

The Newsletter of the
City of Veneta

88184 8th Street
PO Box 458
Veneta, OR 97487
(541) 935-2191
www.VenetaOregon.gov

City News

New Website - www.VenetaOregon.gov

With the goal of helping people find the information they need faster and easier than ever, the City of Veneta has a new website and a new web address - www.VenetaOregon.gov.

The streamlined design is one component of the City of Veneta's communications plan adopted in January, 2015. "The website is one piece of a larger outreach plan," explained Community Development Director Kay Bork. "In addition to serving local citizens, the site will be used to market Veneta as an attractive place to live and do business, as well as to showcase the character and attributes of the area."

To design the site, Bork and Office Support Specialist III Ann Frydendall, who teamed up on the project, responded directly to citizen requests. "Much of the design is based on which questions people most frequently ask when they come to or call the City. We put the most frequently searched topics on the home

page." For instance, at the home page, visitors can find out how to pay a utility bill, or learn of upcoming City sponsored events, search for meetings and agendas, and view the City calendar, all with a few clicks. "The calendar automatically updates, so it's always current," she stated. "It's incredibly easy to use," Bork added. "And you can search our directories for documents and forms by department or board."

The team is still working to develop a series of FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) links. "That part of the project is evolving," said Frydendall. The site went live on May 7, but the updates will never cease. "With this new platform, staff can update, change, and add information quickly, so it will be simple to keep it current," concluded Frydendall.

The site is attractive, informative, and simple to navigate. Check it out today at www.VenetaOregon.gov

LCSO Contract

The City of Veneta's contract with the Lane County Sheriff's Office provides four Sheriff Deputies and a Sergeant. But, until recently, that Sergeant's duties had been split between three assignments. In other words, the City had a Sergeant for one-third of his time each week. Beginning July 1, though, the City will increase Sgt. Billy Halvorson's contract to half time. "Among other benefits, increasing Sgt. Halvorson's time will allow him to stay more focused on Veneta, give him more time to manage our contract and oversee the deputies, and better enact the City's community policing policies, goals, and objectives," says City Administrator Ric Ingham.

Community-oriented policing is a strategy in which law enforcement builds close ties with members of the community. For Veneta, that means working proactively with neighborhood watch groups, teaching people how to safeguard their homes and businesses, having a regular presence at such troubled areas as the skate park, engaging with schools to help kids understand the role of police in their community, and much more.

Police departments have been moving toward community policing for some time, states Ingham. "We're unique in that we're

(Continued on page 2)

CITY OF VENETA - CIVIC CALENDAR - JUNE 2015		
Veneta Administrative Center - 88184 Eighth Street, Veneta, Oregon		
2	Veneta Planning Commission Meeting - City Hall	7:00 p.m.
3	Veneta Park Board Meeting - City Hall	4:30 p.m.
8	Joint Meeting of the Veneta Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee and Agency Board - City Hall Joint Meeting of the Budget Committee and City Council - City Hall Veneta City Council Meeting - Includes Public Hearings on the Approved Fiscal Year 2015-16 Budget & Use of State Shared Revenue - City Hall Veneta Urban Renewal Agency Meeting - Immediately following City Council Meeting - Includes Public Hearing on the Approved Fiscal Year 2015-16 Budget - City Hall	7:00 p.m.
18	Municipal Court - City Hall	8:30 a.m.
20	Summer Solstice Party - Veneta Community Pool - 25190 E. Broadway	6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
21	Happy Father's Day	
22	Veneta City Council Meeting	7:00 p.m.
27	Meet Sgt. Halvorson (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 www.venetaoregon.gov This Civic Calendar was sent to: Fern Ridge Review, Fern Ridge School District 28J, Fern Ridge Public Library, and Lane Fire Authority		

City Encourages Vegetation Control and Code Compliance

Warm days and spring rains create the perfect environment for rapid plant growth. And while everyone enjoys spring flowers, the season also brings quickly growing grass, weeds, and noxious vegetation that homeowners and tenants must keep under control.

According to the City of Veneta's Municipal Code (Ch.8.05, Sec. 8.05.060), property owners or managers are required to prevent noxious weeds or vegetation from growing out of control on their property and from encroaching on the right-of-way of any public thoroughfare abutting the property. Failing to do so could result in a citation and possible fines through Veneta Municipal Court.

The code defines noxious vegetation as weeds and grass more than 10 inches high, poison oak, poison ivy, and blackberry bushes growing into a public thoroughfare or across property lines. It also includes vegetation that presents a health, fire, or traffic hazard.

Office Support Specialist III Teresa Warrick encourages residents to keep lawns mowed and vegetation under control, and to be a good neighbor. "If you notice that your neighbor's yard needs help, perhaps you could offer to mow, particularly if they are elderly or have special needs," she says. "In addition to doing a good turn, you'll also keep weeds from spreading onto your lawn. Cutting the grass also helps reduce shelter for rodents and pollen dust that can collect in overgrown areas."

Due to an unusually high number of unoccupied homes in the area, the City also reminds residents that a process exists to deal with neglected yards. Whether a neighboring property is vacant or inhabited, the process of filing a complaint about tall grass or weeds is the same. Residents may obtain a code compliant form from City Hall or download one from the City's website at www.VenetaOregon.gov.

City Moves to Make all Parks Tobacco/Vape-free Zones

The City of Veneta is currently considering an ordinance to ban the use of all forms of tobacco as well as electronic-cigarettes, or "vaping" products in all City Parks. "Presently, the use of tobacco is only prohibited at the Territorial Skate Park," said Mayor Sandra Larson. "We want to keep *all* of these products out of *all* of our parks."

The move would help reduce the exposure of children to behaviors that are harmful to health. This is consistent with Veneta's participation in the HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) campaign to promote community health and well-being. "Veneta became a HEAL City more than a year ago," said City Administrator Ric Ingham. "Mayor Larson, in particular, has promoted HEAL activities in our City, and this is certainly an important issue."

Including e-cigarettes in a citywide parks smoking ban is particularly important for youth. The use of these products—which contain some of the same carcinogens and toxic chemicals as tobacco smoke—nearly tripled among Oregon 11th graders from 2011 to 2013. E-cigarette

marketing targets youth with candy and fruit-flavored cartridges.

If two recent pieces of legislation out of the Oregon House and Senate are signed by the Governor, Oregon will join a list of more than 41 states that have banned the purchase of these products by minors. By including vaping products in the park smoking ban, Veneta will be at the forefront of a growing trend to protect our youth.

"Kids in our parks should not be influenced by older teenagers and young adults who continue to smoke or vape in the parks," continued Ingham. "An ordinance would make it easier for our deputies to prevent those negative influences."

The proposal will likely be read at the Veneta City Council's June 8 meeting. "The Council will hold a public comment period to hear from Veneta residents to see how they feel about the enactment of the ban," Ingham added. "If enacted, the prohibition will be enforced by our local deputies as part of their community policing objectives."

LCSO Contract

working with county patrol officers who may have spent up to 15 years of their careers responding to incidents from the McKenzie River all the way to the coast. We're now asking them to take a different approach and be more proactive, engage in the community, understand where hotspots are, and have a more visible presence in order to deter negative activities." That, he says, requires a different mentality.

Having Sgt. Halvorson at City Hall, attending community events, and continuing his monthly Saturday talks at the Fern Ridge Library will help him to build better relationships with the community and to more effectively direct the

deputies in their efforts to do so. Further, Halvorson will have more time to work hands on with his deputies so he can provide oversight across activities occurring on different shifts. "When you have four deputies working seven days a week, trying to provide 24-hour coverage, having someone who can connect the dots between the shifts will help identify where the problems in the community are, who may be causing them, and taking actions to reduce crime," Ingham explains. "The desired outcome is that the Sergeant spends more time with the deputies as they engage in community policing practices while they are under contract here in Veneta."