at 547-4734

<i>Reporting Through August 31, 2006</i>		
Program	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Administration	\$707,453	\$361,767
Library	\$17,603	\$4,687
Little Log Church & Museum	\$12,175	\$5,630
Parks & Commons*	\$97,093	\$32,074
Streets	\$129,234	\$17,063
Water	\$473,507	\$137,084
Sewer	\$6,219,536	\$249,416

In Reserve for Future Uses	\$2,056,246	\$1,726,465
Debt	\$134,855	\$1,000
	\$9,847,702	\$2,535,186



VOTING

by Susanne Smith, Mayor

November 7th, 2006 is Election Day. Voting is a right and a privilege. There are many ballot measures this year which require careful consideration and action. Our Voter's Pamphlets should be arriving in our mailboxes soon. I urge you to read them carefully. While there are two Council seats and the Mayor's position that are open in this year's elections and all three candidates are unopposed, it is still important that you exercise your rights. Yachats historically has a higher than average voter turnout. Let's keep up the good work!



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 will 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 \$12.50 per month.

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



LEAKS AND LEAK DETECTION

A little leak can account for large amount of lost water. A pinhole size leak can mean a loss of gallons in three months, and it is so hard to find. The best way to determine if you have a leak is to perform an audit.

A water audit is most accurate in winter months when there isn't outdoor water use.

Locate your water meter and make note of the meter reading. Turn off all the fixtures in and around your home and don't use any water for an hour. Then go back and check the reading on the meter, if it has changed, you have a leak or leaks!!

Repair any leaks, retro-fit with water saving devices, insulate pipes and water heater, and adjust water use.

Check water use for several months after your audit, repairs, retro-fits, and adjustments to compare use.

[City of Yachats](http://www.ci.yachats.or.us)