

## Planning commission to hold public hearings

The City of Sisters Planning Commission is holding two public hearings at Sisters City Hall, 520 E. Cascade Ave. on April 20, at 5:30 p.m.

The first hearing is on a major variance to allow for the creation of two townhome lots that are less than the required minimum lot area and lot width.

The applicant is requesting a variance in order to subdivide the lot and duplex in order to create two lots, each containing a single attached

townhome dwelling. No significant structural changes are proposed to the existing structure.

The lot is located at 311 N. Maple Ln.

City staff is forwarding its administrative decision, dated February 28, to the Planning Commission for a public hearing to consider modification of the type and location of certain recreational amenities in the previously approved Village at Cold Springs Master Plan.

## Neglected cattle seized from Oregon rancher auctioned off

PENDLETON (AP) — More than 100 cattle found neglected and starving on a ranch in eastern Oregon earlier this year have been sold.

The *East Oregonian* reports officials say Tuesday's auction at the Hermiston Livestock Commission brought in more than \$140,000. A few more of the animals will be sold next week.

The animals were seized in January from owner Michael Hockensmith.

The Hermiston rancher

has been charged with 14 counts of first-degree animal neglect and 186 counts of second-degree animal neglect.

Deputies had visited Hockensmith's Cedar Creek Cattle Company and found 14 dead cattle and 15 others too malnourished to be safely moved from the pasture.

The money from Tuesday's sale will be used to reimburse the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office for the care of the animals. Any remaining funds will be returned to Hockensmith.

## Daycare provider faces charges

By Gillian Flaccus  
Associated Press

PORTLAND (AP) — An Oregon daycare provider has been indicted on more than 100 criminal counts after being accused of leaving children as young as six months old alone multiple times over eight days to go to a tanning salon and a gym, prosecutors said Wednesday.

A grand jury indicted January Neatherlin, 31, of Bend last week on 76 counts of criminal mistreatment and 38 counts of reckless endangerment, said Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel.

Neatherlin was arrested last week after police found seven children ranging in age from 6 months to 4 years alone in her home.

She has a court appearance scheduled Thursday. Her attorney, Matthew Baughman, did not return a call from The Associated Press.

Court documents say Neatherlin left children alone at her home on eight different occasions between March

3 and March 15, the day she was arrested after police received a tip and set up surveillance outside the home.

Officers watched as parents dropped off their children and then saw Neatherlin drive away hours later. Out of fear for the children's safety, officers entered the home and found the unattended children.

The investigation is continuing because authorities believe Neatherlin left the children alone on other occasions, possibly going back years, Hummel said.

"We're looking at her entire time operating that babysitting service," he said, adding that she would leave for about two hours each time.

"What's particularly concerning to me (is) the age of some of the children and the length of time she was gone."

In addition to facing charges, Neatherlin must stay away from seven children identified only by their initials in court papers, as well as their parents, and she must avoid unsupervised contact

with her own minor son.

She has also been ordered to stay away from minors in public.

State records show that Neatherlin's business, Little Giggles Daycare, has been investigated twice before by state child welfare advocates.

In 2014, she was found to be caring for more children than allowed without a license. She was told to drop her number to three or less children.

She was investigated for a similar allegation in 2015 and officials found no evidence that she was caring for more than three children.

Neatherlin took out a business license for Little Giggles in 2010, but it lapsed in 2012 and was not renewed, *The Bend Bulletin* reported.

A day care license is only needed if a provider cares for more than three children.

Neatherlin was on a list of subsidized child care for students at Oregon State University-Cascades.

A school administrator said Neatherlin has been dropped from the list.

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