

October 4, 2006

REFLECTIONS FROM AN OUTGOING DUNES CITY COUNCILOR

In many different positions I have enjoyed immensely the ten years of service to our great little town. About three years ago a faction developed here that has driven a wedge through the heart of the city

The issue causing a major rift in the city is the variety of opinion on the needs for lake water quality protection. This has given rise to two groups of widely different character and viewpoint, offering two very different approaches to the problem.

One faction, that I like to refer to as the Water-Only Group (currently operating under the city-sanctioned Moratorium Support Committee) seems to want all possible protection (including a tax base) for Woahink Lake water quality and to get it, is willing to hold any city need hostage to this cause. With G. J. Wasserburg as spokesman, among others, this group is actively working to support Council candidates Peter Howison, Susie Navetta, David Bellemore, and Richard Koehler.

The second group, known as the ~~Whole-City-Group~~ wants to address all needs of the city while also providing all the water quality protection that is possible within the capability (no tax base) of the city, Council candidates Bob Read, Dick Anderson, and Judy Martin, who have made it clear that they wholeheartedly support this position represent this group.

Both camps have similar goals, but the methods used by the Water-Only members have forced me to the decision that I can not support the city in the direction it seems to be going. The tactics of the Water-Only group have been half-truths, exaggerated evidence, outright fabrication, and above all the conscious decision to avoid civility and politeness.

Mr. Wasserburg of the Water-Only faction placed an article in the Siuslaw News of Wednesday, September 20th which may explain my concern for his group's tactics. As just one example, Mr. Wasserburg's contention that the proposed revised land-use code recommended by the "old thinkers" is totally flawed, where in truth only two items of contention have arisen. Mr. Wasserburg then contends that the, "professional rewrite" of the land-use code to be provided by his Water-Only group would be free of errors and would more fully reflect the needs of the city. In the interest of accuracy I should point out that so far a first review of this "professional work" proposed by the Water-Only group has resulted in the identification of more than 15 content problems and a multitude of typos and other errors. The Water-Only group-sponsored draft contain so many errors and lack of change tracking that the mayor, Sheldon Meyer, has called a halt to farther work on it.

The Water-Only group is also proposing two ordinances to the Dunes City Land Use Code that will cost Dunes City home owners millions of dollars in fees and land-use restrictions, plus the loss of land value. The proposed ordinances include the following;

Greatly expanded septic system inspections and, when available, costly new phosphorous and nitrate removal installations.

Frequent stopping of construction that will make it difficult to find a builder who will accept jobs in Dunes City, and then only at a significant premium.

Exceedingly expensive and restrictive erosion control planning, permitting, and inspection. This latter is so restrictive that it will nearly prevent the installation of lawns, as well as the installation and cultivation of gardens and landscaping by homeowners. Added to this, logging under the Oregon Forest Practices act will become impossible and tree cutting nearly impossible. The administration of the permitting process, the approval of plans, and the frequent inspections required by the Water-Only group will run into the millions of dollars and, by estimate of the Water-Only group will require doubling the city staff. This will require a TAX BASE.

The proposals for a Septic System Ordinance and an Erosion Control Ordinance will be aired at an open workshop to be held at Dunes City hall at 7 p.m. an October 18th.

I believe it is vitally important that anyone interested in protecting Dunes City from a tax base and from excessive land-use restrictions should obtain a copy of these two draft ordinances from Dunes City Hall and then plan to attend the workshop,

Lee Riechel

Outgoing Dunes City Councilor Advertisement - Siuslaw News 10-4-06

**BENCHMARKS
(Excluding Public Hearings)**

**TOWARDS THE ADOPTION OF REVISED
LAND USE REGULATIONS**

January – 1999 – City Council directs Planning Commission to prepare a revision of the "Dunes City Code of Ordinances" Chapters 155 and 156.

December – 2004 – Final Draft made available for review by the Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI) under the leadership of a City Councilor.

September 27, 2005 – Text increased to 54,713 words.

November 9, 2005 – Text increased to 54,808 words.

November 18, 2005 – Department of Land Use Conservation and Development (DLCD) notified of Proposed Amendment to Land Use Ordinances 155 and 156.

December 20, 2005 – DLCD Notified of specific text added.

August 16, 2006 – Text increased to 57,815 words.

November 29, 2006 – Text increased to 62,180 words.

I would like to accent the great volunteer support this city enjoys, and to extend an apology.

On several occasions people have expressed the contention that the original draft land-use ordinance update was badly flawed owing to lack of professional writing.

In response I would like to say that the original team authoring the Ordinance 182 text, made the observation that the document should be understandable to developer, builder, land owner and, home owner alike. This was the direction taken by this team. It was with satisfaction that I observed that the city's lawyer found only three items needing further work because of legal interpretation.

I would further like to say that the original team had at least five members that were professionally involved in technical writing throughout their careers before coming to Dunes City and volunteering to serve. These five members have a combined total of more than 150 years of professional technical writing experience. I suspect that the combined total ages of the professional LCOG people who worked on this document is less than the experience base provided by the original team.

I would therefore like to acknowledge the level of competence of our retirees in volunteer service and to apologize for any slight the progression in the writing of the new land-use ordinance may have afforded them.

Great work everyone.

Lee Riechel