



North Bonneville Newsletter October 2011



Where has all the money gone?

We get this question regularly and have addressed specific aspects of it before, but feel it's a good time to provide a more comprehensive overview. Although we're talking about things here in North Bonneville, we are seeing similar scenarios play out at all levels of government and in our national economy as well.

One thing that may help us understand our city's budget is to think of it as many separate budgets. Governmental operating budgets are split up into "funds" that look and act like a bunch of separate companies. Each fund has its own balance sheet, sources of income and sets of expenses. You can think of these funds as a group of businesses on Main Street. While each is independent to a large degree, they also work together and depend on each other for some services. In fact, these funds are legally independent of each other and just like businesses on Main Street do not share their money with each other, although they may make loans to one another. This is why people hear about a city spending large amounts of money in one breath and complaining they don't have enough money in the next – it's like hearing about one company on Main Street that is successful while another one is barely hanging on.

Most Main Streets have a bank, a barber shop, and a hardware store. Similarly most cities have these basic funds: general, street, tourism, capital projects, and utilities (sewer, water, storm drainage). The general fund is the "company" that provides most services, from law enforcement to parks and recreation. It's like a big holding company (think General Electric or Disney) that has its hands in all sorts of different businesses.

In most Washington State cities, the general fund has three main sources of money: property taxes, utility taxes, and sales taxes. This money is unstable – in good times it tends to flood in and in bad times it dries up. Over the past decade, many cities additionally lived off income from the housing boom – they "earned" a lot of money from housing permits and from sales tax on construction. In North Bonneville's case, we also made about \$1.1 million by selling land from 2000 through 2007.

During the good times North Bonneville added staff and services. We kept the parks looking exceptionally neat. We ran a neighborhood block leader program. We subsidized our water and sewer companies, which kept our rates unrealistically low. We re-roofed our buildings, and we provided our own police services.



OCTOBER MEETINGS AT CITY HALL

Planning Committee 4th & 18th ~ 6:00pm

Finance Committee 11th & 25th 6:30 pm

City Council 11th & 25th ~ 7:30pm



Please contact Jennifer at City Hall with any events and/or suggestions for the monthly newsletter.
427-8182 or jennifer@northbonneville.net

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Unfortunately, the good times are gone. As the funds dried up over the past few years we used our savings to keep things going. Now the savings are almost gone. Like the all-to-familiar story of a family that has lost a bread-winner, we are cutting back. We have reduced our staff from 7 full-time and 2 part-time employees to 5 full-time and 1 part-time. We now contract with the county for law enforcement, which is a bright spot in this story as the county is providing excellent service. We stopped subsidizing our utilities and raised rates to actually cover the costs of providing those services. We have been forced to cut back on maintaining our buildings, streets and parks, and we've cut back in administrative services as well. All these moves have been painful, but necessary in order to keep our city viable.

The good news is our City Council and staff in North Bonneville are doing all we can to live within our means. We are focusing on the essential services and cutting everything else. Our primary goal is to keep our city viable and work to bring us all a brighter future.

We welcome your comments and ideas on how we can do a better job. You can contact us at 427-8182, via email at don@northbonneville.net or in person at City Hall.

PLANNING COMMISSION

- ◆ Livestock/Animal Ordinance
- ◆ Shoreline Master Program

HERITAGE TRAILS

- ◆ Children's Discovery Loop
 - Entrance Sign
 - Bigfoot
 - Play Structures
 - Interactive Discovery Kiosks

Members and volunteers needed. Please contact city hall if interested at 427-8182.

CITY COUNCIL

- ◆ Budget Deliberations
- ◆ Sale of Cable TV System
- ◆ Parking Ordinance
- ◆ Livestock Ordinance
- ◆ Tennis Court Backdrop



Happy Halloween



Please slow down and watch for little ghosts and goblins crossing the streets. Parents please use flashlights or reflective clothing so drivers can easily see your children.

NORTH BONNEVILLE SENIORS CRAFT & GIFT BAZAAR

Saturday, November 5th from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
N. Bonneville Senior Center

Come for lunch and homemade goodies. There is also a rummage sale.

For information or to reserve a vendor table call 427-5199 or 427-5234.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Thank you DARLENE MILLS for raising over \$4,000 for the community garden. The fencing has been purchased and will be installed soon. Contact city hall if you would like to purchase a plot or would like more information about the community garden.



The **Burn Ban has been lifted**. Don't forget your permit. Burning permits are free and available at City Hall. Please make sure you read and follow the rules listed on the permit.

Burn barrels are not allowed and only yard debris may be burned.

Library Happenings

Join local artists and art lovers this Thursday night, October 6, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. for the 32nd annual Artists of the Gorge Opening Reception at the Stevenson Community Library. A silent auction including gift certificates, wine and gift baskets, a dinner cruise, a hotel package, artworks, a float tube, and more will benefit the Friends of the Stevenson Library, an organization which supports Stevenson's library in providing services and programs to the community.

Artists from Washougal, Hood River, and White Salmon, as well as Stevenson, North Bonneville, and other locales have submitted their work for this year's show. This year's juror, who selects works to be included and bestows first and second place awards and honorable mentions, is local artist and author Linda Jo Hunter.

Following the juror's announcement of show winners, nationally-known, award-winning guitarist Victor Johnson will perform. Drawing from country blues, swing and traditional styles of music from around the world, Victor plays tunes that please the ear, soothe the heart, unite the tribes, reconnect the generations and get folks feeling good and having fun.

The exhibition will be on view following the opening event through October 31 during library open hours: Mondays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors are encouraged to vote for their favorite artwork in the People's Choice competition.

Lee-Anne Flandreau,
Librarian

SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM

The City of North Bonneville is updating its Shoreline Master Program (SMP) with funding from the Department of Ecology. SMPs must be updated in accordance with the State Shoreline Management Act (RCW 90.58) and SMP Guidelines adopted in 2003 (WAC 173-26). The SMP is intended to provide environmental protection, appropriate shoreline use and development, and public access. The City is required to complete its update by June 30, 2014 under the terms of the Ecology grant agreement.

The City of North Bonneville SMP has not been amended since it was adopted in 1974 when the city partnered with the City of Stevenson and Skamania County. The city's current identified shorelines include the portions of the Columbia River, Hamilton Creek and Greenleaf Creek within the city limits and all of Greenleaf Lake. The shoreline jurisdiction extends 200 feet landward of these waters and includes associated wetlands. The SMP is intended to protect the shoreline environment while providing for appropriate water-oriented uses and public access.

The year and a half long update of the city's SMP will include several steps, each requiring various levels of public participation that will be promoted through communication materials and outreach opportunities.

For additional information you can link on the internet to the Ecology website for a overview: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sma/st_guide/SMP/SMPintro.html
Our specific information will soon be available on the city website <http://northbonneville.net/>

REGISTER TO VOTE

You have until October 10th to register. You can register to vote online at <http://wei.secstate.wa.gov/olvr/site/> and at the Skamania County Auditor's Office.