

The Carbon Valley Herald

FREE

Covering the Carbon Valley area, including Frederick, Firestone, Dacono, Platteville and Mead

Volume 1, Issue 8

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Big wheels keep on turning



Photo by Jen Reeder

A tractor attracts passing motorists to Miller Farms Market at the intersection of Colorado 66 and County Road 19. The family farm sells fresh produce, ranging from onions and peppers to sweet corn and cantaloupe seven days a week from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Firestone board sets special election Residents to vote on Union annexation Sept. 30

By Jen Reeder
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FIRESTONE — Firestone residents will decide the fate of the Union annexation in a special election on Sept. 30.

The Firestone Board of Trustees voted unanimously to continue with annexation plans, despite public petitions protesting the

annexation, at a board meeting Aug. 14.

Members of the grassroots organization InformFirestone collected signatures for two petitions essentially calling for a referendum in an attempt to allow more public input into the process. The Union development plans call for construction of 300 to 700 homes, and 680,000

square feet of commercial development.

“It’s the culmination of what we worked for, so in that sense, we’re very happy,” said Dan Sanger, co-founder of InformFirestone. “But I was very disappointed in the board’s decision (not to abandon annexation plans) yesterday.”

Sanger and other members

(Election, page 18)

School board decides possible future high school home

By Andrew Gloor
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FREDERICK — The future of Frederick High School’s new campus was decided Aug. 13 by the St. Vrain Valley School Board. During the board of education meeting, the board

came to a decision on how to present the Frederick High School construction project that will be part of a bond measure on this November’s ballot.

Totaling approximately \$186.5 million dollars, the bond, if passed, would fund construction on a proposed \$53.86 million dollar

project to rebuild Frederick High School on a new site, and remodel the existing structure into a K-8 school. Some of the project money would also go toward maintenance projects for Frederick Elementary School, said Sandi Searls, president of the St. Vrain Valley Board of

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To: Postal Patron

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Union annexation special election Sept. 30 in Firestone

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of InformFirestone collected signatures by door-to-door canvassing, and talking to people in Firestone at King Soopers and the post office. They needed to have two petitions signed because the Union development was annexed by Firestone last April in two parts, Ordinances 678 and 679. The town clerk certified the petitions as valid with a statement of sufficiency on July 11.

The Firestone Board of Trustees has also faced obstacles to the Union annexation from the city of Longmont, which responded by voting to annex an overlapping area of land on the Interstate 119 corridor known as Sandstone Ranch on June 24. Sanger said that in the rush to annex the land, Firestone did not take the time to resolve logistics questions, such as whether there will be enough water, fire, police and other resources to support the Union development.

"It's like the entire town was caught up in

this race with Longmont, so none of this was fully examined," Sanger said. "It isn't necessarily that it's inherently bad, we just haven't spent much time actually discussing the issues."

After voting to continue with the annexation, the board was required to set a date for the special election not less than 60 days or more than 150 days from July 11, when the clerk certified the petitions. Additionally, a special election can't be held 32 days before or after a primary or general election, so the only dates available were Sept. 16, 23, 30, and Nov. 4, the day of the general election. If held Nov. 4, the issue would be part of the entire ballot for the general election.

At the meeting, Firestone Town Manager Cheri Andersen said a special election would cost around \$10,000, and that the city could save around \$2,000 if it were part of the general election on Nov. 4. The election will be paid for with money from the town's general fund.

But the general consensus of the trustees was that though voter turnout is higher for general elections, the annexation issue would be buried among other issues, such as voting for U.S. President.

"This November's ballot is going to be enormous," said Mayor Chad Auer.

"We need to focus on Firestone," said Trustee Butch Walb.

Trustee Matt Holcomb was the sole dissenter, suggesting: "Let's save a couple of bucks."

Though he didn't vote to repeal the ordinances, as the petitioners had hoped, Holcomb praised the efforts of the members of InformFirestone.

"I think this is a very exciting time for Firestone. It shows a group organized itself and got in front of other citizens and got this to us," Holcomb said. "It's government in action."

Those citizens will continue to raise questions in the six weeks leading up to the special election, said Tom Ward, co-founder

of InformFirestone. In particular, Ward said he wants more details about whether or not the Union project has a Public Infrastructure Reimbursement Agreement in place, which he said needs to be completed for the annexation to occur.

According to Firestone

the Union annexation before Sept. 30, possibly through a meeting, as well as the group's website.

"It's a challenge to meet their timeframe, especially as a grassroots organization, but we'll find a way," Ward said.

He added that he is encouraged by the

In other action:

- The board approved a liquor license transfer to Parrott's Sports Grille.
- The board approved modifying the city employee benefit plan.
- The board approved funding a crossing guard for Centennial Elementary.
- The board approved supporting the Great Outdoors Colorado Grant for Firestone. Trail connections. Firestone will provide \$20,000 in matching funds for the \$200,000 grant.

City Attorney Sam Light, a PIRA for the Union project has not yet been completed.

"One is under negotiation," Light said.

Ward said that though he is frustrated that the board decided to hold the special election so soon, InformFirestone will do its best to inform the public about the issues surrounding

democratic process that led to the scheduling of the special election.

"I'm really glad the board took our petitions for a real voice of the citizens and left it up to us. That's why we elected these people: they said they would listen to us. I'm grateful for that," Ward said.

Classifieds

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