Minutes of the Veneta City Council Work Session
October 12, 2015

Present: Sandra Larson, Tim Brooker. Thomas Cotter, Victoria Hedenstrom and Thomas Laing

Others: Ric Ingham, City Administrator; Shauna Hartz, Finance Director; Kay Bork, Community Services Director, Kyle Schauer, Public Works Director; Darci Henneman, City Recorder; Steven Reister; Lane County Commissioner Jay Bozievich; Sgt. Halvorson; LCSO, Sheriff Byron Trapp, LCSO; Chief Terry Ney; Lane Fire Authority; Superintendent Aaron Brown, Crow/Applegate Lorane School District; and Joan Mariner, Fern Ridge Review

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1. CALL TO ORDER THE VENETA CITY COUNCIL WORK

Mayor Larson called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

2. PROPOSED FERN RIDGE POLICING DISTRICT

Mr. Reister presented a power point presentation. He said a group of citizens have united and in the last few months have spearheaded the Fern Ridge Neighborhood Watch (FRNW) and Fern Ridge Patrol Group. They have worked with Lane County Sheriff's Office, the Fern Ridge Community, and the City of Veneta, to discuss potential long term public safety solutions. The Citizens Initiative is to create the Fern Ridge Community Policing District. The group has made a lot of progress; however, concerns remain that because only Veneta City limits are patrolled, we are creating an environment for criminals. He said the residents would vote for the District hopefully during the May 2016 election. The Policing District would provide the following services: 10 patrol deputies; 2 resource deputies (1 for school, one for community service (FRYC)); 1 Fulltime sergeant, and expanded neighborhood watch. Mr. Reister asked if the Council had any questions.

In response to a question from Thomas Laing, Mr. Reister said the Youth Corps. Program would be a stand-alone nonprofit and would be supervised by a resource officer.

Joan Mariner thanked Mr. Reister for putting this together and all the effort that was put forth.

Mr. Reister said he has met with the Lane County Tax & Assessor's office to come up with estimated assessment amounts.

Jay Boziviech said the school districts would not be included in the compression calculations, but the Library and Lane Fire Authority would be effected.

Sgt. Halvorson said the District boundary was loosely based on the school district but scaled down to shorten police response. He said Crow is included in the boundary but not Lorane. He said Lorane is 19 miles from Veneta and it's hard to deliver service that far south. He said Crow Junior/High School and Applegate Elementary are included in the District.

In response to a question from Victoria Hedenstrom, Mr. Reister said he has talked to the principals at Elmira High and Crow High as well as both school district superintendents.

Mr. Brown, Superintendent of Crow/Applegate/Lorane (CAL) School District, said he is very supportive of a policing district. He said he is in favor of having a resource officer at the Junior/High School and enrolled CAL students could be involved with the youth corp. He said his schools are old and open so it would be very positive to have a five minute response.

In response to a question from Mayor Larson, Mr. Reister said its possible to have a ballot measure written by December. He said Lane County Elections needs all ballot information by February 2016. He said he will show this power point presentation to Lane County Commissioners at an October 20th Work Session. He said a lot of work still needs to be done and they need support from Veneta City Council and County Commissioners to get this to voters in May 2016.

Terry Ney, Fire Chief, Lane Fire Authority (LFA) said there are ways to make the revenue neutral and LFA is strongly in favor of the proposal. He said when responding to a call, the fire dept. has to stage at a safe distance before they can enter which is nationwide protocol. The response time from LCSO is disheartening and effects when first responders can administer medical attention.

Mr. Reister said a District formed under ORS 451 would allow the City to enter into a 190 Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) which would include language to allow the City to form its own police department, if population growth requires it in the future.

In response to a question from Mayor Larson, Mr. Reister said costs are not known right now. He said they want to know what people are willing to pay and about 5000 people will be notified tonight of the proposed District.

In response to a question from Victoria Hedenstrom, Sgt. Halvorson said more work space is needed at City Hall. He said it will take time to get everyone involved but LCSO is working through some options with the City.

Sgt. Halvorson said response time will decrease. He said currently deputies are required to have a back-up deputy on scene prior to responding to a call. He said the proposed District will mean two or more deputies will be on duty at all times so we won't have to wait for the second deputy to come from other areas in the county to respond to a call.

In response to a question from Tim Brooker, Commissioner Bozievich said we see this working in other areas. He said there are a lot of details that need to be vetted out but the group needs Council approval to move forward. He asked if the idea intrigued the Council enough to move forward with directing staff to spend some time on this and work together to eventually get something on the May 2016 ballot.

Victoria Hedenstrom said she is concerned this may be a slippery slope.

Sheriff Trapp said there have been special districts in various forms that are serviced by LCSO. He said LCSO have been serving Veneta in one form or another since the early 1980's. He said this would be similar to what City residents are getting now but would expand the taxing district and would be honored the same way the City's contract is with LCSO.

In response to a question from Thomas Laing, Ingham said everyone in the District would pay the same amount and receive the same service but the City may have to roll back the taxes we collect.

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Sgt. Halvorson said if there is dedicated funding, LCSO can talk with Union to use already trained officers. He said there are other options other than 11 months of police training at the academy. He said we would start out with a few deputies.

Sheriff Trapp said if we hire laterally, we can have deputies up and running in a couple months.

3. OTHER
None

4. ADJOURN
Mayor Larson adjourned the Veneta City Council at 6:37 p.m.

Sandra H. Larson

Sandra H. Larson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Shauna Hartz

~~Darci Henneman, City Recorder~~ Shauna Hartz, Finance Director
(Minutes prepared by DHenneman)