

Linking Letter

June 16, 2017

by *Anne Scheck*

6/13/2017 CITY COUNCIL

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~| **Cannabis Site**

A project on Stryker Road to cultivate, produce and process marijuana will go forward as planned now that residents of the airpark have stopped their appeal on the operation, City Manager David Clyne announced.

An “intent to appeal” the operation, on Stryker Road in the city’s industrial zone, had been filed with the *Land Use Board of Appeals* by the Independence Airpark Homeowners Association (IAHA), but IAHA board members recently voted -- by a slim margin -- to drop the appeal. An email poll of airpark residents showed a large majority of respondents favored continuing the litigation. Appeals on the site design to both the City Council and the Planning Commission by the IAHA had been denied, but new conditions on noise and odor have been instituted, as wells as terms for operation in new city licenses for marijuana.

The grow-and-processing facility appears likely to be the highest source of sales-tax money for the city – 10% of total marijuana tax revenues collected by the state will be returned to cities and counties based on the number of licenses issued for marijuana. Half of that 10% is derived from the number of retail licenses – the other half is based on the number of grower, producer or wholesale licenses within the municipality, according to a spokesperson for the Oregon Department of Revenue. The operation, by *Organic Investments*, will require multiple licenses under the requirements of state guidelines.

~| Indy Landing Costs

Change orders for construction work at *Independence Landing* that bring the cost so far to nearly \$2 million were approved Tuesday by the Independence City Council acting as the Urban Renewal Agency -- but these expenses add nothing new to the estimated budget. “Even with the cost of (demolishing) the old city hall, we’d still come in at about \$3.2 million,” said Steve Ward PE, the engineer on the *Independence Landing* project.

Asked after the City Council meeting what the total cost is likely to be -- including a proposed parking lot development of the old city hall site -- Mr. Ward said the \$3.2 million to which he referred doesn’t include the purchase price of the 18-acre riverside property for *Independence Landing* or the original

costs of grading. That will put the price at \$4.7 million, a sum confirmed by Shawn Irvine, the city's economic development director. However, the last report in the *Linking Letter*, which predicted costs could run to \$5 million, was called a "gross misstatement of likelihood of city debt from this Urban Renewal Project," according to David Clyne, who wrote a letter to the editor about this issue (see bottom of this *Linking Letter*).

~| Mekanico Denied

The owner of *Mekanico*, a tavern by Riverview Park on Main Street, won't be granted an extension on a balloon payment due this fall on the property, which could mean it will revert to the city.

Acting as the Independence Urban Renewal Agency, city councilors voted to reject a request by Matthew Lind, owner and developer of *Mekanico*, to allow him to delay payment on the remaining debt. He had been granted a previous extension. "I took a derelict gas station and made it into something," said Mr. Lind, following the decision. Mr. Lind stated that he is current on all payments due to the city to date. He said he suspects the city would like to re-acquire the land. "That's not true," said Shawn Irvine, Independence economic development director, when asked about Mr. Lind's assertion. "We don't want it back," Mr. Irvine said.

>|PIN REPORT: MINET

Public Interest News

MINET is on track to earn the highest net annual operating income that it has ever achieved and is predicted to be able to contribute 73% more toward debt than it did in the 2015-16 budget year, according to a news release issued by the company. This month, the MINET budget committee unanimously passed the 2017-2018 budget, which features “a lot of good news,” the report states.

Overall expense increases have been kept to a minimum – revenues are “much improved” -- and now MINET has an ability to set aside money for needed system upgrades, the company announced.

At Tuesday’s City Council meeting, a new debt- repayment resolution was approved, which would require MINET to make full debt payments in 2023. [The August issue of *The Independent* will look more in-depth at MINET’s efforts to ease the cities’ debt burden in the near term].

<|**DATE-TO-NOTE: Saturday! 6/17**
“Art in the Park” for youth ages
kindergarten to middle school.

Kid-safe *Chihuly-like* “glass”
will be made from plastic
bottles. Parents of children
are encouraged to attend.

Riverview Park:10am–noon
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Riverview Farmers Market
Now on Tuesdays.1- 6 pm.

!!!PICK UP the June *Independent*, free:

The Golden Horse, The Ovenbird Bakery,
Elite Cleaners (all downtown) and
The Starduster (at Independence Airport)

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To: Anne Scheck from City Manager David Clyne

It would be amazing if you bothered to fact-check your writings before raising everyone's concerns week in and week out. I don't recall one instance of your having contacted me in advance of any of these "exposes" to check accuracy. This one may top the list for fiction.

Just for a moment consider the possibility that the City actually understands its job. I think the vibrant downtown you see today v. years ago speaks well to that job knowledge.

My direct number is below. I would encourage you to dial it in the future before you print another lop-sided story about City business. Balanced reporting is essential to true journalism.

Feel free to publish this response.
(from David Clyne,
Independence City Manager
re previous article in Linking Letter)

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FINALE: New Independence Logo:

A new city logo -- for branding signage and other markers of Independence -- was unveiled at the City Council meeting this past Tuesday by the *Fisher Carlson Company* of Portland. It shows the peak of the Cooper Building, at an angle overlooking Riverview Park at the North entrance to the city.

"It is a heroic symbol of the city's past and its pioneering future," stated John Fisher, founder of the design firm, who presented the images to councilors.

LINK to 6/13/2017 meeting video below

via youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYYHrHtX4zE>