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Library board approves 2009 budget with service reductions; Mall branch to remain open through 2009

Difficult times, difficult decisions.

The Fort Vancouver Regional Library District Board of Trustees faced tough choices at its Monday budget meeting. Decreasing tax revenues due to the economic slump, in addition to cost increases, have forced the library to look for creative solutions to its budget crisis.

Board members approved a 2009 operations budget of \$17.9 million that will require reduced library hours in several branches, layoffs and other expense cutbacks.

FVRL Executive Director **Bruce Ziegman** said, "Over the past weeks, we received many thoughtful messages and suggestions from citizens and staff regarding the options under consideration for bringing our 2009 budget in line with reduced revenue. These were difficult decisions to make because of the impact they have on our employees and library service to our communities. However, we are committed to continuing to provide the very best library service we can in the coming years."

The Board had previously considered possible closure of the Vancouver Mall Community Library at Westfield Vancouver due to lack of funds to complete remodeling previously said by mall management to be mandatory. However, mall officials agreed to delay the costly interior remodeling until after 2009.

Cutbacks in the 2009 budget include:

- A wide variety of reductions in non-personnel budget categories, including training and capital purchases, and a likely significant reduction to the books-by-mail program
- Elimination of several administrative positions
- No pay increases for non-union staff; union staff are due a "step" or longevity increase in 2009 under the terms of the current contract
- Staff layoffs that would thereby require a reduction in open hours by up to one full day at each of six libraries: Battle Ground, Goldendale, Stevenson, Three Creeks, Vancouver (main library) and Vancouver Mall.

Details about the specific schedules for reduced hours and number of employees to be laid off will be worked out by administrative staff in the coming weeks. The district expects to begin implementing the cutbacks in First Quarter 2009.

City begins Main Street re-striping



Main Street intersection concept sketch. [Click here](#) for more information.

Stalled by a hurricane? Hardly. The City of Vancouver's Main Street Project (to convert Main St. from one-way to two-way between Sixth and 15th Streets) is in full swing despite the fact that signal equipment delivery was delayed due to impacts of the Gulf Coast hurricane. Instead of putting the project on hold, officials are moving forward with re-striping Main Street traffic and parking lines now, and completing signal work when the equipment arrives. City officials said crews have poured curbs and placed pavement where bump-outs were scaled back. Currently, crews are installing the new brick ramps to be built to sidewalks.

If the weather cooperates, officials expect the conversion to two-way traffic on Main St. to one-way on Sat., Nov. 15, following a full 5 a.m. street closure and parking stall striping.

Clark College women's choral and jazz ensembles to present fall concert

The Clark College Vocal Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of **Janet Reiter**, the Women's Choral Ensemble, under the direction of **April Duvic**, and the Clark College Chorale, co-directed by Reiter and Duvic,

will present a concert on Thursday, December 4, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. at Clark College's Gaiser Student Center. The concert is free and open to the public.

Clark College's main campus is located at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver.

The Vocal Jazz Ensemble will perform several selections from the Big Band Era, including *Shiny Stockings*, *Straighten Up and Fly Right*, *Just In Time*, *Night Train*, and some holiday tunes.

The Women's Choral Ensemble will sing several selections, including *Hodie Christus natus est* by Palestrina, *I Sing of a Maiden* by **Hadley**, the Spanish Carol *A la Nanita Nana* and **Rene Clausen's Psalm 100**.

Highlights of the Chorale's selections include the American classics *Ain't-a That Good News*, arranged by **William Dawson** and *Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal*, arranged by **Alice Parker**. **Debra Illyn** will be featured soloist on Mozart's *Laudate Dominum*. All three choirs will conclude the program by singing *And the Glory of the Lord* from Handel's *Messiah*.

Columbia Crossing sets open houses

Columbia Crossing Project officials have scheduled two public open house sessions on December 2 and 3.

Learn about the project's plans for light rail on Hayden Island and Vancouver, a replacement bridge, and fixing seven interchanges between SR 500 and Columbia Blvd.

Citizens are encouraged to attend and provide input on a variety of issues regarding the project, including the number of lanes on the new I-5 bridge, the design of the new bridge, light rail and highway improvements.

Open house dates and times are as follows:

Tuesday, December 2

5:30–7:30 p.m.

Hilton Vancouver Washington

301 W. 6th Street

Vancouver, WA 98660

C-TRAN Bus #4

Wednesday, December 3

5:30–7:30 p.m.

Portland Metropolitan Exposition Center

2060 North Marine Drive, Hall D

Portland, OR 97217

TriMet MAX Yellow Line

More info: www.trimet.org or (503) 238-RIDE.

Free parking.

For more information, go to: www.ColumbiaRiverCrossing.org

Calendar

- **11/12—Agricultural Preservation Committee** open house tonight, 6-8 p.m. at the Clark County Public Safety Complex, 505 NW 179th St., Ridgefield. Clark County is currently working to develop a farmland preservation program to address economic, social and political pressures that discourage farming in areas where population has been increasing and lifestyles are becoming more urban. An advisory committee has drafted strategies intended to protect opportunities to pursue both commercial and non-commercial agriculture. Public comments will be considered prior to finalizing recommendations to the Board of Clark County Commissioners later this year. Go to <http://www.clark.wa.gov/legacylands/projects.html#farm> for more information.
- **11/12—Port of Ridgefield** regular meeting. Wed., Nov. 12, 6-8 p.m. at the Port Office, 111 W. Division St., Ridgefield. Meeting items include the Port Commissioner vacancy briefing; Public Hearing #1: 2009 Annual Budget; Public Hearing #2: Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements; and revised December meeting dates.
- **11/13—Kiwanis Grapefruit Sale:** Ruby Reds are here! Clark County's six Kiwanis clubs launch their 26th annual "Texas Ruby Red Grapefruit Sale" The grapefruit is guaranteed. Many buyers are on a repeat list, but orders can be arranged by calling **Bill Corey** at 256-1143, or **Gregg Butts** at 694-1306, or

Nita and Bill at 892-6897.

- **11/13—CREDC Annual Luncheon**, Thurs., Nov. 13, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at the Vancouver Hilton Convention Center. Keynote speaker is **Michael Parks**, editor & publisher, *Marple's Pacific Northwest Newsletter*: "Inside the Northwest Economy." Register at www.credc.org or call **Pat Mobley**, 360-567-3181.
- **11/13—The Port of Ridgefield** will host a joint meeting of the Board of Port Commissioners of the Ports of Ridgefield, Vancouver and Camas-Washougal on Thurs., Nov. 13, 6-8 p.m. at the Port of Camas-Washougal, 24 South "A" St., Washougal. Dinner begins at 6 p.m. The general meeting begins at 7 p.m.

Wednesday on the air

Community Pride Design Awards (11/10)—4:30 p.m. CVTV

Portland at Miami—5 p.m. ESPN, KXTG 95.5

Clark County Board of Health (10/22)—6:30 p.m. CVTV

YMCA Strong Communities Luncheon (10/22)—7:15 p.m. CVTV

Houston at Phoenix—7:30 p.m. ESPN

Looking Outside the Box, What We Can Learn From Other Counties (11/4)—8:30 p.m. CVTV

Vancouver Police Dept. West Precinct District 1 Community Forum (10/14)—10:30 p.m. CVTV

Town Tabloids and the Weather

Vicki Fitzsimmons baking up some ideas. <> **Jim Sork** not missing out. <> **Duke Simpson** seeing double. <> **Sarah Prince** sending strict orders. <> **Justin Hughes** preparing for take-off. **Celinda Rupert** sending street news. <> **Wednesday** more wet stuff than should be allowed, 41-53. **Thursday**, wet and windy, 42-59. **Friday**, relief on the way, cloudy, drizzle possible, 41-56.