

# Pacific Source

Your Source of information on your Government and your Community

**City of Pacific, Washington**

November 2009

## *Pacific's Flood Wall*

Unlike the threats of flooding on the Green River which are caused by problems with the Howard Hanson Dam, problems along the White River are caused by problems with the capacity itself. Where the White River as it flows through Pacific once had a capacity of over 20,000 Cubic Feet per Second (CFS), it is now down to almost 25% of that. According to a recently completed study of the lower White River the capacity currently sits between 5100 CFS near County Line to 5800 CFS near the park. It would not take a major storm to cause the White river to flow over its banks.

The advantage we have is that the Mud Mountain Dam can and will hold back water in most instances. A few inches of rain would not result in the requirement to dump large amounts of water in a short period of time. However we are not going to take any chances.

Partnering with the Army Corps of Engineers and King County, we are constructing an artificial flood wall that will extend from Pacific Park, around the apartments that were flooded last year, and down to the Pierce County Line behind White River Estates. This flood wall should reduce the risk of any homes getting flooded this year. Pumps will be strategically located to pump storm water over this wall and into wetlands.

This wall will effectively limit access to the river for many people. Once closed, it will not allow vehicles to drive to the back of the park, nor will it allow easy access for pedestrians. A Stairway will be built near the bathrooms to allow people to get over the wall. You can also walk around it on the north end. **Under no circumstances is anyone to climb upon or climb over the flood wall in other locations.** Although relatively stable, if they were damaged by vandalism or by accident, this damage might not be discovered until it was needed for flooding. Signs will be posted Prohibiting playing on or around these walls.

Most of the wall is constructed using HESCO's or large 3' x 3' x 4' cages that are lined with a fabric and filled with sand. This creates a contiguous wall 4' high that should contain any floodwater generated. Additionally "Super Sacks" or large sandbags that look like marshmallows will be used where HESCO's will not fit tightly. This wall will remain in most areas for two to three years as other permanent mitigation is completed. Sections will be taken out for the spring and summer to allow use of the park during the non flood season.

*Rich Hildreth*

## ***The Science of Political Manipulation***

As it seems with any election, over this next week we will be bombarded with attack ads, negative campaigning and psychological tricks designed to sway our votes. It is unfortunate, but it has been proven that these types of mind games often work because the viewer does not understand they are scientifically being manipulated. Have you ever seen a candidate's campaign sign posted in threes? This is because your mind will react to that visual more than you would if they were posted individually. This is the same tactic that Burma Shave used with their famous road signs along highways in the 50's and 60's. There is a science to politics and it is often used to manipulate a vote.

This science extends beyond the typical understanding of politics as well. With the many cable news channels and political commentators that we now gather our information from; they have learned that how to manipulate political support or opposition. They understand that if a particular segment of the population desires news that builds upon their support for or plays on their opposition to a political belief, you can hint to them something they want to believe and they will run with that rumor as quickly as if it were proven fact. This is not meant as a slam against any particular network as both sides have been known to use this tactic.

This tactic can be countered by thinking for yourself. The gossip and rumor that is spread by this tactic is often so thin that common sense should dictate that this needs further investigation. However politics is not common sense, it is emotional. Evidence of this can be seen by the people who believe that President Bush planned the 9-11 attacks or that President Obama's birth certificate from Hawaii is fake. For someone who wants to believe those stories, there is nothing you can tell them to convince them they are wrong. These political beliefs are pure emotion, not common sense.

Many of the attack ads you see and hear each year play on this same emotion; this candidate wants to give your tax money to ACORN, or this candidate is paid off by special interest groups (often if you look, you find you might be a member of that special interest group). They are designed to play on those same emotions. But will they really help us elect the best candidate?

There are many good men and women who either currently hold or are running for political office. Choices you make over this next week can shape not only your future, but the future of your children and grandchildren. Make informed decisions based in reality and fact. Consider the source of your information and ask yourself if they might be manipulating you. Governance is far too important to leave to political games.

***Note: There is a Pacific Candidate Forum that will be held on Thursday, October 29th at New Hope Church 603 3rd Ave SE (Across from the City Park). This is an opportunity to meet and hear from some of your candidates in person. Donations to the Food Bank are requested.***

## **2010 Budget Proposed**

Our city is emerging from one of the worse economic downturns in many decades. Already hurting from changes in State Law that shifted Sales Tax and B&O tax that was paid to us to other cities and Washington State, this recession devastated our revenues and used up most of our reserve funds. If it were not for the reserves we had been able to build over the past few years we would have faced severe cutbacks and elimination of some programs.

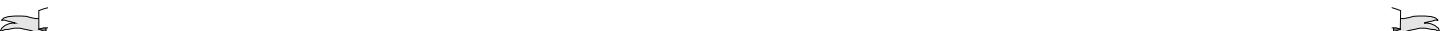
The budget that was proposed to the Council is based on belief that we will see a slow but steady recovery in 2010 and we are not further hampered by Initiative 1033. We have used the remaining banked property tax, but with the overall drop in many home values it will result in only a slight increase for local tax payers. It should also be noted that the city purposely held taxes down over this past few years instead of using the maximum capacity to begin with. Even with this increase local taxes will remain below what many of our neighbors are paying.

Now it is almost automatic that when government announces it is going to be raising taxes, people will come out of the woodwork claiming government is just wasting money and a tax increase is unnecessary if elected officials would just learn to budget. I invite anyone to look at our books and realistically propose additional cuts that would not cost our city far more in the long run. If you cut out programs such as Youth and Senior Services, you also sacrifice on the quality of life for many of your citizens. When you cut police officers you can expect an increase in crime. If you cut back on administration then staff gets overworked, things get overlooked and the overall quality and level of service goes down. To create of a balanced budget in this tough fiscal environment is difficult at best.

You need to also look at the big picture with budgets. The total budget which includes the General Fund, utilities, equipment reserves and capital projects is actually reduced from what it has been in the past. This year's proposed budget is \$15,170,977, down over \$1.5 million from last year. The General Fund is nearly identical to 2003's budget when adjusted for inflation.

I understand the desire to have the lowest possible taxes. As I have proven with every budget I have proposed, I am a fiscal conservative but with an eye on reality. The most effective way to keep taxes low is with an effective government. That is keeping an eye on how tax dollars are spent, but it is also making sure that cuts made do not cost you more in the long run. That is the basis for the budget that has been proposed.

***Note: There will be a second public hearing on the 2010 budget on Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. This hearing will be held as part of the Regular Council Meeting held at City Hall. 100 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave SE, Pacific.***



**The Pacific Source is a Monthly Newsletter Available at Pacific City Hall, the Senior Center, and other locations around the city.**

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**Please contact Mayor Hildreth at [pacificmayor@aol.com](mailto:pacificmayor@aol.com) to be added to the mailing list.**

