



THE FLASH

An update from City Administration,
Planning, Public Works
and Police Departments

City of Talent

February 28, 2008 / Volume 11, Issue 2

Ashland Sanitary & Recycling Rate Increase

The City Council has been asked to approve the trash disposal rate increases for Ashland Sanitary & Recycling Services Co., Inc. to be effective in March. The 9% rate increase will be applied to residential, commercial and medical waste customers. According to the company representatives this is necessary for a number of reasons including increases in: fuel, wages and benefits, liability and workmen's compensation increases, and tipping fee at Dry Creek Land-fill. The company does offer alternative programs for those users who have a much reduced waste stream. Recycling also provides opportunities to reduce the amount of trash generated. The existing and new programs will qualify residents to participate in the recycling program which consists of a 65 gallon roll cart

for household recyclables and a small blue bin for glass and motor oil. Residents are encouraged to contact them directly to have a more detailed explanation of the new rates and these programs. The last rate increase was in April 2004. Since the company has an exclusive right to provide trash pick-up service in Talent through a Franchise Agreement with the City, the City Council is required by ordinance to review and consent to any rate changes. The public hearing for this ordinance had to be rescheduled due to a lack of a quorum and will be held on Wednesday, March 5, 2008 at the Community Center at 6:30 p.m.

Committee Openings

There continue to be openings on several City Committees. There is a position available on the Planning Commission. While normally a 4 year term, an appointment would be filling a term that expires in December 2009. The Budget Committee (2 years) still has one opening and the Parks Commission (4 years) has

one opening. If you would like additional information about these committees you can review descriptions on the City's website www.cityoftalent.org or call and ask at City Hall.

Parks and Recreation

The City has hired Brian McKinnis to serve as the summer recreation program coordinator. Many of you may know Brian from his work at Talent Elementary. He will be busy serving both the school and the city until June when school is out. If you have some ideas on possible summer programs that would have appeal to the youth in Talent, or would like to teach a course you can contact Brian via email at brian@cityoftalent.org.

Several City committees including Parks and Recreation are planning Summer Night events at the Commons area taking advantage of the stage area built as part of the Civic Center Complex. If you have interest in helping or ideas please feel free to contact the



**Official
Newsletter of the
City of
Talent**

110 East Main Street,
P.O. Box 445, Talent,
Oregon 97540

*Edited by
Cheryl Nicolay*

City Website:
www.cityoftalent.org
Telephone:
(541) 535-1566
E-mail:
cheryl@cityoftalent.org

Inside this issue:

<i>Utility Bill Payment Options</i>	2
<i>Water System</i>	2
<i>Cop Talk</i>	3
<i>Planning Department News</i>	3
<i>Police Department Renovations</i>	4
<i>City Council Vacancy</i>	4
<i>Calling All Artists</i>	4

Parks and Recreation (cont'd from page 1)

City Manager at betty@cityoftalent.org. Getting this started will take a lot of help from many people with great idea. Being able to offer events during the summer evenings in Talent will be a great opportunity for family outings close to home.

Utility Bill Payment Options

All Water Utility Customers have the opportunity to enroll in an "Equal Payment Plan" for the payment of monthly water utility bills. This has been a popular program for some, and allows them to equalize their monthly payments for water usage over a 12 month period rather than having to deal with higher water bills during the warmer months of the year and lower bills in late fall and winter months.

To participate in the program a water customer signs an agreement with the City that they will make equal monthly payments based on their annual consumption. The criteria for qualifying for this program is as follows: 1) You will need to have one year of payment history with the City (i.e. you have been a city water customer for at least a year; 2) Sign up for the program in March; 3) You agree to pay the calculated monthly payment on time each month.

The actual monthly payment is based on your water usage history. Looking at the previous year of usage assists in setting the monthly payment at an amount that would, over the course of a year, cover the highs and lows of the bills.

By signing up in March you will be able to build up a credit balance so that when the larger bills occur during the summer months there will be money there to cover that. Each year at this time the City reviews each one of the "Equal Payment Plan" accounts and adjusts the monthly payment to reflect the previous year usage as well as any balances on the account. A new agreement is signed between the customer and the City confirming the commitment to continue in the program. If the monthly payments are not made then the City will terminate the agreement and place the customer back on a regular billing that requires full payment each month. Please call Amanda at City Hall 535-1566 for more information about this program.

Water System

Costly in terms of manpower to maintain. - One of the more expensive and time consuming parts of our City Government is the management of the water system. It involves both City Hall staff and members of the Public Works Water Department. The Public Works staff are trained to maintain the water distribution system, which includes maintaining the entire water line distribution system throughout the City, the pump stations, the reservoirs and all the water meters.

The meters do require monitoring to ensure they function properly but also must be read on a monthly basis. Should anyone question a reading or the billing clerk finds a problem they will need to go out and check the meter again. While we have upgraded the meter reading system so that it is automated to make it much more reliable there will always be questions or problems regarding individual meters. Some of these questions come as a result of unreasonably high readings that may come as a result of a water leak. Public Works is also involved in posting shut off notices and in turning off water when requested to do so by the owner or when bills are not paid in a timely manner.

City Hall staff involvement includes the actual utility billing itself, receipting payments, preparation of warning notices when bills are not paid in a timely manner, and preparation of actual shut off notices when other notices are ignored.

Billing and collection process. -The City Council has adopted Ordinance #750 that provides the rules and regulations for the operation of the system as well as the billing and collection process. Since the bills go out monthly there is a continuous cycle of reading, billing, warning notices, shut offs and then billing again. The customer has 14 days from the date the bill is sent to pay the bill in order not be considered delinquent. A reminder notice is sent to everyone who has not paid in the 14 day time period. Warning notices are sent if there is an excess of \$60 owing or more than one month is past due. The reminder notice includes the amount owing and also the time frames of when the water will be shut off if the bill is not paid. Fourteen days is allowed for full payment from the day of the warning notice before the next step of having shut off notices actually posted at a property. Once the notice is posted a customer has 48 hours to pay or the water is shut off. (cont'd on pg 3)

Spring is on it's way and folks are spending more time enjoying outdoor activities. As we recreate outdoors, it's important to remember local ordinance requirements. If you are a Greenway user then you are aware that we have a continuous problem with dog owners allowing their dogs to go unleashed on the Greenway. This causes a variety of problems for other Greenway users, so please keep your dog on a leash and clean up after it. We have had reports of aggressive dogs and some citizens have expressed fear to return to the Greenway because of aggressive uncontrolled dogs. I would ask that anyone experiencing problems on the Greenway call police to report the problem.

For more info on Greenway laws, see Ordinance #686, "Bear Creek Greenway".

Parks in Talent have hours of use that change with the rising/setting sun. Parks are closed during hours of darkness and anyone found on park property after dark may face legal consequences. We have had problems such as vandalism and alcohol/drug use in our parks after dark, primarily at the Skate Park, but also at Chuck Roberts Park. I would ask all citizens to respect the hours of usage, and especially parents in making sure that your children are not in the parks after dark.

As we approach another season of skate park activities I'd like to remind park users and parents about

Laws pertaining to skate park use.

The Public Parks ordinance has a section dedicated to the skate park. Most of that language is also posted at the skate park.

You can access the ordinance on the City website; see Ordinance #286 "Public Parks". The violations that we are seeing most often at the skate park include failure to wear a helmet, smoking, disorderly behavior, foul language, and loitering inside the fenced bowl area. Generally, the enforcement response is to warn, issue a citation, or if necessary trespass the offender from the park. We'd prefer not to have to take any of these enforcement actions, so please help by being aware of the laws and following them.

Water System

(Continued from page 2)

Many wait until this happens to come in and pay and there is therefore a great deal of Public Works staff time in posting all of these notices. Once the shut off has taken place a customer must pay the full amount owing in addition to a \$25.00 fee to reconnect the water.

All of these steps involve a great deal of staff time and we are always looking for ways to improve the system. The most direct way is to encourage bills to be paid on time. If a warning notice is received please come in and make the payment right away. There are some alternative methods of payment depending on one's eligibility, but once a shut off notice is posted these options no longer are available to the customer.

In addition to paying for all the staff time involved in this process the City has to pay the Medford Water Commission for all the water used by the City. Without receiving the payments from the users it makes it more difficult to do that.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT NEWS

Upcoming Applications

An application is expected soon from Clearwire for the installation of an internet service tower to provide increased coverage in the area. The City Council is willing to lease land at Public Works (200 Suncrest Road) for the tower, provided it is approved by the Planning Commission. Such towers are permitted under "site development plan review" in the RM-22 zoning district as a semi-public structure essential to the welfare of the area.

Appeal of "Pacific Stage Heights" Decision

Hearings Officer Paul Nolte will hear the appeal filed by Artnr Construction following the denial in December of its proposal for a 143-unit subdivision. The hearing will take place on Thursday, March 6, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Center at 206 E. Main Street. The public is welcome to attend, but the right to testify is reserved only to people with standing; i.e., those who submitted written or oral testimony at one of the hearings on the proposal.

Update on Police Department Renovation

The renovation/expansion project on the Talent Police Station at 604 Talent Avenue is nearly complete. We will move back into that “new” facility in March. There will be a period of transition as we move (during the period of March 21st thru 27th) when we may be a little hard to pin down, with one foot in each location, so to speak, so here are a few reminders:

1. Regardless of which location our administrative office is at, there will be a uniformed patrol officer on duty to meet public safety service needs.
2. Should you have difficulty reaching us at our administrative phone number (535-1253), 911 will always work for emergencies, and non-emergency calls can always be made to our Dispatch Center (776-7206).
3. We will find a way to provide whatever police service you may need during this period of time, so don't hesitate to call.

We are planning an Open House in April and will invite everyone to come and check out our new work space. Details for the Open House will be provided in the next Flash.

CITY COUNCIL VACANCY

Due to the resignation of Brian Roberts from the Talent City Council the City is seeking applications for this vacancy. When vacancies occur between elections the City Council appoints someone to serve until the next general election. To qualify, candidates must reside within the City limits and be a registered voter in the City prior to submitting an application for appointment. **Applications must be submitted to the Office of the City Manager no later than 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 5, 2008 to be considered.** Council will interview the applicants at a special session on Wednesday March 5, 2008, 5:45 p.m. Talent Community Center, 206 E. Main Street. Applications may be obtained at City Hall, 110 E. Main St.; phone 535-1566 or the website: www.cityoftalent.org.

Calling All Artists

For the second year in a row, the Harvest Festival Committee has decided to put out the call to artist's. This is for fun and will give the artist a chance to show off their creativity. Imagine your artwork on the front of this year's Harvest Festival T-Shirt and Event Poster. One lucky artist will be selected in April to have his or her artwork represented. The theme is “Harvest”. Artwork only, do not include any words or dates. Each entry will need to be accompanied by a signed artwork entry form. Forms are available at the front counter at City Hall and can be completed at time of submission. Contact Cheryl at 535-1566 for more details on your submission. **Deadline is April 1st.**

M A R C H 2 0 0 8	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
							1
2		3 Court 3:00 pm Comm. Center	4 City Council Study Session 6:00 pm Talent Library	5 Harvest Festival 3:30pm Comm Center City Council 6:30pm Comm Center	6 Planning Appeal Hearing 6:00 pm Comm. Center	7	8
9		10 Together for Talent 3:30pm City Hall	11 Traffic 3:00 pm Public Works Architectural Re- view 6:00pm City Hall	12 Parks 6:00pm Comm. Center	13 Public Arts 6:00pm City Hall Planning Sub-Committee 6:00 pm Library	14	15 Architectural Re- view Walk-Around 9:00am
16		17 Court 6:00 pm Comm. Center	18 Urban Renewal 6:00 pm 102 Home St.	19 Safety Comm 1:30pm C.H. City Council 6:30pm Comm. Ctr.	20	21	22
23		24	25	26	27 Planning Commission 6:30pm Comm. Center The “Flash” Distributed	28	29
30		31					