

Community News



City of North Plains, 31360 NW Commercial Street, North Plains, OR 97133

MAYOR:

David Hatcher

CITY COUNCIL:

President

Teri Lenahan

Ana Singh-Gill

Robert Kindel

Michael Demagalski

Michael Broome

Glen Warren

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Town Hall Meeting Feb 16

North Plains City Council will host a Town Hall meeting on February 16, 2012 at 7:00 p.m at Jessie Mays Community Hall, 30975 NW Hillcrest Street.

This meeting is an opportunity for residents to ask questions about City operations, community projects and goals, and share your comments about what the future of North Plains should be. Mayor David Hatcher will

make a brief presentation and facilitate the meeting.

In addition to members of Council, members of the City staff including the City Manager, Police Chief, Public Works Director and Library Director will be available to respond to questions and take notes.

Coffee and cookies will be served.

We hope you can join your neighbors in this event.

Odors in North Plains

When you drive down Highway 26, you probably smell a whiff of a sweet tobacco-like smell. Occasionally you may have smelled the same odor at your home. In early December, during an air inversion, most North Plains residents could smell the odor strongly for about a week solid, and residents as much as 5 miles away from Highway 26 reported the unusually strong smell.

The odor was caused by composting materials at Nature's Needs, which is operated by Recology, a private company.

Since November, Recology has been processing organic materials collected in the City of Portland. Six days a week, trucks deliver yard trimmings and food waste (together called organics) to Nature's Needs, and the volume has increased since Portland started weekly organics collection.

In December, Recology was completing a construction project and had limited space in which to work. As a result, the material was moving through the compost process in about 14 days, which is very rapid compared to its normal operations which requires about 24 days to complete.

Recology held a community meeting in mid-December to discuss the (page 3)

Volunteer of the Year Nominations

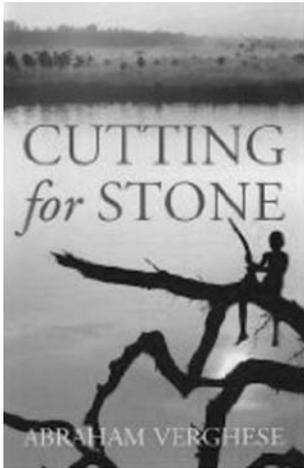
Volunteer Recognition will be held on Thursday, April 12, 2012, this year.

If you would like to nominate someone for the 2011 Volunteer of the Year award or the 2011 Lifetime Achievement award, applications are available online at www.northplains.org. You can also pick up applications at City Hall. Feel free to make multiple nominations as there are many individuals in our community worthy of consideration for these awards.

Applications must be dropped off at City Hall by 5:00 p.m. on March 1, 2012.

One Book, One Community Month

A Celebration at North Plains Public Library



Cutting the Stone by Abraham Verghese is the featured book

Cutting for Stone

by Abraham Verghese is the featured selection for the 5th annual community book read sponsored by the Friends of the North Plains Public Library.

Eleven free activities will be held during the month of February in support of this community program, and refreshments will be served at the events.

The Friends are proud to have won a grant from the Cultural Coalition of Washington County to help with funding.

Kickoff Party. The initial event will be held Saturday evening, February 4 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Library and will feature the music of Derrell Sekou Soumah Walker, a taste of Ethiopian cuisine, and the distribution of 100 copies of Verghese's book.

Culture and Economics of Ethiopia. On Wednesday, February 8, beginning at 7 p.m. at the Library, guest speakers Steve Kountz and Bob Alexander, who have been going to Ethiopia regularly for four years for an economic development project, will discuss culture and economics in Ethiopia today.

Biographical Movie. On Friday, February 10

beginning at 7 p.m. at the Library, an R-rated film will be shown about Dr. Abraham Verghese's personal story of working with AIDS patients in a small Tennessee mountain town. The movie stars Marisa Tomei, Naveen Andrews, Glenne Headly and Hal Holbrook.

Family Program of Stories, Games, and the Culture of Coffee. On Saturday, February 11 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Jessie Mays Community Hall in North Plains, a children's program for K-6th graders will feature African stories and the Ethiopian game of Mancala, and simultaneously, an Ethiopian coffee ceremony will be offered by Sonya Damtew for adults.

Art in Ethiopia. On Monday, February 13 beginning at 7 p.m. at the Library, guest speaker Daniel Amini will present a program about Ethiopian art.

Addiction in Africa. On Thursday, February 16 beginning at 7 p.m. at St. Edward Church in North Plains, the Rev. Steve Newton will speak about addiction in Africa. As president of the Institute for Central and East African Rehabilitation, Rev. Newton spent many years working in East Africa and

helped develop programs for addiction in Kenya, Uganda, and Zambia.

Women's Health in Ethiopia. On Saturday, February 18 beginning at 7 p.m. at the Library, Dr. Kaitlin Masarie will present a lecture on current medical conditions in Ethiopia.

Travel in Africa. On Wednesday, February 22 beginning at 7 p.m. at the Library, Teresa Sullivan of Mango Safari Travel will speak about travel adventures in Africa.

African Dance and Percussion. On Saturday, February 25 beginning at 7 p.m. at the Jessie Mays Community Hall in North Plains, the African dance and percussion group, Sébé Kan ("Serious Sound"), featuring Derrell Sekou Soumah Walker, will perform.

Book Discussion Groups. There will be two opportunities for participation in book discussions. On Wednesday, February 29 beginning at 10 a.m. at the Library, Mike Spooner will lead a discussion, and that evening, beginning at 7 p.m. at the Library, Mark Leavitt will be the discussion leader.

Odor Issue continued...

(continued from page 1)

odor issue with residents. About 40 people participated and expressed concern that the odors were unusually strong. Dave Dutra, a regional manager from Recology, explained that business decisions had been made that led to a "perfect storm" for creating odors in North Plains. He also discussed changes in the operations at Nature's Needs to help prevent a reoccurrence of the December inversion event.

Together with many residents, North Plains' Councilor Teri Lenahan and City Manager Martha DeBry voiced concerns to the Washington County Board of Commissioners as they were considering amending Recology's franchise to allow food wastes to be handled at the facility on a permanent basis.

A responsive Board voted to extend the pilot period for 12 months in light of the many concerns expressed by residents and the City in December. The bottom line for everyone was that the odors need to be managed better than they have been managed.

Nature's Needs has been in operation for over a decade, and Recology is the third operator to oversee the site.

To its credit, Recology has

introduced more technology and physical improvements to manage the composting process. During the initial 12-month pilot period for food waste acceptance, the County received fewer complaints than in the year prior when only yard trimmings were accepted. That all changed in December when dozens of complaints were logged.

Moving forward, the City is working with residents, Washington County, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Recology to ensure the odors are managed more effectively. Residents are encouraged to express their concerns about odor by sending an email to odor@northplains.org which will forward an email to representatives at the City, DEQ, Washington County and Recology's compliance and operations staff. If you do not have email, please contact the City at (503) 647-5555, and staff will be pleased to forward an email on your behalf.

It is important to report odors when they happen. Each complaint is investigated by the County, Recology and DEQ. The more timely and accurate the complaint is, the clearer the documentation will be when changes in the franchise are considered by the Washington County Board of Commissioners and DEQ in the future.

How To Complain About Odor:
Please contact the City, County and DEQ when you believe the odor is unacceptable by sending an email to:
odor@northplains.org



Biofilters draw air through compost piles

Nature's Needs is located immediately east of North Plains on Highland Avenue and north of HWY 26

Tax Help for Seniors

AARP Tax-wise will begin tax preparation at the North Plains Senior Center on beginning February 1, 2012.

Appointments are required and can be scheduled between 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, every Wednesday.

Please call the Center at (503) 647-5666 and ask for Elaine.

In March you can pay your water bill on-line by credit card

City to Accept Credit Card Payments

Have you ever wanted to pay your water bill online by credit card? Very soon you can do that. City Council approved a proposal by Point and Pay to allow the payment of utility bills, deposits, court tickets, building permits, and other services by

credit card. The new service will be funded through convenience fees paid by people who use the service (About \$3 fee/\$100 paid). No new equipment was needed to implement the service, and a small surcharge by the City will recover software

costs. This change was proposed to make payments more convenient for residents.

Claxter Street Water Project Begins Soon

Residents will see a water system improvement project beginning on Claxter Street shortly. This will consist of the installation of a new water main, service lines, fire hydrants and a fresh lift of asphalt. Construction is

expected to start by the end of April 2012 and take a couple of months to complete.

Funding for this project is being provided through a Washington County Community Development Block Grant.

The staff contact for this project is Public Works Director Blake Boyles blake@northplains.org or 503-647-5555.

Local Business Incentives

The City of North Plains is encouraging the retention and establishment of businesses locally.

Business license set up and first year fees have been waived through 2013.

Design review fees, building permit fees and other City services have been discounted for existing businesses

wishing to expand and for new businesses.

North Plains is an e-commerce city. This means that businesses that rely on internet channels to sell and market their products can receive substantial tax benefits from the State of Oregon and Washington County.

If you need information about how to set up a business in North Plains,

please visit the City website at www.northplains.org and look for the "Business" tab at the top of the page. It provides links to information about small business loans, State of Oregon incentives, and Washington County services.

As always, please call City Hall with any questions you may have at 503-647-5555.

City Council reduced many fees to encourage business development in our community

City of North Plains

31360 NW Commercial Street
North Plains, OR 97133

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info@northplains.org

City Manager
Martha DeBry
Martha@northplains.org

Police Chief
Bill Snyder
bills@northplains.org

Public Works Director
Blake Boyles
blake@northplains.org

Library Director
Debra Brodie
dbrodie@wccls.org

City Recorder
Lisa Gibson
lisa@northplains.org

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.northplains.org

Jingle Video

Visit www.northplains.org
to see a 2 minute video
of the North Plains 2011
Jingle.

Council Agenda

Issues that will be coming before City Council
in February include:

- Swearing in of 4 reserve police officers
- Appointment of Planning Commission members - Doug Nunnenkamp and Doug Black applicants
- Appointment of Budget Committee member - Cindy Hirst applicant
- Discussion of Master Fee Schedule and proposed changes to fees in 2012/13, including code enforcement, water, and planning fees
- Presentation by Washington County Cooperative Library Services Manager Eva Calcagno
- Portland General Electric franchise renewal
- Adoption of new zoning and development code
- Acceptance of 2011/12 financial audit
- Discussion of community garden on Commercial Street

City Council has regular meetings scheduled at 7:00 p.m. on the first and third Monday of each month. A special meeting will be held on February 27. All meetings are open to the public. Agendas are published on the City's website the week before the meeting.

Dates to Remember

Town Hall Meeting – 7 p.m. February 16, Jesse Mays Community Hall

City Council - 7 p.m. on February 6, 21, 27. at Jessie Mays Community Hall

Chamber of Commerce – Noon, February 1st at the Fire District 2 Station on Commercial Street

North Plains Garden Club - 9 a.m. February 8 at Jessie Mays Community Hall

Planning Commission - 7 p.m. on Feb 8 at Jessie Mays Community Hall

Library Board - 7 p.m. on Feb 15 at the Library

Downtown Walking Trail Loop

Have you noticed the City has a Downtown Walking Trail and we are beginning to put down icons around town?

This is the first of several Walking Trails in the works. Since we are in the early stages of this project, we would appreciate community feedback.

Please email pam@northplains.org with your comments.

Shoe Donations Welcome

One Book
One Community
Month

During the entire month of February, clean and gently used shoes will be collected at the North Plains Public Library to be donated to the

Ethiopian Shoe
Project

<http://ethiopiaproject.com/our-story>