

City News

The Newsletter of the
City of Veneta

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<http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/>

City Council adjusts water rates as planned

Veneta residents and local businesses will see a small increase on their municipal water bills dated 3/31/2015. The increase is part of a planned gradual adjustment of user fees intended to ensure that the City can meet the water demands of its citizens while maintaining the system's infrastructure.

In 2012, the City of Veneta began a preliminary water rate analysis as part of its effort to upgrade the municipal water system to meet its long-term water supply needs.

The initial study indicated that the City would need to increase its water rates substantially. Subsequent reanalysis showed that the City could scale back the necessary increase and spread it out over several years while properly maintaining the municipal water system and completing construction of the pipeline connecting Veneta to EWEB's water source in West Eugene.

In 2013, the City Council approved a 25 percent water rate increase, which went

into effect 7/1. After the pipeline's completion in the fall of 2013, the City's final water rate analysis indicated that Veneta should increase its water rate by 3.5 percent in 1/2014 and spread out further increases over the next five years.

City Council, concurring with the analysis, increased rates 3.5 percent on 1/1/2014 and again by 2 percent on 3/1/2015. For a household using 5,000 gallons of water, the new increase will equate to .63 (cents) per month.

This rate adjustment, along with the expected future increases, will allow Veneta to maintain drinking water service levels while performing necessary repairs, maintenance and replacement of existing system components.

City staff will continue to update projections and assumptions, while monitoring water system related revenue, expenses and future needs to assure that potential future rate increases will be appropriate to the needs of the municipal water system.

Council requests engineering report

On February 9, the City Council directed the City Engineer to prepare an engineering report on the cost of constructing a sewer line along E. Bolton Rd. The project would serve properties between Applegate Court and Pine Street along E. Bolton Rd.

The Engineering Report will include a construction cost estimate, identify properties that would benefit from the sewer project and an estimate of costs attributed to benefitted property owners.

The Council will meet March 9, 2015 and decide to either approve or modify the Report. If the Council accepts the report, it can decide whether or not to form a Local Improvement District (LID).

If Council wishes to form a LID, they will pass a resolution at the March 9 meeting and schedule a public hearing for April 13, 2015. If a hearing date is set, notices will be published in the local paper and mailed to benefitted property owners on E. Bolton Rd.

For more information on the project, visit the City's homepage at <http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/index.cfm>

CITY OF VENETA - CIVIC CALENDAR - MARCH 2015		
Veneta City Hall - 88184 Eighth Street, Veneta Oregon		
3	Veneta Planning Commission - City Hall	7:00 p.m.
4	Veneta Park Board - City Hall	4:30 p.m.
8	Daylight Savings Time Begins - Spring Forward 	
9	Joint Meeting of the Veneta City Council and Veneta Planning Commission (Economic Strategic Plan) - City Hall	5:30 p.m.
	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall	7:00 p.m.
	Veneta Urban Renewal Agency Meeting - Immediately following	
17	St. Patrick's Day 	
19	Municipal Court - City Hall	8:30 a.m.
23	Veneta City Council Work Session - City Hall	6:00 p.m.
	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall	7:00 p.m.
28	Meet Sgt. Halvorson (Lane County Sheriff's Office contract Sergeant for the City of Veneta) - Fern Ridge Library	1:00 p.m.

City to develop multi-year street preservation plan

Veneta's streets, a valuable part of the City's infrastructure, are in relatively good condition according to a recent report, and should be maintained properly to avoid more costly replacement in the future.

In September 2014, the City contracted with Pavement Services, Inc. (PSI) to conduct a Pavement Condition Survey of Veneta's street and sidewalk networks and recommend a multi-year schedule of maintenance activities to ensure proper preservation of the City's street infrastructure. The Veneta City Council reviewed the report, completed in January 2015, during its February 9 meeting. The City Council has directed the Public Works Department to create a six-year preservation plan based on the report's recommendations.

"The Pavement Assessment identified the projects and estimated costs to preserve the City's street infrastructure," says Public Works Director Kyle Schauer. "It will be the basis of a Pavement Preservation Program that the City will utilize over the next several years to cost effectively repair and maintain the street system."

The report focuses only on the condition of the existing wear surface to Veneta's roads. Its recommendations would preserve or rebuild streets to their original condi-

tion. The recommendations do not cover improving streets to current City standards, including the addition of curbs, gutters and sidewalks, as well as construction requirements for the road base, asphalt thickness and storm water facilities.

Currently, the Veneta Public Works Department manages a network of 21.5 miles of asphalt, concrete and gravel streets within City limits, valued at about \$26 million dollars according to the report. PSI rates the overall condition of the Veneta street system as "Good," giving it a weighted average score of 83 out of 100.

The report includes a breakdown of the street transportation system in terms of pavement type, level of improvement, and functional classification. The report establishes a baseline condition for the City's street network and describes current surface condition, reviews current treatment programs and costs, and projects future treatment needs based on several funding scenarios.

The report contains a multi-year maintenance and repair project list of approximately 3.4 million dollars in needed street maintenance and outlines four different budget scenarios for completing the work based on different levels of funding.

Veneta veteran and volunteer honored

Thomas Laing is no stranger to Fern Ridge's tightly knit community of civic volunteers. Best known for his work on behalf of veterans in Veneta and across Oregon, his accomplishments include bringing to Oregon the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall – a traveling replica of the original memorial in Washington, D.C.– and founding the nation's sole university VFW post at the University of Oregon.

In recognition of his efforts on behalf of veterans, the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) honored volunteer Laing as its Outstanding Citizen for 2014 at its Annual Appreciation Dinner on February 6.

"We are proud and fortunate that Tom and his loving wife and partner Laurel call Veneta their home," said Veneta Mayor Sandra Larson in introducing Laing at the awards banquet.

Noting his devotion to his wife of 47 years – and to their family of 5 children, 19 foster children and 8 grandchildren – Mayor Larson spoke of Laing's dedication to the local community and to "the welfare of America's war veterans."

Laing, currently serving his first term on Veneta's City

Council, is also the president of the Fern Ridge Lions Club. Laing, a Marine Corps veteran who served in Vietnam, saved Fern Ridge's chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars – Jack Kelley VFW Post 9448 – from closing in 1996. Thanks to his efforts, the post has more than 100 members today.

Oregon VFW's current Chief of Staff, Laing has served in VFW leadership positions at both the state and local levels. His awards including being named an All American State Commander in 2004-2005; being only the 63rd person since the VFW's founding in 1899 to receive the Triple Crown Award from the organization's national office.

Along with his tireless efforts on behalf of the VFW, Laing is also an active member of the Marine Corps League, the American Legion, Viet Nam Veterans of America and the Oregon Disabled Veterans of America. At the awards banquet, Larson credited Laing, who has successfully battled PTSD, with lobbying Congress on veterans' issues numerous times and with helping to establish a VFW grant program that has provided "\$5 million to assist military families with basic necessities of life."

City Easter Egg Hunt early April

One of Veneta's most beloved and popular annual events takes place next month, heralding the onset of Spring. Veneta Elementary School will host the 29th annual Veneta Easter Egg Hunt on April 4 between 10:15 a.m. and 12 p.m.

Sponsors for the volunteer-run event include the Ve-

neta Park Board and Kiwanis of Fern Ridge. The event kicks off with story time at 10:15 a.m. and the hunt itself starts at 11 a.m. The well-attended event can draw more than 400 children, so the City recommends families come early to be ready when the event starts.