

The Newsletter of the
City of Veneta

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City News

Faces new and familiar join City Council

By Ephraim Payne

The new year promises to bring both fresh enthusiasm and experience to Veneta's municipal government. As a result of the November 2010 election, two members will leave the City Council and two other citizens will take their place.

Thomas J. Cotter received 935 votes in his bid to rejoin the council he served for over a decade. New Veneta resident Brittany Boothe ran a write-in campaign after no

other candidate filed to run for the second open city council position by the registration deadline, gathering 27 votes.

Veteran councilors Tim Brooker and Darrell Carman had both declined to run for reelection.

"I've reached the point after 20 years of serving the city that it was time for me to retire," said Brooker.

Former councilor Carman said that he was also "ready to pass the baton and give somebody else a chance" to lead the city.

Cotter will rejoin the

council after a two year hiatus. He served as a city councilor between 1997 and 2008, when he chose not to run for the council at the end of his previous term.

Boothe, who has lived in Veneta for a little over a year, works for the Springfield School District as a literacy program assistant.

She listed drinking water supply and the continuing downtown revitalization efforts as two of the biggest issues currently facing Veneta.

Water supply meetings scheduled

By Ephraim Payne

With a court ruling backing its water purchase contract with the Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) and federal funds available to build a pipeline between Veneta and Eugene, the Veneta City Council is holding a series of meetings in January to update residents on water supply options and the proposed pipeline project.

The Council plans to host a work session on Jan. 11 to review an analysis of the potential impacts of the project on water rates and development fees and will present the project to the public at a Jan. 18 Town Hall meeting at the Fire Hall. A public hearing will take place at the Fire Hall on Jan. 25.

Residents should note that these meetings do not fall on the Mondays regularly scheduled for Council meetings and that the venue has been changed to accommodate a larger audience.

Due to the special nature of these meetings, times and venues may change, please visit the City website or contact

See **WATER MEETINGS** page 2

Visions of Veneta highlights area's natural beauty



Nathan Lively submitted this photo-stitched landscape of a sweeping, forested bend in Vaughn Road.

By Ephraim Payne

From morning haze lifting off the smooth waters of Fern Ridge reservoir to a blazing forest sunset to a pheasant exploding into flight, the first month of Visions of Veneta shows that local photographers are tuned in to the varied natural beauty of the Fern Ridge area.

Five local amateur pho-

tographers submitted eight photos to the City of Veneta for use on the City's website. The Visions of Veneta program in December 2010 showcases the area's appeal and provides local amateur photographers a chance to display their talent.

Nathan Lively's composition, *Vaughn Road*, is the first month's feature photograph, netting the

artist free passes to the community pool. The winning entry combined three photos in a dramatic, horizontal photo-stitched landscape of a wooded bend on Vaughn Road. Photo submission guidelines can be viewed at the City's website:

www.ci.veneta.or.us/visions.cfm. Local photographers are encouraged to submit photos on an ongoing basis.

Drinking water and wastewater rate increases take effect

By Ephraim Payne

Veneta residents have seen few water rate hikes since the City incorporated in 1962. But, at the same time, the cost of providing safe drinking water and efficient sewer services to an expanding population has increased.

Between 2007 and 2010, the City of Veneta authorized rate and Systems Development Charge (SDC) studies for both drinking water and wastewater services, to determine to what level of rate adjustments are necessary to balance rising costs and demands.

In December 2008, the City Council considered three plans to increase the drinking water rates and SDCs.

The City Council selected an option “with future semi-annual increases to the water base and use fees of 3 percent for a period of several years,” in order to keep pace with the rising cost of providing drinking water to the public.

In February 2010, the City’s wastewater consultant recommended an increase of wastewater charges of 12.66 percent over three years.

Rate increases are scheduled for January and July of each year and residents will see these increases reflected on their January utility bill with an increase of 3 percent for water, and a sewer rate increase of 2 percent.

New crossings create pedestrian friendly atmosphere downtown

By Ephraim Payne

The City Council’s vision of a safe, pedestrian-friendly downtown has a flashy new sign of progress – two flashy new signs, actually. Thanks to collaboration between the City of Veneta, Lane County Engineering and Lane Transit District, the City has two new flashing intersection controls at the intersection of Territorial Hwy. and Broadway Ave.

Lane Transit District (LTD) provided critical funding and support for the project, according to Associate Planner Zac Moody, with the cost split between LTD’s Transit Center project and the City’s Urban Renewal-funded downtown project. The crossings will benefit LTD passengers using the new transit center as well as downtown residents, visitors and clients of the new senior center proposed for West Broadway.

The crosswalks span Territorial at both the north and south ends of the Broadway intersec-



One of two pedestrian-activated crossing signs at the intersection of Territorial Hwy. and Broadway Ave.

tion. Pedestrian-activated flashing LED signs control the intersection for 32 seconds.

The permitting process for the crosswalks proved to be a challenge, according to Moody, because the plans had to be modified to conform to Oregon Department of Transportation standards that do not normally cover this type of crosswalk.

“They do not have a lot of these types of crossings (which stop traffic at two sides of the intersection versus a single crosswalk, such as that in front of Veneta Elementary),” he said. “It’s a much more complicated crosswalk than normal from a planning perspective.”

As part of the project, workers installed eight light poles to ensure pedestrian safety in the dark. Previously, the intersection was lit by a single light post.

“It was a fairly dark intersection,” said Moody, “and will be one of the brightest in town once the lights are turned on.”

Water meetings: tentative schedule for City to study water pipeline impacts.

City Hall for the most current information. The current schedule has the Veneta City Council deliberating and making a decision on whether or not to proceed with the pipeline at its Feb. 14 meeting.

All background materials related to the project including an up to date meeting schedule are available through the City’s website at:

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

For an expanded version of this month’s newsletter and past issues, visit the City News online at: <http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/citynews.cfm>