

The Newsletter of the
City of Veneta

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City News

Policing District Moves Toward Ballot Measure

The Lane County Board of Commissioners and the Veneta City Council have each taken the steps necessary to begin the creation of the Fern Ridge Community Policing District (FRCPD). The Commissioners unanimously passed a board order on Dec. 8 that "put into motion all the state statutes required to form a new law enforcement special district," explained City Administrator Ric Ingham. For the City of Veneta's boundary to be included in the district, the Veneta City Council co-adopted that order, passing resolution 1184 at its Dec. 14 meeting. These motions make the FRCPD increasingly likely to appear on the May 2016 ballot.

A citizen-proposed initiative, the FRCPD would provide the unincorporated communities of Alvadore, Crow, Elmira, Noti, and Walton, and the incorporated City of Veneta with extra patrol deputies, 24-hour coverage and a designated District Attorney to prosecute crimes committed in the district, a school resource officer and other emergency services.

Ingham explained that the Lane County public safety system has been in a "state of crisis" since losing timber rev-

enues in the early 80's. This proposal, he said, could help address the crisis, at least as far as law enforcement and public safety are concerned.

Currently, the policing district has a proposed tax rate of \$1.67 per \$1,000 of approved property value. "As with any new district, that will be a permanent rate separate from, and in addition to, the tax rate of the other taxing districts," said Ingham. In Veneta the City currently pays for law enforcement services through a contract with the Lane County Sheriff's Office. Should the initiative pass, that contract would no longer be necessary. Thus, the Veneta City Council will have a series of discussions in January about requesting less taxes than the City is allowed to collect. "The idea is to make this expense neutral for our taxpayers, while at the same time receiving enhanced services," Ingham explained. This does not take into account, of course, other tax issues that may be on the ballot.

The policing proposal has moved very rapidly and garnered good citizen feedback. Ingham credits the speed of the motion to the hard work done by the

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Water Rate Increase

Effective January 1, Veneta residents will see a 2 percent increase in their water rates, which will be reflected in the bill they receive in February. For a household using 5,000 gallons per month, the increased cost will be .66 cents. This will be the third consecutive year of small rate increases, which will likely continue through 2021. The rate increase is necessary to meet the debt service obligations incurred to build the pipeline that transmits the water from EWEB's infrastructure in Eugene to Veneta. Determined to be the most cost-effective solution for Veneta's long-term water supply needs, the project cost \$10 million.

The higher fees will also enable the City to keep pace with the costs of providing water services, purchasing water from EWEB, and funding maintenance and repairs as needed.

No rate changes are currently proposed for sewer or drainage.

CITY OF VENETA - CIVIC CALENDAR - JANUARY 2016

Veneta Administrative Center - 88184 8th Street, Veneta, Oregon

1	City Hall Closed in Observance of New Year's Day	Closed
5	Veneta Planning Commission Meeting - City Hall	6:30 p.m.
6	Veneta Economic Development Committee Meeting - City Hall	2:00 p.m.
6	Veneta Park Board Meeting - City Hall	4:30 p.m.
11	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall Veneta Urban Renewal Agency Meeting - Immediately following	6:30 p.m.
14	Veneta Economic Development Committee - Open House - Fern Ridge Community Library - 88026 Territorial Rd.	6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
18	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - City Hall Closed	Closed
21	Municipal Court - City Hall	8:30 a.m.
25	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall State of the City Address from Mayor Sandra Larson	6:30 p.m.
30	"Meet Sgt. Halvorson" (Lane County Sheriff's Office contract Sergeant for the City of Veneta) - Fern Ridge Library	1:00 p.m.



Calendar updates are posted on the City's website at www.venetaoregon.gov. The Civic Calendar was sent to: Fern Ridge Review, Fern Ridge School District, Fern Ridge Public Library, and Lane Fire Authority.

Multi-Use Path Proposal Advances

The City of Veneta's proposal for a bike/pedestrian path connecting Veneta and Elmira is one step closer to being realized after the Lane Area Commission on Transportation ranked the project first out of seven county-wide proposals heard at a Dec. 9 meeting. "Supporting testimony from Oregon Senator Floyd Prozanski and Rep. Paul Holvey was crucial to the ranking," said City Administrator Ric Ingham.

The proposal now advances to the state level, where ODOT will consider it for funding. If approved, Veneta-Fern Ridge residents could enjoy a 10-foot wide asphalt path along the west side of Territorial Hwy.

"The path would provide a continuous route along the highway that would significantly improve safety for the community and school-aged children who walk or ride between Veneta and the three public schools in Elmira," he said. "It would also allow Elmira residents to easily access services in Veneta without driving, as well as providing a recreational facility for walking and jogging." Finally, it would make the area more attractive to employers.

If approved this year, groundbreaking on the project could happen in the next three to four years.

Local Businesses Invited to Economic Development Events

Just as it intended when it hired RARE (Resource Assistance for Rural Environments) participant Claudia Denton in September, the City of Veneta is rapidly advancing the goals of the "Veneta Economic Development Strategy: Five-Year Action Plan, 2015-2019." And the pace will accelerate as the City's Economic Development Committee invites local businesses to two key events in January, as well as seeking 18 volunteers for a business visitation process from February through March.

The first event is an Open House to facilitate discussion and relationship-building between the business community and Committee members. "We want to hear from businesses about their unique challenges, and we want those businesses to learn how the Committee aims to provide resources to help them succeed," said Denton.

The second gathering will build on the familiarity gained at the Open House as the Committee kicks off a six-month Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program with help from partners from Rural Development Initiatives (RDI). According to the Committee, every rural business faces unique challenges, but there are proactive and proven economic development strategies that can help existing businesses achieve their full potential. To this end, the BRE Program will assess business needs, connect businesses with relevant assistance, and develop long-term strategies to support the local business base. "We highly encour-

age the business community to join us for the Committee Open House and the BRE Kickoff event with RDI. This is an excellent opportunity for businesses to tell us about their experience doing business in Veneta," said Denton.

Examples from other similar programs include helping businesses that wish to expand but need assistance in finding the right location, or connecting businesses with legal, marketing, or entrepreneurship resources, according to Denton. "The January events and the business visitation component of the program will help us learn what businesses need," said Denton. "And those findings will guide the Committee's activities for the future."

The Open House takes place on Jan. 14 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Konnie Room at the Fern Ridge Community Library. The BRE Program Kickoff is slated for Jan. 28 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at Our Daily Bread. For more specific information on the BRE see enclosed flier meanwhile, the City will be accepting applications from prospective volunteers for the business visitation process, which will help the City communicate with and collect information from businesses. "The work provided by these volunteers will be valuable for years to come" said Denton.

Applications are available on the City website or, for more information, interested parties can contact Denton at 541 935-2191 or cdenton@ci.veneta.or.us.

Policing District Moves Toward Ballot Measure continued...

citizen proponents who brought the issue before the council. "They brought this to us in October and they had really done their homework," he said. After hearing the proposal, the City Council solicited comments at two events. "We held an open house forum on Dec. 8 and solicited more public comments at the City Council meeting on Dec. 14. Everyone who commented was in favor of adopting the board order and pro-

ceeding with the formation," said Ingham.

The Board of Commissioners will hold two more public hearings, Jan. 12 and Feb. 9, but at this time, the City has not scheduled additional hearings on the matter. The Commissioners will begin to draft the necessary ballot title and summary information based on input from their scheduled public hearings.

Business Retention and Expansion Program Veneta, Oregon



The key to business vitality is having a strong, locally-owned business base that has the capacity to endure and grow in today's rapidly changing economy. While every rural business faces unique challenges, there are proactive and proven economic development strategies that can help existing businesses recognize their full potential. To this end, Veneta, Oregon is partnering with Rural Development Initiatives (RDI) to develop and deliver a Business Retention and Expansion Program beginning January 2016. Alongside countless partners, the City of Veneta, RDI, and the newly formed Veneta Economic Development Committee (EDC) aim to assess business needs, connect direct assistance, and develop long-term strategies to support the local business base.



RDI's specially trained and certified economic development practitioners will work hand-in-hand with local leaders in designing and delivering customized business retention and expansion services that address a community's unique business needs. Below is an outline highlighting key activities:

1. Assess local business climate and needs
2. Develop business outreach and visitation processes
3. Leverage and deliver existing local and regional resources to businesses and connect to outside expertise

Project Timeline

Typically, a BR&E program takes six months to launch and implement. During this time, RDI, the City of Veneta, and the EDC will reach out to community members, resource providers, and other key stakeholders to build capacity and coordinate resources. The project is slated to begin January 2016 and wrap up by June 2016.

"Veneta is very excited to have RDI's expertise in developing and launching the Business Retention and Expansion program. This will set the stage for long-term economic vitality in our community, stable jobs for our region, and a good quality of life for our residents and business owners." Ric Ingham, Veneta City Administrator

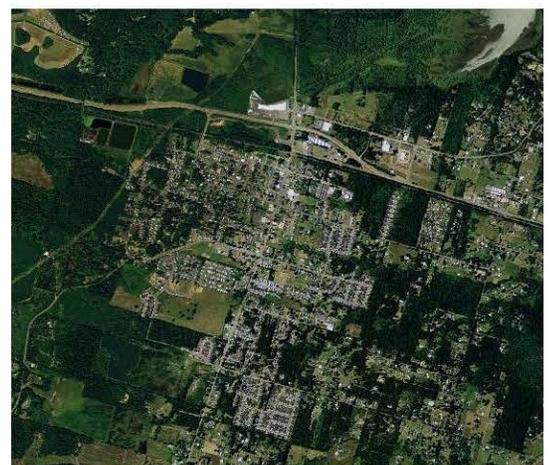
Program Goals

- Interview 25 businesses between February-March 2016
- Connect, provide, and deliver technical assistance and capital to Veneta businesses
- Create a long-term outreach strategy that involves locally trained and skilled leaders
- Better connect local businesses with public and private resources

Questions?

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Attention! Upcoming Community Events!

We welcome you to two upcoming events for the Veneta Business Retention and Expansion Program:

- January 14: Open House at the Fern Ridge Library from 6:00-8:00 p.m. to introduce the Economic Development Committee to the business community
- January 28: Kick-Off Event from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Our Daily Bread

How can you get involved?

The deliberate cultivation of relationships is the heart of every successful Business Retention and Expansion program and requires significant investment from community members. **This is where we need your help!** A true relationship between the private sector and community is critical to understanding the “who, what, when, and how” dynamics impacting these wealth and job generators. **To this end, Veneta needs your help and support to better understand business needs and foster strategic relationships by joining our Business Visitation Teams.**

Visitation Team Commitment and Qualifications

RDI and the City of Veneta are looking to recruit up to 18 volunteers to help support the Business Retention and Expansion Program by serving as members on Business Visitation Teams. Below are highlights of tasks, responsibilities, and qualifications for participating members.

- Two-person teams
- Visit 2-4 businesses each
- Commit up to 20 hours of volunteer time over 3 months
- Be respectful, open, and communicative with the ability to listen
- Be open to training other visitors in the future
- Attend up to 3 trainings (mandatory)
- Be willing to engage businesses quarterly for 1 year
- Refrain from bringing a personal agenda or “baggage” to business interviews
- Must be highly confidential and agree to sign confidentiality statements

What do the Visitation Team Trainings entail?

Each Visitation Team volunteer must attend mandatory trainings. The trainings include a framework for the entire visitation process, desired outcomes, and reality-based deliverables. This includes things like explanation of the purpose/intent of the BR&E program, description of participating organizations, and the resources they represent as well as anticipated outcomes for the subject business and community as a whole. Typically, trainings will be conducted over two or three “building block” sessions. Training times and dates are flexible to reflect the dynamic scheduling needs of every day workers.

If you have any questions, or are interested in learning more, please contact Claudia at 541-935-2191 ext 312 or email cdenton@ci.veneta.or.us.

