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Commissioners to hold Highway 99 hearing

A public hearing is scheduled for 10 a.m. December 16 at the Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin St., Vancouver, for the Board of Clark County Commissioners to consider a new plan to guide the future of Highway 99 and neighborhoods nearby.

If approved, the proposed Highway 99 sub-area plan would become part of the county's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan. The planning area is roughly between Northeast 63rd Street, Interstate 5, Northeast 134th Street and the Bonneville Power Administration transmission right-of-way.

Current project documents are available for review on the county Web site at www.clark.wa.gov/hwy99. Please contact **Marilee McCall** in Community Planning at marilee.mccall@clark.wa.gov or (360) 397-2280 ext. 4558 to request copies on compact disc or to purchase copies on paper.

Written comments may be sent to: Highway 99 Sub-Area Plan, Clark County Community Planning, P.O. Box 9810, Vancouver, WA 98666. Comments by e-mail may be sent to commplanning@clark.wa.gov. Comments received by December 12 will be forwarded to the commissioners in time to prepare for the hearing on December 16.

Please visit the county Web site at www.clark.wa.gov/hwy99/index.html for more information.

Clark Public Utilities approves Electric and Water system budgets for 2009; hearing on possible rate increase set for December 9

Clark Public Utilities commissioners yesterday approved Electric and Water system budgets for 2009.

Electric System expenses are expected to be about \$413 million, up from about \$363 million in 2008. About 73 percent of that is the cost of power that the utility generates or purchases for sale to its customers.

Power supply and conservation costs are up about \$45 million compared to 2008, due to higher prices for natural gas used to generate electricity at the River Road Generating Plant, and anticipated higher rates for power and transmission services purchased from the Bonneville Power Administration. The budget also includes about \$2 million to purchase power from a wind project and an increase of \$1.6 million in conservation spending, both required by voter-approved Initiative 937.

Higher power costs in 2009 will be partially offset by \$26.3 million in refunds from BPA, but that still leaves a deficit of about \$20 million, according to Commissioner **Carol Curtis**.

"Electric rates will need to increase about 6 percent largely to cover higher costs for the purchase and generation of electricity that is sold to the utility's customers," Curtis said.

Commissioners discussed several options for the rate increase, and will consider approving an increase on December 9.

Curtis noted that residential electric rates have not changed since April 2003, while rates to commercial and industrial users increased about 2 percent in October 2005.

Can't beat a buck — affordable ornaments & holiday sparkle galore at Divine Consign

Linda Glover, of Divine Consign, reports that the downtown Vancouver shop has "something for every tree" in its dollar ornament collection.

The shop, which support local charities through store purchases, is also stocked with a great inventory of holiday decorations in addition to its usual consignment offerings, Glover said.

In addition, the store is again offering 50/50 consignments in an effort to "keep more money in your wallet during these tough economic times."

Finally, Glover reminds that the Divine Holiday Home Tour is tomorrow, December 4, from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. Click on the following link for tickets and more information:

<http://www.divineconsignfurniture.org/wa/furniture/info/C343/>

Vancouver Ducks Unlimited hosting December 4 dinner & auction

From the Vancouver Lake Lowlands to the La Center Bottoms, Vancouver Ducks Unlimited works hard to conserve and restore waterfowl & wetlands and provide education regarding restoration and conservation needs.

The organization will host its 38th Annual Fundraising Dinner & Auction tomorrow, December 4, 2008 at 5 p.m.

Today's Live Sports Schedule:

4:00 p.m. Portland at Washington, CSN Comcast 37, KXTG 95.5
6:00 p.m. Oregon Ducks (Basketball) at Utah, KXL (750)
6:15 p.m. North Carolina V. Michigan State, ESPN
7:00 p.m. Eastern Washington at Portland, KCMD (970)

Town Tabloids and the Weather

Melissa Morse contemplating weaponry. <> **Darby Bacon** sharing "Quadruped." <> **Jack Hardy** connecting. <> **Michael Parsons** promoting. <> **Judith Witteman** artistically speaking. <> **Tammy Williams** sporting new frames. <> **Wednesday**, drying trend on the way, partly cloudy, 39-50. **Thursday**, fog, sun breaks, 38-51. **Friday**, clouds & sun, 39-51.

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

West Coast Bank is the title sponsor.

Organizers said Vancouver Ducks Unlimited is a 100 % volunteer organization that has successfully raised over \$325,000 in the last five years through grassroots efforts. More than 87% of funds raised go directly into conservation and restoration efforts, which is on of the best efficiency ratings of any conservation organization.

The Vancouver Chapter is rated as one of the top 100 Ducks Unlimited chapters nationally out of over 3,500.

Tickets to the dinner & auction are \$75. Each entry includes admission, prime rib dinner, and a one-year annual membership to Ducks Unlimited.

The event will include door prizes, raffles, silent auction items, a live auction and dinner.

Purchase tickets by calling **Gerrick Weakly** at 360-901-6500.

For more information about Ducks Unlimited visit www.ducksunlimited.org.

Calendar

- **12/3 -- Clark County Budget hearings** continue this week. Tuesday, **December 2** — Hearings for the public to speak on the budget: - 10 a.m., sixth-floor hearing room, Public Service Center, Vancouver - 6:30 p.m., Rainier Room, Clark County Fire District 5 Northwest Regional Training Center, 11606 N.E. 66th St., #103, Vancouver; Wednesday, **December 3** — 9 a.m., Board will meet to review the final 2009/2010 budget. Meetings will be held at 9 a.m. on **December 4 and 5** if necessary. Copies of Clark County's draft 2009-2010 biennial budget are available online at <http://www.clark.wa.gov/obis/documents.html> or at the Clark County Office of the Budget, sixth floor, Public Service Center, Vancouver.
- **12/2—Columbia River Crossing Open House**, Tuesday, Dec. 2, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Hilton Vancouver Washington, 301 W. 6th St., Vancouver. Information about plans for light rail on Hayden Island and in Vancouver; a replacement bridge across the Columbia River; and improvements to seven interchanges between SR 500 and Columbia Blvd. in Portland. CRC technical staff will be available to provide information and answer questions. More information: www.columbiarivercrossing.org.
- **12/3—Port of Ridgefield Commissioners Meeting**, Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2008, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Port Office, 111 W. Division St., Ridgefield. Meeting items include: port commissioner applicant interviews.
- **12/4—Divine Holiday Home Tour** benefitting the hungry among us in Clark County through the Walk & Knock program. [Click here](#) for additional information and online signup via paypal.
- **12/5--Columbia River Crossing Project Sponsors Council** meets 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Portland Building, 1120 SW Fifth Ave., Portland, Room C, second floor. More info: <http://www.columbiarivercrossing.com/>.
- **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.
- **12/8—Neighborhood Associations Council** of Clark County meets Mon., Dec. 8, 7-9 p.m. at the Public Works Conference Room, 4700 NE 78th St., Vancouver.
- [Click here](#) for the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce Community Events Calendar
- **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.

Wednesday on the air

Today's CVTV Schedule

(Clark-Vancouver Television Channel 23):

- 4:00 p.m. [Clark County Focus \(11-9-08\)](#)
- 4:30 p.m. [Smart Environments: Artificial Intelligence \(11-14-08\)](#)
- 5:45 p.m. [Clark County Board of Commissioners \(12-2-08\)](#)
- 8:30 p.m. [YMCA Strong Communities Luncheon \(10-22-08\)](#)
- 9:45 p.m. [Vancouver Symphony Orchestra \(10-19-08\)](#)
- 11:00 p.m. [Clark County Board of Commissioners - Budget Meeting \(12-1-08\)](#)