

Council Present:

Omar Bowles	Holly Campbell
Richard Heyman	Adam Pelatt
Ted Romoser	Dave Stram
Jane Vincent	

Staff Present:

Michelle Amberg	City Administrator
Roberta Tharp	City Recorder
Cliff Bellew	Public Works Director
Shelley Humble	Airport Manager
Maddie Phillips	Planning Technician
Maia Hardy	RARE Participant
Sgt. Billy Halvorson	Lane County Sheriff's Office
	Municipal Judge
R. Scott Palmer	City Attorney
Ross Williamson	City Attorney
Lauren Sommers	

Council Absent: 0

Press: 1 – Creswell Chronicle – Scott Olson

Audience: 21

The regularly scheduled City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Dave Stram at 7:04 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was given.

**Oath of Office**

Creswell's Municipal Judge, The Honorable R. Scott Palmer, administered the Oath of Office to the newly elected Council members: Mayor Dave Stram and Councilors Campbell, Heyman and Pelatt.

**Election of Council President**

Councilor Vincent nominated Councilor Pelatt to serve as the 2015 Council President. There being no other nominations the Council voted unanimously to elect Councilor Pelatt as the Council President for 2015.

**Public Forum**

Jessica Pelatt, Chair of the Parks Advisory Board addressed the Council inviting the community to a Skate Park meeting on Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Community Center beginning at 5:00 pm. The committee will be discussing the formation of a Skate Park Committee.

Jurgin Ramil, addressed the Council to pay tribute to Martin Luther King and Creswell resident Duane Hodges, a local veteran who was killed in action on the USS Pueblo in 1968.

**Mayor's Report**

State of the City Address

Mayor Stram addressed the Council and audience to deliver his State of the City Address. A copy of his address is attached.

Council Committee/Commissions and Board Appointments and Charges

Mayor Stram made the following appointments and charges to the Council Committees:

Transportation/Public Works Committee

Holly Campbell, Chair  
Adam Pelatt  
Ted Romoser

Staff Support to Committee

City Administrator  
Public Works Director

Transportation and Public Works Committee Charge:

Provide education to the public about the water rate increase; develop a comprehensive methodology for setting annual water rates. Consider all economic impacts, such items as: water supply, treatment costs, system maintenance costs, prudent reserves, loan terms, State and Federal mandates, projected demand for water, personnel costs and public input. Assist with Wastewater Master Plan update development.

Finance Committee  
Ted Romoser, Chair  
Jane Vincent  
Richard Heyman

Staff Support to Committee  
City Administrator  
Finance Director

Finance Committee Charge:  
Review the 2014 audit; work with staff on preparation of 2015-16 budget; review financial policies established in 2014 and begin development of a multi-year financial plan.

Administration Committee  
Adam Pelatt, Chair  
Omar Bowles  
Holly Campbell

Staff Support to Committee  
City Administrator

Administration Committee Charge:  
Conduct the one-year City Administrator performance review; bring to completion the hiring of a Judge Pro-Tem; develop the plan to conduct an organizational assessment.

Public Safety Committee  
Omar Bowles, Chair  
Ted Romoser  
Richard Heyman

Staff Support to Committee  
City Administrator  
Lane County Sheriff's Sergeant

Public Safety:  
Review policing study and schedule presentation to Council; develop a plan for public input and education about the policing study; review Lane County Sheriff proposal for a one-half Sergeant Position.

Cultural Services  
Jane Vincent, Chair  
Holly Campbell  
Omar Bowles

Staff Support to Committee  
City Administrator  
City Recorder

Cultural Services:  
Continue oversight of Grant Process; continue work on City Hall 2<sup>nd</sup> floor décor, to include showcasing the work of local artists.

Economic Development  
Richard Heyman, Chair  
Adam Pelatt  
Jane Vincent

Staff Support to Committee  
City Administrator

Economic Development:  
Work with the Airport Commission and City Staff to develop a multi-year Airport sustainability plan.

The Council gave their unanimous consent to the committee charges issued by Mayor Stram.

Planning Commission:  
The Mayor with consent of the Council appointed David Christopher and Lloyd Safley to the Planning Commission for the terms that expire on December 31, 2018. He issued the following charge for the Planning Commission: Elect a chair, vice chair and secretary. Recommend Land use and business regulations for Medical Marijuana facilities in Creswell; revise and make recommendation to the Council on codification of Creswell Development Code.

Airport Commission:  
The Mayor with consent of the Council appointed Richard Heyman as the Council representative to the Airport Commission. He then issued the following charge to the Airport Commission: Elect a chair and secretary; review the draft "Rules and Regulations: Minimum Standards for Commercial Activities, Hobby Field Airport" and make a recommendation to the Council; work with the Council Economic Development Committee and City Staff to develop a multi-year Airport Sustainability Plan.

The Mayor with the consent of the Council appointed Don Amberg to fill the at large vacancy on the Airport Commission for the term that expires December 31, 2018.

Budget Committee appointments will be made at the February Council meeting.

**Parks Advisory Board:**

Mayor Stram appointed Councilor Vincent to continue as Council representative to the Parks Advisory Board. The Mayor with the consent of the Council appointed Tom Serface, Mark Murphy and Jeff Warner to fill the at large positions on the Parks Advisory Board until the terms expire on December 31, 2017 and issued the following charge: Elect a chair and secretary; update the Parks Master Plan to include projects worked on in 2014; continue development of Friends of Creswell Parks to engage volunteers in parks clean-up and improvement projects.

**Tree Board:**

The Mayor with the consent of the Council appointed Holly Campbell as the Council representative and Mark Murphy as the Parks Advisory Board representative to the Tree Board for the 2015 year and issued the following charge: Elect a chair and secretary; produce a public version of the Tree Care Manual; provide educational opportunities to residents on tree care; ensure that Garden Lake Park trees are cared for until they become mature; investigate replacement of trees at Harry Holt Park; and apply for Tree City USA recognition.

**Citizen Involvement Committee:**

The Mayor with the consent of the Council appointed Holly Campbell to the Citizen Involvement Committee.

**Lane Act:**

The primary representative to the Lane Act is Mayor Stram with Michelle Amberg as alternate.

**LCOG Representative:**

The primary representative appointed by the Mayor to LCOG is Councilor Adam Pelatt, and Councilor Ted Romoser as alternate.

**Regional Fiber Representative:**

The Regional Fiber Representative appointed by the Mayor will be Michelle Amberg.

The Council gave their unanimous consent to the appointments and charges.

**Correspondence**

No comments were given on the Correspondence.

**Consent Calendar**

City Recorder Roberta Tharp asked to have the Consent Calendar amended to include the November 10<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting Minutes. The minutes were included in the packet but were not listed on the agenda. The Council gave their unanimous consent to amend the agenda.

Adam Pelatt moved Omar Bowles seconded to approve the consent calendar as amended to include the November 10, 2014 City Council minutes. Mr. Heyman asked for two minutes to review the consent calendar in his packet. Voted on and the motion carried unanimously.

**Administrative Report**

Administration

Policing Update – Sgt. Billy Halvorson

Sgt. Billy Halvorson addressed the Council to explain the new reporting format of the Calls for Service reports included in the Correspondence section of the packets. Calls are now summarized into seven different categories to streamline the report and make it easier to read.

Sgt. Halvorson reported he also participated in a Town Hall meeting this month facilitated by the Chamber of Commerce. Sgt. Carver provided a presentation on Neighborhood Watch programs in order to help revive the local program.

The last Saturday of every month, Sgt. Halvorson will be hosting a Meet and Greet in order to foster relationships within the community. January 31<sup>st</sup> he will hold his session at the Creswell Library.

March Budget Training Workshop

Mayor Stram announced that the City Council has requested to hold a work shop on budget training. The work session will be held in March and will be open to the public.

City Administrator Priorities for 2015

Michelle Amberg presented a chart that outlines her priorities including the Council's goals that she and staff will be working on during the next year.

Initiative Presentation - Roberta Tharp

Included in the packet is a copy of the initiative petition filed by Chief petitioner Jacob Daniels in regards to the water rates. This is informational only.

Airport

No report was given

Finance

November 30, 2014 Financial Summary

A brief discussion ensued in regards to the footnotes included at the bottom of the report. Mr. Romoser expressed satisfaction of note #5 – current revenues exceed current expenses in the Airport Fund by \$9,448.08. Mr. Romoser also inquired about Water System Development Charges Fund and Ms. Amberg explained the totals there reflect the total revenue in this fund.

Public Works

No Report was given

**Council Action Items**

Resolution 2015-01 A Resolution Accepting A Water/Wastewater Financing Program Grant Award Administered Through the Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA) and Changing Appropriations Within the Sewer Fund – Madeline Phillips

Madeline Phillips addressed the Council to notify them the City has been awarded a technical assistance grant in the amount of \$20,000 from the IFA to supplement the existing budget for the City's Waster Facilities Plan Update.

Holly Campbell asked if there was a deadline for the grant to be expended. Ms. Phillips noted we will enter into a contractual agreement to accept the funds and does not believe there is a deadline for expending the funds.

Holly Campbell moved Adam Pelatt seconded, that the City Council accept grant funding in the amount of \$20,000 from the Water/Wastewater Financing program administered by the infrastructure finance authority to supplement available funds for the update of Creswell's wastewater facilities plan. Voted on and the motion carries unanimously.

Holly Campbell moved Jane Vincent seconded that the City Council adopt Resolution No. 2015-01 A Resolution Accepting A Water/Wastewater Financing Program Grant Award Administered Through the Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA) and Changing Appropriations Within the Sewer Fund. Voted on and the motion carries unanimously.

Resolution 2015-02 A Resolution of the Creswell City Council Amending the City of Creswell Employee Handbook; Rescinding Resolution 2014-26 and replacing the current vacation benefit policy and to add a new shared Leave Policy – Michelle Amberg

Ms. Amberg noted this resolution is a housekeeping issue. The copy of Resolution 2014-26 adopted by the Council was missing a small portion regarding probationary employees that was mistakenly omitted during the copying of the packets.

Omar Bowles moved Jane Vincent seconded The City Council adopt Resolution No. 2015-02 A Resolution of the Creswell City Council Amending the City of Creswell Employee Handbook; Rescinding Resolution 2014-26 and replacing the current vacation benefit policy and to add a new shared Leave Policy. Voted on and the motion carries unanimously.

Resolution 2015-03 A Resolution Amending the 2014-2015 General Fund and Appropriating Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP) Grant Funds; and awarding these funds to the Creswell Chamber of Commerce – Michelle Amberg

Ms. Amberg explained each year the city receives a transient room tax payment which is revenue generated from hotels and motels within the County. The use of these funds is regulated by state law and can only be spent for the promotion of tourism. It was estimated at budget time that Creswell's share would be \$15,945. Creswell received a payment of \$16,234 for the RTMP Grant; \$289 more than expected. This resolution allows the City to

receive those funds and pass them along to the Chamber of Commerce to provide staffing to the Visitors Center, help with the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration, and to provide improvements to their visitors center and website.

Councilor Vincent would like to see the Council provide some additional funding to the Chamber at budget time. Councilor Campbell asked if the Chamber has ever provided a report to the Council outlining their accomplishments with the monies. Ms. Amberg explained that last year the money forwarded to them went to provide 882 hours of staffing time to the Visitors Center and \$5,361 towards the costs of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration.

Jane Vincent moved Ted Romoser seconded that the City Council adopt Resolution 2015-03, A Resolution Amending the 2014-2015 General Fund and Appropriating Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP) Grant Funds; and awarding these funds to the Creswell Chamber of Commerce. Voted on and the motion carries unanimously.

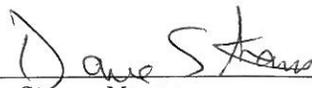
At 8:32 pm Mayor Stram recessed the meeting in order for the Council to enter into the following executive sessions:

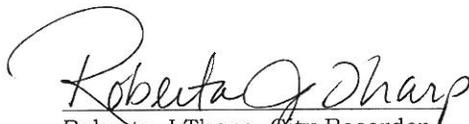
192.660 (2)(e) – To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions

192.660 (2)(f) – To consider information or records that are exempt by law from public inspection

**Adjournment**

At 10:38 pm, the Council returned to its regular session and invited the public back into the room. Attorney Sommers reminded the Council to keep the correspondence confidential. Mayor Stram adjourned the meeting at 10:40 pm.

  
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Dave Stram, Mayor

  
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Roberta J Tharp, City Recorder

**State of the City Address  
January 19, 2015  
Mayor Dave Stram**

Last June I had the opportunity to walk in the Portland Rose Parade with Portland Mayor Charlie Hales and Mayor's from around the State of Oregon. They provided the Mayors with banners to carry along the parade route. Proudly I waved my Creswell banner that day! I am truly proud of Creswell, and thank you for electing me to serve another term as Mayor. I pledge to do my very best serving you.

In preparation for this address I looked through the minutes of our twenty-plus Council meetings and work sessions and concluded that 2014 was a banner year for Creswell.

It was a banner year literally, in that Councilor Pelatt, working with John O'Connell and receiving support from many businesses, prepared and placed banners of our young people serving in the armed forces. Those banners have been displayed up-and-down Oregon Avenue; such a positive way of showing support for our women and men in uniform serving this great nation.

There were many GOOD things that happened in Creswell last year, making 2014 truly a banner year!

The City Sign Code was completed and approved. The Tree Board completed their Tree Care Plan. When the Council learned that our employees' pay scale was in the bottom one-third for like size cities in this region, a Staff Compensation study was undertaken. The Public Works department finished the "Public works design standards" manual and eight new street lights were installed on Harvey Rd. A new Municipal Building Use Policy was enacted, and several new Financial Policies were developed, protecting our Fund balance reserves and our Fixed Assets.

The Parks Advisory Board worked on numerous projects such as: walking trails on Creswell Butte, a community garden at the Cobalt Building, Skate Park, Garden Lake Park improvements, new park land acquisition, and "Pocket Parks". They developed a Facebook page - "Friends of Creswell Parks"; check it out!

Our Lane County Creswell deputies received new vehicles - have you seen them around town? If you look closely you'll see the words, "Creswell Patrol" painted on the back. For the second year in a row, Creswell had three full-time deputies, providing 120 hours of weekly coverage in Creswell. Many people have told me they feel safer knowing there are three deputies working in Creswell. A study of police options for Creswell was commissioned and is presently underway by Portland State University.

2014 was a banner year for Creswell because the audit was completed. A portion of Scott Lane was paved. In downtown Creswell, a new parking lot was put in, providing over 20 spaces for LTD riders, visitors to City Hall, shoppers, and Fourth of July visitors. On the Fourth of July, thousands of visitors came to Creswell for the parade, and this year there was even more to do. At the Airport, the Experimental Aircraft Association offered free rides as part of their young eagles program. In the Cascade Hardware and Wright Brothers Auto Shop parking lots, those wishing to keep their feet on the ground were treated to the Cars & Stripes Car Show.

Last January when I gave this address, I noted sadly that our grocery store had shut down and there were "no cucumbers" to be bought in Creswell. How exciting that this January you can purchase, not only cucumbers but also bananas, broccoli and beats at Farmlands Market. If you want to treat your kids after a band concert or soccer match, you can drive to the other side of the highway and get them a blizzard at the new Dairy Queen. For members of our community that are hard-pressed to buy bananas or blizzards, Creswell has a Food Pantry. The Food Pantry is housed in the City-owned Cobalt Building, and each Thursday the Pantry is open. The Pantry has become, in the words of Alicia Hines, agency relations coordinator for Food for Lane County, "a best practices pantry. They take

their role very seriously and practice impeccable food safety, treat all clients with endless dignity and respect, and think of ways that they can serve their clients beyond providing the food box.”

2014 was a “banner year for Creswell”. So raise the banner proudly for the Food Pantry, new police vehicles, three deputies, the Parks Advisory Board, Tree Board, Sign Committee, Fourth of July Festival, Chamber of Commerce, new parking lot, completed audits, bananas and blizzards, public works design standards, building use and financial policies, and our Creswell military men and women serving around the world!

Much of what happens in Creswell occurs Monday-Friday, 9-5 down at City Hall. I appreciate so much the work that is done by Jennifer and Michelle and Carolyn, by Maia and Roberta and Layli. We have a very loyal and dedicated office staff. Mike does a great job with our Water and Sewer treatment plants, and Cliff oversees our Public Works department. I appreciate Shelly’s work at the Airport and doing Code Enforcement. Did I miss anyone? Oh yes, we made two new hires in 2014. We hired our first full-time Planning Technician. Maddie Phillips had been our RARE intern and we were impressed with her talents. She has been a great addition to the staff. And then we needed to hire a City Administrator. We searched for a year and found a jewel. Last February we hired Michelle Amberg. Michelle is bright, creative, and personable. She is a long-range planner. Each week Michelle and I meet to review current activities and plan future meetings. Michelle has developed a schedule for Council meetings and work sessions through the month of August. I value her planning ability. Michelle brings a fresh perspective to Creswell government and has made a great contribution to our City in her first year on the job.

So on behalf of myself and the City Council, thank you to all our Creswell employees!

And thank you to the members of this Council. Two years ago in January, we began with seven elected Councilors. Eighteen months later, of those seven elected Councilors, only two remained - Jane Vincent and myself. Over the last two years we have had twelve different people serve on the Council. With five resignations, we needed new people to step up and be appointed to serve as Councilors. I am so appreciative of Adam Pelatt and Brent Gifford; they made a huge difference when they came on in April of 2013. Holly Campbell came on last January, followed mid-year by Ted Romoser and Omar Bowles. Each of these Councilors has brought their unique perspective and abilities and has served, tirelessly, for the GOOD of Creswell.

I look forward to working with our newest Councilor, Dick Heyman, and anticipate the contributions he will bring to our city.

Aggressive goals have been set for the New Year.

In 2015 we will develop a multi-year plan to achieve financial stability at the Airport.

In 2015 we will identify long-term needs in our community and explore methods for generating revenue to meet those needs.

In 2015 we will make a decision about police services. How many officers are needed? What kind of organization will be most effective? What will it cost, and how will we pay for it? When the policing study is done, the Council will review it and you will be invited to participate in helping us make this important decision.

In 2015 the Planning Commission will recommend, and the Council will establish, regulations for the sale of medical marijuana in Creswell.

In 2015 conversations will continue with the Creswell Library about how they might make greater use of the Community Center to offer more services for Creswell people.

In 2015 you will very likely see increased activity on the Bald Knob property. In 2008 following a fire, the Bald Knob mill was shut down, putting some 95 people out of work. In recent months there have been conversations with the property's realtor. I am optimistic that the Bald Knob site will again be a vibrant center for business and employment.

So . . . what about the water rates? Perhaps you're wondering what I have to say about that subject. Basically, two things: first, not everything you've heard is true, and second, the rates are going up.

Not everything you've heard is true. I heard recently that City Councilors don't pay for water; it's a freebie given us in exchange for our volunteer service on the Council. If that were true, I wish somebody would tell the folks at City Hall; they keep sending me a water bill! The truth is that Councilors pay for water just like everybody else. When we raise the rates, we pay the increase too.

Not everything you've heard is true. Some have said that rates are actually going up 12% in 2015. So I got my calculator out. In 2014 I paid \$555.29 for water, approximately \$46.27 per month. When the rates go up, 4% this month and an additional 8% in July, I will pay - for the same amount of water - \$599.71 in 2015. That's an increase of \$3.70 per month, \$44.42 for the year - a total 7.99% increase. If you paid \$1200 in 2014 for water (\$100 each month), you will pay \$1297.92 for the same amount of water in 2015, up \$8.16 per month, \$97.92 for the year - an 8.1% increase. Water rates are going up in 2015, but NOT by 12%.

When you elect a City Council you charge them with the responsibility of evaluating the water system and setting rates to cover the actual costs. You expect the City Council to preserve the water system so that it doesn't break down; to protect the purity of the water so that what you drink is safe; and to provide an adequate supply of water for your needs.

We have miles of underground pipes that require annual repair and replacement. Ongoing repairs and replacements cost approximately \$50,000 per city block.

The water we pump from the Willamette River is not fit for drinking until it is purified at the treatment plant. The cost of chemicals and materials to purify and deliver water increased by nearly 75% from 2009 to 2014.

Creswell provides water for three public schools, numerous churches and businesses, and over 5000 residents who deserve an adequate supply of water.

Would you agree with me that preserving the system, protecting the purity, and providing an adequate supply of water are GOOD things for us to do? Then when the actual costs exceed the actual revenue, raising the water rates is a GOOD thing to do.

During that six-year period (2009 to 2014) while our cost of chemicals and materials were going up nearly 75%, our actual water rates in Creswell went up 5 ½%; 3% in 2009, followed by increases of ½ of 1% each in years 2010, 2011, and 2012, with no increase in 2013 and a 1% increase in 2014. Six years. Five-and-a-half percent.

In 2014 the City completed a water rate study which indicated that if rates stayed the same, in two years the actual cost of providing water would be more than the amount paid. In two years, our expenses would be greater than our revenue. The lines would cross: costs going up, income going down. That's what prompted the Council to raise rates. In my opinion, that was a GOOD decision.

Sometimes good decisions can be painful and costly. The most painful decision the Council made in 2014 was raising water rates. Starting with the February utility bill, we will all shoulder the increased cost.

When I was a teenager, my parents bought me a new 10-speed bicycle. I jumped on and took off down the driveway. We lived in the country and the driveway was gravel. Taking my first turn too fast, I spun out and hit the ground, cutting open my hand. Running into the house for mom, she quickly put my hand under the sink and began washing and cleaning the wound. Then she announced, "We're going to the hospital." Though I was a fully grown teenage boy and mom was barely five-feet tall, over my strong objections, my mother - the nurse, won out. We went to the hospital. They stuck needles into my hand to deaden it, and then stitched my palm together. She insisted this was a GOOD thing for me! "You're going to use that hand the rest of your life. If we don't take care of it properly, it will always give you problems." Mom was right; Moms usually are! Her decision was costly to my parents and painful for me, but it was a GOOD decision to make.

Raising water rates is painful and costly, but we're going to be using this water for a long time, and it's GOOD to take care of it.

I want you to know that the Council has been listening to you. You have expressed concern that the 8% increase has no end date. The Resolution passed by the Council states, in Section 9, that, "beginning July 1, 2016 and continuing each year thereafter", the rates will increase by 8%. This is a valid concern.

Tonight I am happy to announce that at next Monday's Council work session, the Council will discuss adopting a new water rate resolution. This new resolution would delete Section 9 - Annual Adjustments. If the Council is in favor of this new resolution, the 8% water increase will not continue automatically each year.

How then will we pay for the increasing costs of water each year? Tonight I will give a charge to the Transportation and Public Works committee to develop a comprehensive methodology for setting water rates on an annual basis. This methodology will consider all the factors that impact water rates: treatment costs, maintenance needs, loan payments, State and Federal mandates, personnel costs, and projected population growth. There will be additional water rate increases over the next few years; water rates are going up in our region. The best way to determine what our rates should be is to develop a methodology for evaluating actual costs and setting rates annually. We have not had such a methodology in place. Now is the time for one.

On the agenda tonight is an Initiative Presentation to change the Creswell City Charter. This initiative would limit annual water rate increases to the same percentage as the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic's Oregon Consumer Price Index, known as the CPI. If this initiative is placed on the ballot and is passed by the voters, it would limit water rate increases to the Consumer Price Index. Any rate increase above the CPI would be brought to the voters for approval.

The main problem with this initiative is that it connects water rate increases to the CPI, while there is, in fact, no connection between the two. The actual cost may go up by 2% one year, 5% the next, 3.3% the following year, and then jump 10%. In the last six years, the CPI went up an average of 2% per year; during the recession years it was a negative number, and the highest increase was 3.1%. All this to say that if actual costs increased by the numbers above (2%, 5%, 3.3% and 10%), Creswell citizens would be voting to raise their water rates three years in a row. In Creswell we love our Fourth of July Parade, but I can't imagine we'd love a steady parade of ballot measures year after year asking for a water rate increase.

A much better approach is for us to develop our own methodology for evaluating and setting water rates on an annual basis.

It is my hope that if - the Council passes a new water rate resolution deleting Section 9 - Annual Adjustments, and if - the Council commits to a methodology for setting water rates on an annual basis - then the proponents of this Charter Amendment will consider holding off on the ballot initiative for at least this year, allowing for the needed 8% increase in July. Furthermore, it is my hope that they will come alongside the Council and help us establish a new methodology for setting annual water rates.

This Council is committed to protecting water in Creswell, and I believe the backers of this initiative share that commitment. I will reach out to them in the hope that together we can find a workable solution to water rates in Creswell.

I'd like to end on that note - working together. It is a great honor to work together with the Council and Staff and many volunteers who serve Creswell.

At Christmas my daughter gave me the book, *Unbroken*, the story of Louie Zamperini, a WWII bombardier whose plane was shot down over the Pacific Ocean. Louie and two other airmen survived the crash and floated adrift for over 40 days, accompanied most of the time by hungry sharks.

How did they survive? In her book, Laura Hillenbrand provides the answer: "Hope displaced their fear and inspired them to work toward their survival, and each success renewed their physical and emotional vigor" (155). We are not on the ocean and we are not surrounded by sharks.

As we move into a New Year, let us work together with hope in our hearts, and may each success renew our vigor!

Dane Starn  
2/11/2015