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Commissioners adopt 2009/2010 Budget

The Board of Clark County Commissioners yesterday adopted the county's 2009/2010 budget. Totalling \$994 million, the budget is down six percent from 2007/2008 and resulting in the loss of about 150 jobs.

The goal was to preserve services for residents, according to Commissioner **Steve Stuart**. "We cut costs, saved services, protected public safety and didn't raise taxes," he said. "While it's been a struggle, I think we can turn things around."

Chair **Betty Sue Morris** agreed that the budget process was not easy. "Some of it has been remarkably painful," she said. "This is our worst budget since the early 1980s. We are very sorry that we are having to cut about 150 jobs."

The county has had strict hiring controls in place for several months. The current budget calls for eliminating almost 150 positions, including some that are vacant. Staffing adjustments will begin immediately, to determine the number of people who will be laid off by January. The budget also freezes salaries for management employees and elected officials in 2009.

General Fund Departments under the Board took 12 percent cuts that eliminated almost \$6.7 million from their budgets. Law and Justice and other elected officials took cuts of more than \$8.16 million, which averaged about four percent of their budgets.

For more information visit <http://www.clark.wa.gov/obis/documents.html>.

Three Creeks Advisory Council to meet on transportation Dec. 11

Clark County's Three Creeks Advisory Council will meet on Dec. 11 from 10 a.m. to noon. The meeting will be open to the public, at the offices of the Clark Regional Wastewater District, 8000 NE 52nd Court, in the Hazel Dell area. The council will hear presentations by the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council on high-capacity transit and by C-TRAN on its 20-year transit development plan. In addition, there will be a roundtable discussion regarding urban growth boundaries, annexation and the city of Vancouver.

The Board of Clark County Commissioners appointed the council to assist the county on transportation, land-use planning and related issues in the planning area, which includes unincorporated areas around Hazel Dell, Felida, Lake Shore, Salmon Creek and the fairgrounds.

Forest Service road closures delayed

With no snow forecast for the Cascades during the coming week, and [little or no accumulation of snow expected](#) on most forest roads, winter road closures that are normally established near Sno-Parks and for wildlife winter range will be delayed until they are closed by snowfall.

This extension of the open road season will allow better access into these areas for Christmas tree cutters during this year's late start to the winter recreation season.

Sno-Parks throughout the [Cascades](#) Forest will begin operating once snow is present at the Sno-Parks. Roads leading to the Sno-Parks will be maintained during the winter. Please check the Forest website for current conditions at the Sno-Parks. The Gifford Pinchot National Forest website is: <http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/>. For the latest information on State Route 504 and other Washington State highways visit WSDOT's website at www.wsdot.wa.gov/regions/Southwest/. Motorists can receive updates by calling **511**.

Battle Ground receives upgraded bond rating

A report issued by Standard and Poor's on November 25, 2008, announced the upgrading of the City of Battle Ground's bond rating from A (Upper Medium Grade) to AA- (High Quality).

The upgrade is attributed to four factors: the City's strong financial performance; the local economy's strength in weathering the economic downturn; the City's strong reserves; and new financial tools that will help moderate financial cycles – a new investment policy, a change in reserve policy, a new financial model and the biennial budget process.

The High Quality AA- rating benefits the City by increasing the marketability of existing bonds and by

receiving lower interest rates on future debt issuances.

The City of Battle Ground was one of 19 municipalities in Oregon and Washington, and the only municipality in Clark County, to receive an upgraded rating.

People

The Port of Vancouver named **Pete Boch** as its new accounting manager.

A long-time resident of Southern California, Boch will be supervising the accounting staff and is responsible for preparing financial reports.

Before coming to the port, Boch worked for a decade as a controller and finance manager and was most recently with Longview Fibre as assistant director of corporate accounting.

Boch graduated from UCLA with a master's degree in finance and a bachelor's degree in economics.

Chrissy Whitters has joined the Port of Vancouver USA as administrative assistant.

Whitters, who comes to the port from Vancouver's HDJ Design Group where she was an administrative assistant supporting the accounting department, will play a key role in the port's re-development of its administrative services department, and will provide support to all departments on various projects. Whitters comes to Vancouver from Alaska, where she attended the University of Alaska and worked as an office manager and project coordinator for an excavation company.

News Brief

The first meeting of the new Clark County Urban Livestock Task Force is set for 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 10, at the Public Service Center, 6th Floor, 1300 Franklin St., Vancouver.

Convened by the Board of Clark County Commissioners, the task force is charged with reviewing standards for urban livestock and with developing recommendations for any changes to current standards.

Task force members are **Loren Carlson, Cheri Cornelius, Dr. Tom Meyer, Clarence Petty, Mary Ann Simonds, Denise Smee, Art Stubbs** and **Norm Welsh**.

For more information, please contact **Gordy Euler** in Community Planning, (360) 397-2280, ext. 4968, mail Gordon.Euler@clark.wa.gov.

Calendar

- **12/8**—Fort Vancouver Regional Library District Board of Trustees meets in regular session on Mon., Dec. 8, 2008 at the Vancouver Community Library (in Library Hall) 1007 E. Mill Plain Blvd., Vancouver. An executive session is scheduled for 5 p.m. The public meeting begins at 6 p.m.
- **12/16**—**Rescheduled Meeting**: The Vancouver Library Capital Facility Area Board will meet on **Tuesday, December 16, 2008 at 9:30 a.m.** (meeting was previously scheduled for December 9) in the Clark County Commissioners Hearing Room, 6th Floor, Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington, for review and approval of the final design for the new main library.

Additional Community Calendar Links

The **Southwest Washington Center for the Arts** has published its December newsletter and calendar of events. [Click here](#) for the PDF file.

Greater Vancouver Chamber Community Calendar: [Click here](#)

City of Vancouver Calendar of Community Events: [Click here](#)

Friday on the air

- 4:38 pm [Clark County Board of Health \(11-26-08\)](#)
- 5:30 pm [Clark College Orchestra: Italia \(12-3-08\)](#)
- 7:30 pm [Vancouver Community Tree Lighting at the Festival of Trees \(11-28-08\)](#)
- 8:00 pm [Vancouver Pops Orchestra Concert at the Festival of Trees \(11-28-08\)](#)
- 9:13 pm [City Minutes \(11-30-08\)](#)
- 10:00 pm [Community Pride Design Awards \(11-10-08\)](#)

10:30 pm [The Regional Economic Outlook: Resilience or Recession? \(11-13-08\)](#)

11:30 pm [Forum: Landlords & Tenants: Resolving Disputes \(11-20-08\)](#)

Today's Live Sports Schedule:

NBA--

5:00 p.m. Portland at Boston ESPN, KGW, KXTG (95.5)

7:30 p.m. Toronto at Utah ESPN

CVTV programming on demand:

<http://www.cityofvancouver.us/cvtv/cvtvindex.asp>

Town Tabloids and the Weather

John Bryden offering lofty views. <> **Roger Peterson** declaring roads open.<> **Suzanne Arnitz** getting the word out.<> **Barbara Kerr** looking forward to get-together.<> **Paul Montague** recapping.<> **Bob Durgan** conversing. <> **Friday**, sunny but cool, 39-48. **Saturday**, mostly cloudy, 39-46. **Sunday**, rain likely, 38-51.

[Click here for additional local weather information.](#)