

City Beat — 5A

Carousel needs funds — 3A

Local resident turns 100 — 10A

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Taylor pump project adds \$127,000

BY CAITLYN MAY
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City council opens a new year with change order

Under the management of the newly sworn-in mayor Jeff Gowling, the Cottage Grove City Council approved a change order just over \$27,000 for upgrades to the Cottage Grove Water Pump Station at its first meeting of the year.

The million-dollar project, also known as the Taylor Pump Station, hit a snag when Pacific Power altered the path of service available for the project.

According to city engineer Ron Bradsby, the original plan would have cost the city \$30,000. However, because of the now defunct estimate by Pacific Power, an additional \$57,000 is needed. Moreover, other challenges hit the project including discovering waterlines and having to lower sewer lines.

"Staff's intent is to have the city manager to sign the change order with a cost not to exceed \$127,054.14," Bradsby said.

Councilor Mike Fleck was the first to address the issue asking where the money would come from. It was Bradsby's contention

that the water reserve fund would pay for the changes.

However, questions concerning the origin of the problem were raised with Bradsby noting that the city's consultant contacted Pacific Power to have an estimated route proposed for the project. At the time, there was power on the east side of Interstate 5 according to Bradsby.

"The plans were submitted to basically feed off one major line and go underground to the pump station, just basically crossing the freeway," he said.

The mandated additional lead near Dublin to cross the freeway, according to Bradsby caused further issues.

"The local office said they wouldn't allow that because they didn't want an accident to happen on the freeway and the power be cut," Bradsby explained.

Three options were presented to the city with Bradsby informing

See Pump pg.8

"Our choices are we authorize this or continue building a pump station that doesn't have efficient electricity."



Snow hit the city late last week closing schools and causing delays but some residents found time to enjoy the weather. A 9ft. tall snowman appeared overnight at Lincoln Middle School.



New school, new name

Lane County School District plans to choose a name by month's end

BY SAM WRIGHT
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The school district is getting close to naming the new elementary school that is in the process of being built off of 10th St. The district has opened online voting polls for six different possibilities.

Communications Director Garrett Bridgens says that the website has over 2,000 votes, more than the city's 2016 election participation.

Unlike the elections, however, the polls are not the deciding

factor for the name of the school. The school board will take into consideration the voice of the public and then vote on a name.

The option to vote is listed on the South Lane School District website. But voters will have to hurry, as the polls will close on Jan. 17.

Currently the voting options are: Bridges Elementary, Covered Bridge Elementary, Harrison Elementary, Head-



waters Elementary, Heritage Elementary and Krista Parent Elementary. The name will be determined at the school board's next meeting on Jan. 23.

Residents of Cottage Grove voted in November to approve the Bond Measure 20-249 to

construct the new elementary school that will replace Harrison Elementary. The estimated cost of construction is \$18,921,100; just slightly higher than the cost to renovate the existing structure.

Libraries on the road to closure in Douglas

BY CAITLYN MAY
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Inclement weather did not stop the Douglas County Commissioners from holding a public hearing concerning the possible closure of the county's library system on Wednesday, Jan. 4.

For over an hour, the commissioners heard from the public and offered their own understanding of the impending funding crisis set to hit the library system this summer.

"Know this: We as your commissioners know the benefit of a library in the community," Chairman Chris Boice said. "We understand who uses it and what they use it for. This has never been a question of the libraries' importance. It's always been a question of funding."

The Douglas County Library System was funded, in part with grants, through the end of the fiscal year. However, in November, the commission put forth a ballot question asking residents

to form a tax district to fund the library requiring .44 cents per \$1,000. The vote failed 55 to 44 percent. As a result, the budget for the library was front loaded and the majority of the funds were spent during the first half of the fiscal year, leaving the county and the system in the lurch for the last six months of the year.

According to Boice, the county is examining several options to continue funding the 11 libraries within Douglas and is

asking the community to offer suggestions. However, Boice cautioned those present at the meeting on Wednesday that the county's budget had its own restrictions.

"I think it's helpful for folks to know that when suggestions come in and they're along the lines of, 'We're spending too much money spraying roadside weeds,' know this the county

See Libraries pg. 8

School board debates budget

Budgetary concerns may force district to take action, school days may be cut

BY SAM WRIGHT
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South Lane School District's budget discussion was one of the more intensely debated topics during this first school board meeting of 2017. This year's budget has the potential to effect certain programs in certain school and even have days cut from the school year.

The winter weather hasn't helped the situation either.

For budgetary reasons, there was talk of cutting the last two days of school (June 14 and 15). The January weather has already taken away some school days, and the two-day pay cut will be reallocated for January paychecks.

With the new proposed education budget from Governor Kate Brown, which is just over \$8 billion, the school district will fall an estimated \$1.3 million dollars short of its assumed budget. The regular service standard is currently at \$8.4 billion dollars, which would still leave the district about \$400,000 short.

The school district proposed ideas to shorten the gap. Only one proposal was approved for now.

The school board voted to cut the last two days of school in order to spread salaries for January and to stay above instructional minutes.

Other proposals more di-

rectly related to closing the gap on the budget included things such as eliminating P.E. positions at the elementary level, postponing the adoption of math and science curriculums, eliminate specific course offerings and increase participation fees.

All proposals came difficult to the school board, which didn't take action on any yet. Superintendent Krista Parent said that the district has already postponed the adoption of the new math curriculum, and a new science curriculum is coming up for adoption as well.

"We've already postponed the math curriculum, and if we postpone science we will be behind on two," Parent stated.

The school district could also eliminate course offerings, but that would be hard for teachers and students.

Cottage Grove High School recently added two new AP courses (AP Language Composition and AP World History), and the high school was put on the AP Honor roll, a national recognition. Further discussion on the budget will continue and pending whether or not the state takes Governor Brown's proposed budget or not will likely affect the decisions of the school board.

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WEATHER



Possible snow

HIGH 40
LOW 27

CONTENTS

Calendar.....3B
Channel Guide.....5B
Classified ads.....5B
Obituaries.....2A
Opinion.....4A
Public Safety.....5A
Sports.....1B



1 Dollar

Coffee with the Editor
Every Tuesday 10 am

@ Backstage Bakery

Come chat about the community!

