

## City Council Votes to Not Surplus Parks

After a year-and-a-half of study on the question of whether the sell or keep Ralph Johnson Park and 5<sup>th</sup> Street Park, first by professional parks system consultants, then the volunteer Veneta Parks Board, the volunteer Veneta Planning Commission, and finally taking public comments on the full picture, the City Council voted on August 8<sup>th</sup> to keep both parks.

"I started with one opinion when this question first came up," said Mayor Keith Weiss, "but after having the benefit of our volunteer boards and staff gather all the facts and share them with the community so that our citizens could have their say, I ended up with a different opinion than when I started. We need to find

a way to fund park improvements, and selling smaller parks just doesn't fit our vision for Veneta."

After the unanimous vote in favor of keeping the parks, Mayor Weiss commented that the City should try to find money to make improvements to Ralph Johnson Park so that more people can enjoy its peaceful atmosphere.

Ralph Johnson Park was originally part of Veneta's very first City Hall property. It occupies the northwest corner of the block fronting 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Dunham Avenue. A large tree provides shade for a picnic bench and two additional benches. There's also

*(See "Surplus Parks" on page 2)*

## National Night Out - A Big Success

Veneta's National Night Out, an annual event that fosters police-community camaraderie, was a major success this year! The event was held on Tuesday, August 2nd from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Ignite Veneta Alliance Church served 300 hot dogs donated by Sanipac, and at least that many people were in attendance, said Management Analyst Cole Haselip.

Highlights included a hot dog eating contest (won by David Manning), a potato sack race, an egg toss, a dunk tank, and the Lane County Sheriff's Office horse patrol and drone. There was even an appearance by Smokey Bear, who was there with the Oregon

Department of Forestry raising awareness about fire prevention.

"The kids absolutely loved the water mister from Lane Fire Authority," Haselip said, noting that on the day of the event it was ninety-degrees outside. Barry MacGuire from KOOL 99.1 provided the music, and \$525 was raised to support local youth sports programming.

"The goal of the event is to connect people to their first responders. A lot of times it's a thankless job, so it's nice to be able to celebrate them. It's an event that takes a lot of participation, so a big thanks to everyone. We really want to thank all the volunteers who

*(See "NNO" on page 2)*

## Dog Park

On just over an acre directly south and west of the railroad crossing in Veneta at Territorial Highway an off-leash dog park is starting to take shape. Underbrush has been cleared and several danger trees taken down so that the vision for the dog park could be planted. It'll take some time to get the land ready for our furry friends—maybe late Spring or early Summer, but it's an exciting vision to see coming to life.

How did this vision start? It took two key ingredients: The community's collective desire for an off-leash dog park as documented in the 2020 Parks Master Plan, and the goodwill of the Port of Coos Bay.

When we asked the community in 2019 and 2020 to express their vision for Veneta's park system as part of the Parks Master Plan process, an off-leash

*(See "Dog Park" on page 2)*

CIVIC CALENDAR September 2022		
All meetings held at City Hall unless otherwise noted		
2	Veneta Community Pool - Last Day of the 2022 Pool Season	7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
5	Labor Day Holiday - City Hall will be closed	Closed
6	Planning Commission Meeting	6:30 p.m.
7	Park Board Meeting	4:30 p.m.
12	City Council Meeting	6:30 p.m.
14	Economic Development Committee Meeting	2:00 p.m.
15	Municipal Court	8:30 a.m.
22	Business Assistance Committee Meeting	3:00 p.m.
26	City Council Work Session: 2023-25 Goals & Social Media Guidelines	5:00 p.m.

## September is National Preparedness Month

National Preparedness Month is an observance each September to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies that could happen at any time. To learn more about how to prepare visit <https://www.ready.gov/september>

### NNO, continued

showed up and made it happen,” said Haselip. Compared with last year, the 2022 event had higher attendance, more activities, and increased participation overall.

“With the activities I believe we were really able to create a welcoming community event. It was fun to see,” he said. Next year the goal is to incorporate new activities, keeping the ones that people really enjoyed, and hopefully working with community partners even more. Haselip explained that the more sponsors there

are, the more success when fundraising for things like Territorial Sports Program.

National Night Out sponsors included, but were not limited to, Fern Ridge Kiwanis, Douglas FastNet. St. Catherine of Siena Parish and Veneta Elementary School provided parking for the event. Veneta Public Works Department handled set up and clean up.

As far as next year goes, Haselip said, “We’ll always try to do an even better job of connecting people to their first responders and fostering those communi-

### Surplus Parks, continued

a doggie bag station and trash can. The 5<sup>th</sup> Street side of the park can accommodate a couple of cars on a gravel berm.

Two-and-a-half blocks south on 5<sup>th</sup> Street is the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Park that has what some older adults might fondly remember as an “old school” metal slide, as

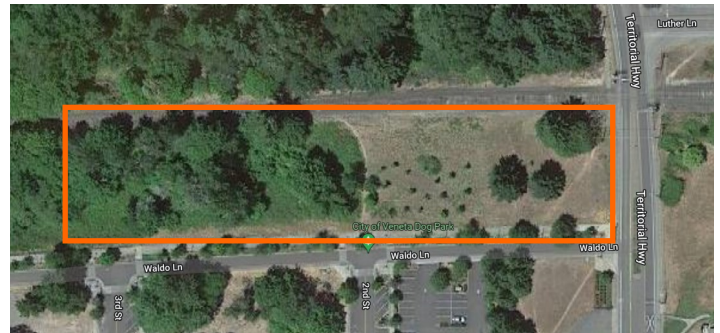
well as two swings, and two benches to watch the fun from. There’s a doggie bag station and trash can, too.

Park neighbors who attended the City Council meeting spoke about their special memories of growing up near the park, and how much it meant to have their kids share that same special experience.

### Dog Park, continued

dog park was a top-three response. The challenge for City staff was finding more than an acre of available land that would be suitable for fun-loving, barking dogs throughout the day.

This is where the Port of Coos Bay came in. Since 2011 the City had an agreement with the Port operating the Coos Bay Rail Line, to maintain some of their railroad land adjacent to Territorial Highway for city beautification. City staff had the idea to ask the Port if they would be open to fencing off that land, plus a little more, for an off-leash dog park. At Mayor Weiss’s invitation the Port’s CEO came to town to see the vision himself and that sealed the deal!



Proposed Dog Park Area (In Red)

### Back to School Crosswalk Safety

As students prepare to head back to class, now is a good time for children, parents, and motorists to brush up on school transportation safety. For drivers, that means slowing down in school zones and keeping an eye out for children alongside the roads, drivers should pay particular attention to crosswalk laws.

A crosswalk exists at any public intersection, whether marked with paint or unmarked. Crosswalks also exist between intersections (mid-block) only if they are marked with white painted lines. A person is crossing the roadway in a crosswalk when any part or extension of them, including but not limited to any

part of their body, wheelchair, cane, crutch or bicycle, moves into the roadway in a crosswalk with the intent to proceed.

For parents, now is a good time to review safety precautions whether students walk, ride a bike, or take the bus to school. For more information on Oregon crosswalk laws, go to <https://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/get-my-kid-walking/>



Veneta

# Harvest Festival

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2022**

**10:00AM - 3:00PM ~ 2nd & W. Broadway Ave**

## **FESTIVAL EVENTS**

**8:00am - 12:00pm** - Breakfast for purchase inside Fern Ridge Service Center provided by Joy Cart

**10:00am** -Vendor Booths Open: 60+ venders including Veneta Downtown Farmers Market  
-Kid Zone will be on 3rd street  
-Kiwanis Kruise-In Car and Motorcycle Show, Emcee by **DJ Robo**, Cars and motorcycles will be in the Fern Ridge Service Center parking lot, on 2nd st and Veneta Elementary School parking lot on Territorial Hwy.  
-Food Trucks located in Our Daily Bread Parking Lot on Territorial Hwy

**11:00am** Chamber of Commerce Chili Cookoff judging

**11:30am** Chili will be available for purchase

**3:00pm** Harvest Festival Closes

**Come Enjoy this FREE Outdoor Event!**  
**541-935-4555 for more info**

