



Hermiston Herald

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YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER

HERMISTONHERALD.COM

Port, city to review potential agreement on zoning dispute

Proposed resolution to be made public at each agency's meeting Jan. 6

BY SEAN HART
HERMISTON HERALD

A potential agreement to resolve a zoning dispute between the Port of Umatilla and City of Umatilla will be made public Tuesday when the Port Commission and City Council discuss the matter at their respective meetings.

Both parties agreed to postpone oral arguments before the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals in anticipation of a local resolution after the potential agreement was reached between officials from each agency, including two council members and two commissioners, behind closed doors Dec. 22.

Discussion about the agreement is on the agenda for both the Port Commission meeting at 1:15 p.m.

SEE DISPUTE/A16

TODAY'S WEATHER



Mostly cloudy
High: 36° Low: 29°

OUTLOOK

- SUNDAY
Showers
High: 38° Low: 37°
- MONDAY
Afternoon showers
High: 53° Low: 42°

A complete weather forecast is featured on page A2.



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FOR LOCAL BREAKING NEWS

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Resources available for the homeless

Editor's note: This is the fourth article in a five-part series about homelessness in the community

BY MAEGAN MURRAY
HERMISTON HERALD

Hermiston Warming Station chairwoman Carol Johnson and volunteer Trish Rossell regularly see firsthand just how difficult the lives are of people living on the streets.

Fortunately, a number of resources or programs in the community are available to provide assistance to homeless people. The challenge is just a matter of getting information about those services to them.

"Getting the word out has been our biggest obstacle," Rossell said. "Sometimes, it is an easy fix, but it isn't easy if you don't have a phone or computer."

CONNECTING HOMELESS PEOPLE TO RESOURCES

Rossell said, when someone comes to the warming station for the first time, volunteers assess what help that person needs and what resources are available if a particular service is desired and make a referral if necessary.

Locally, Rossell said, there are agencies that work with people to obtain financial assistance or free or discounted daycare options for children. As well, Hermiston Pet Rescue will house pets overnight when their owners stay at the warming station, and organizations like Agape House also offer free showers for homeless people and food.

Additionally, Johnson said, CAPECO's Moving Forward Program can provide rental subsidies

to households needing long-term assistance. Many of the area's health agencies also offer free and affordable services to those in need.

Rossell said people just need to know where to go, and volunteers help with that.

"For example, we might have a single mother who has a job and an apartment, but she's staying with us because her heat was turned off," she said. "We know who can help her get that service restored."

For families, Martha's House may also be a resource. The house has living quarters, complete with beds, a sink and a microwave and other items for families, laundry rooms and more. People also can get help applying for jobs, gain community service hours and save up money to pay for a rental deposit and rent when they leave.

WHO ARE THE HOMELESS?

Johnson said the circumstances of people in the homeless community differ. Some, she said, are seeking employment but are hindered by having no address, phone or work-appropriate clothing.

Johnson said, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Oregon residents must work 72 hours per week at a minimum-wage job to afford a two-bedroom apartment without having to pay more than 30 percent of their income.

"This means independent housing is simply out of reach for many working people," she said.

Rossell said, in Hermiston,

SEE HOMELESS/A16

Hermiston artist uses art to cope with stress and depression

BY MAEGAN MURRAY
HERMISTON HERALD

Before Hermiston resident Samantha Gunn found painting, her world was a much darker place.

In junior high school, Gunn said she suffered from depression. To help her cope, she decided to start drawing, and after taking some art classes at school, she realized she had found her passion.

Whenever she started feeling down, she picked up a pencil, a piece of charcoal and slowly sketched out a portrait. Gunn said it provided her a temporary escape and a way to ease her mind.

"It was therapeutic for me," she said. "It still is therapeutic for me."

Gunn said she never thought she was good at her craft, however. Until recently, she hadn't shown her paintings and charcoal sketches to anyone but family members and her junior high school art teacher, Denise Smith.

In the last few years, Gunn, now 27, has begun to show her art to more people,



Hermiston resident Samantha Gunn paints a portrait of her dog Wednesday afternoon in her home studio.

MAEGAN MURRAY PHOTOS

and their responses have been positive, she said. During the last several months, family members and friends have started commissioning portraits from Gunn.

Gunn said the positive responses to her work has left her dumbfounded.

"I am really amazed at how much attention I've

gotten," she said. "I never thought in my entire life that I would be showing and selling my art."

Gunn said, while the majority of her requests from family members and friends are for portraits of people or pets special to them, she said

SEE GUNN/A8



One of Samantha Gunn's favorite portraits is one that she did of President John F. Kennedy. She said she enjoys painting portraits of those who have inspired her.

Working through the ranks

HPD officers describe moving up in a law enforcement career

Editor's note: This is the third in a four-part series on becoming a police officer and moving up in the ranks

BY SEAN HART
HERMISTON HERALD

After more than 11 years of experience in law enforcement, Hermiston Police Department patrol officer Chris Martin will take the next step in his career Monday: a promotion to the newly created corporal position.

Four of the 12 current HPD officers will be promoted to help provide support to their supervisors, four sergeants who answer directly to the operations captain, who answers to the police chief.

Martin, 47, was hired as a full-time officer in 2003 after being a reserve officer for about two years, and he will work as a lead officer in his new role.

"Basically, we'll be there to augment the sergeants," he said. "If they're busy in the office, we'll be



SEAN HART PHOTO

Hermiston Police Department Patrol Sgt. Kelly Parsons sits at his desk at Hermiston Police Department. He has been an officer for more than 23 years. He started at HPD four and a half years ago and was promoted to sergeant two years ago.

out on the road. We'll be able to help officers make decisions if they need help."

Martin said he went to school to

become an automotive technician and worked in that profession for

SEE MARTIN/A6

Umatilla working on commercial zone changes

BY SEAN HART
HERMISTON HERALD

Umatilla's 120-day moratorium on new strip clubs has almost expired, but the Umatilla Planning Commission plans to request an extension to finish a commercial zone overhaul that would regulate where all businesses can open in the city.

Umatilla City Planner Bill Searles said state law allows for a moratorium to be extended for an additional six months, and he plans to ask the City Council to do so this month. The original ban was enacted in September, and commission members continued working on new commercial zoning regulations at a meeting Tuesday but only finished reviewing the uses to be allowed in the first zone.

SEE ZONING/A16

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