

# City News

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## City Seeks Councilors & Committee Member

The City of Veneta is accepting applications to fill two vacancies on the Veneta City Council as well as one citizen position on the City's Budget Committee. One Council vacancy is a partial term that expires December 31, 2018. The other is a full four-year term that expires December 31, 2020.

The partial-term position was created when Tim Brooker resigned on November 15 with two years remaining on his term. His position was declared vacant and the City Council began to advertise to fill his seat. The departure of Councilor Victoria

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## State of the City Address

As she begins her second full term as Mayor of the City of Veneta, Sandra Larson will once again give her "State of the City" address on January 23 at the Veneta City Council meeting at City Hall. Larson's address will recap the highlights of the past 12 months, touching on such issues as public safety and the introduction of the City's new contract Sheriff, Sgt. Scott Denham as well as the growth of neighborhood watch programs; growth and economic development; communication and civic engagement.

Looking ahead, the Mayor will prognosticate on the prospects for the new kiddie pool at the Veneta Community Pool, infrastructure projects including the Hwy. 126 expansion, as well as espouse the need for citizen participation in local government as we engage the issues, challenges, and opportunities of the year to come.

Larson has served since being appointed Mayor Pro Tem in July 2012 before being voted into office in the Nov. 2012 General Election and re-elected in 2016.

## Senior Services at Fern Ridge Service Center

Now celebrating its third year in operation, the Fern Ridge Service Center is meeting its goal of delivering services to seniors, as well as providing a food pantry program for the community. The facility was built using a Community Development Block Grant funds secured by the City of Veneta. To deliver these services, the City entered a partnership with Mid Lane Cares (MLC).

MLC encourages citizens over the age of 60 to enjoy the benefits of the Fern Ridge Service Center (FRSC) at 25035 W. Broadway. Now in its third year of operation, this beautiful facility is owned by the City and operated by MLC to provide local seniors with an extensive array of services.

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## City Continues to Enhance Communication

Much of a City's overall success depends on the quality of its communication with the citizens it serves. To that end, the "City of Veneta Communication Plan" provides a blueprint to continuously improve community awareness by expanding the ways it shares information about City issues and public engagement opportunities.

"We're using many creative avenues to communicate with citizens," said Finance Director Shauna Hartz. These include public meetings, such as City Council and planning commission. These open meetings enable citizens to come watch their government at work and, in a structured fashion, share their

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CITY OF VENETA - CIVIC CALENDAR - JANUARY 2017		
Veneta Administrative Center - 88184 8th Street, Veneta, Oregon		
2	City Hall Closed in Observance of New Year's Day Holiday	Closed
3	Veneta Planning Commission Meeting - City Hall	6:30 p.m.
4	Veneta Park Board Meeting - City Hall	4:30 p.m.
9	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall Veneta Urban Renewal Agency Meeting - Immediately following	6:30 p.m.
11	Veneta Economic Development Committee Meeting - City Hall	2:00 p.m.
16	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - City Hall Closed 	Closed
18	City Park Redesign Open House - Community Center, 25190 E. Broadway	CANCELLED
19	Municipal Court - City Hall	8:30 a.m.
23	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall State of the City Address from Mayor Sandra Larson	6:30 p.m.
28	"Meet Sgt. Denham" (Lane County Sheriff's Office contract Sergeant for the City of Veneta) - Fern Ridge Library	1:00 p.m.
 Calendar updates will be posted on the City's website at <a href="http://www.venetaoregon.gov">www.venetaoregon.gov</a> This Civic Calendar was sent to: Fern Ridge Review, Fern Ridge School District 28J, Lane Fire Authority, and Fern Ridge Library		

## ***City Seeks Councilors & Committee Member Continued...***

Hedenstrom in April, 2016 created another vacancy, which was filled when Laura Ruff applied for and was appointed to serve out the remainder of that term which expires December 31, 2016. No candidates ran for that four-year term (January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2020) in the November General Election. Ruff was elected as a write-in candidate, but declined to serve because of personal commitments.

City Councilors essentially serve as the legislative branch of city government as well as overseeing City goals and policy-making. The Veneta City Council meets regularly the second and fourth Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. on occasion special meetings are also held. To qualify as a candidate, an individual must have been a Veneta resident for 365 days and be a registered voter.

The City will be accepting applications for these positions until 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 18, 2017. Applications can be picked up Veneta Administrative Center, 88184 8<sup>th</sup> St., in Veneta. They are also available on the City's website at [www.venetaoregon.gov](http://www.venetaoregon.gov)

The City's Budget Committee also has one vacancy for a citizen position. This position is a partial term that expires on December 31, 2017. The citizen positions, which normally have a three-year term, are appointed by the Mayor after discussion with the City Council. Generally speaking the time commitment required is two to six hours per year during May and June. The application deadline for this position was December 30, 2016, however, this may be extended based on the number of applications received. For more information contact Shauna Hartz at 541-935-2191.

## ***Senior Services at Fern Ridge Service Center Continued...***

Lane Council of Governments provides a low-cost or free lunch which is served in the center's "Café 60," every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, providing a healthy meal and good company. On Tuesday and Thursday, West Lane Technical Learning Center (local charter school) culinary program cooks a low-cost homemade lunch that may be enjoyed in the Café or taken home. This ensures seniors have access to healthy meals throughout the week.

FRSC also hosts social events and activities including Bingo, Dominos, chair exercise, massage, foot care, a memory care support group for caregivers, and a Silver Threads quilting and sewing group. Special classes include ukulele, Tai Chi, and Computer Class for Seniors. Each Wednesday, a Reiki (hands-on Japanese healing program) provider offers her services.

The Senior and Disabled Services, or Senior Connections, also is administered by Lane Council of Governments and provides a "one-stop" resource for senior needs, including transportation to medical and other appointments, help with energy assistance programs and Meals on Wheels services, among other tasks. "This program connects people with the services they need," said Facility Manager Lois Riha.

A Senior Health Insurance Benefits program provider will review Seniors' benefits—such as Medicare, PERS, or retirement coverage—to ensure they are receiving the benefits to which they are entitled.

Services and activities at FRSC are either free or ask a small donation, with the only qualification that participants be over 60 years of age. The exception to the age requirement is the Love Project Food Pantry on the north side of the building. There, people of any age can shop one time each month according to their needs and preferences, selecting enough food from the pantry to fill a shopping bag. This service is offered on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

"We highly encourage citizens to take advantage of FRSC's free or very affordable programs," said the City of Veneta's Community Development Director Kay Bork. "The Center is open to all seniors. In addition to services, it provides extensive volunteer opportunities for people of any age that are looking for ways to help their neighbors."

For more information, visit [www.midlanecares.org](http://www.midlanecares.org), call 541-935-4555, or simply stop in.

## ***City Continues to Enhance Communication Continued...***

concerns and provide input. The City's monthly newsletter is included with each utility bill. Its news articles cover current events, upcoming opportunities for citizen involvement, policy changes, seasonal issues, and more. Previous issues of the newsletter dating back to 2010 can be found on the City's Website. The website contains a broad range of information, from how to pay your utility bill to upcoming community events, and from information about city councilors to updates on current City business. Press releases are sent out as needed on more urgent topics, such as alerts and information about community events. The City also places advertisements and public notices in the local newspaper when relevant. Printed materials are distributed to inform the public of special events or encourage public involvement. And most recently, the City is communicating through social media.

The City launched a Facebook page in September 2016. The page is just one of the methods through which the City aims to ensure two-way information flow; provide prompt, accurate, and timely information on the City's actions, issues, and decisions; strengthen direct communication between elected officials, City departments, and citizens. The page shares information regarding City programs, projects, and community events. It will also be used to communicate directly with the public during emergencies, increase government transparency, and highlight the City's history and culture.

Understanding citizen concerns and considering their ideas and values is critical to the City's decision-making process. Consequently, City staff encourage citizens to visit the website [www.venetaoregon.gov](http://www.venetaoregon.gov) and the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/cityofveneta/> to stay informed.