Esterman seeks second term

By Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

Richard Esterman was elected to a two-year term on the Sisters City Council in 2016. This November, he is seeking reelection to his seat. Like all three candidates for council, he is running unopposed.

Esterman told *The Nugget* that he would like to see the City address the question of housing affordability by creating guidelines and criteria for developers interested in creating such housing and offering breaks on permits and fees. He is opposed to the idea of a construction excise tax, which the council has considered in concept.

"I don't like the CET tax," he said. "I don't see how it's going to take care of the problem."

He also said that he would not have supported the $300,000 subsidy the City provided to build affordable apartments, which was agreed upon prior to his tenure.

"We're not in the banking business," he said. "I didn't agree with that; I wouldn't have been on board with that."

Like other councilors, Esterman is looking toward the 2020 expiration of the City's contract with the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services. He is leery of moving to reconstitute an independent police department at this time.

"I'm willing to look at it," he said. "I can't say I'm 100 percent for it, because I've seen the (cost) numbers. Eventually, yeah, we're going to need it."

He said that he would be supportive of allocating funds to save for such a future eventuality and "gradually move into it" — as long as the funds were clearly dedicated to that purpose.

The councilor would like to test some small-scale efforts to smooth traffic flow through Sisters, including banning left turns off Cascade Avenue/Highway 20, except from dedicated left-turn bays, perhaps starting with just doing so on weekends. He would also like to test regulation of crosswalk traffic to smooth out the stop-start effect of unregulated foot traffic across Cascade Avenue.

"There would have to be some enforcement," he acknowledged.

Esterman is pleased that the City acted proactively to create time, place and manner regulations regarding cannabis production and distribution in Sisters. Voters will decide in this election whether they want to allow such activity in town.

Esterman supported sending that question to voters and says that regulations will be ready to go if they approve the activity — now or at some future date.

He does not have a strong sense of which way the vote will go.

"I think it's going to be close; I really do," he said.

He does not think there will be a major impact if voters do approve commercial marijuana activity.

"I really think if it's monitored that it will be fine," he said.

The councilor noted one issue upon which he's had a change of mind and heart: vacation rentals.

"I used to think if you owned a piece of property, you should be able to do what you want with it," he said.

Testimony from families who feel they have been negatively impacted by vacation rentals in their residential neighborhoods had an impact on him.

"It changed my mind," he said.

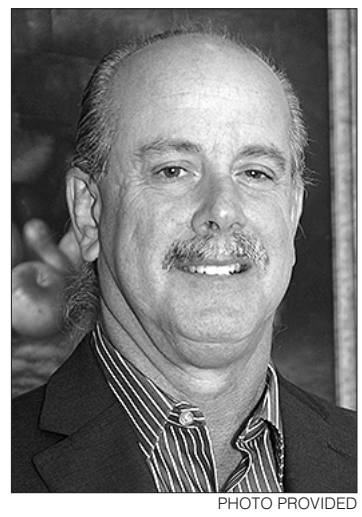
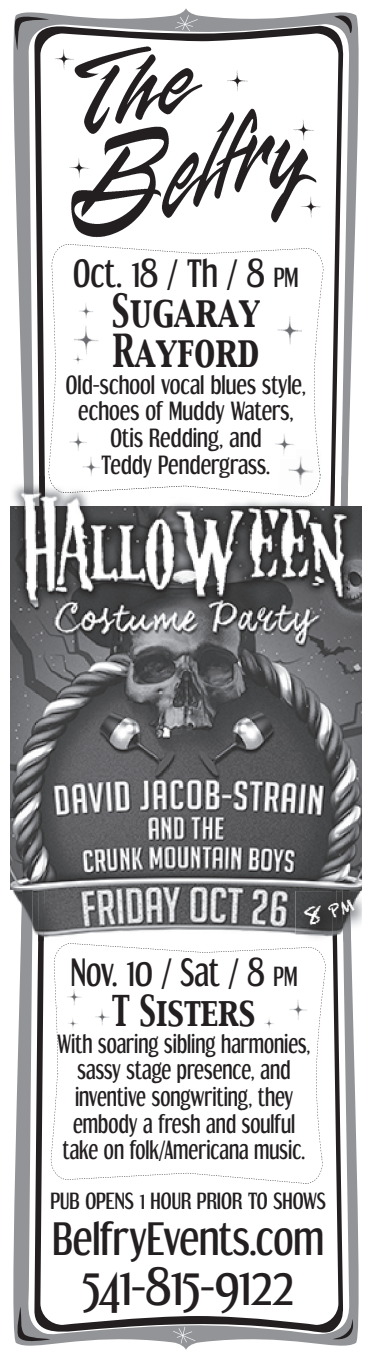


PHOTO PROVIDED

Esterman is seeking another term on Sisters City Council.

Esterman told *The Nugget* that he now supports imposing more restrictive zoning on vacation rentals in Sisters.



SISTERS AREA *Entertainment & Events*

OCT 17 WED

Sisters Saloon Poker Night 7 p.m. Every Wednesday! $20. For information call 541-549-7427 or go to sisterssaloon.net.

OCT 18 THUR

Cork Cellars Tasty Thursday Hosted Wine Tasting 5 to 7 p.m. For additional information call 541-549-2675 or go online to corkcellarswinebistro.com.

Sisters Saloon Karaoke Night 9 p.m. to midnight. Every Thursday, no cover! For additional information call 541-549-7427 or go to sisterssaloon.net.

The Belfry Live Music with Sugaray Rayford 8 p.m. Old-school vocal blues style. For information call 541-815-9122 or go to BelfryEvents.com.

OCT 19 FRI

Hardtails Bar & Grill Live Music with Cheyenne West Band 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. No cover! Modern Country, Classic Country and Counrty Rock. For information call 541-549-6114 or go to hardtailsoregon.com.

OCT 20 SAT

Cork Cellars Live Music with Eric Leadbetter 7 to 9 p.m. No cover! For additional information call 541-549-2675 or go online to corkcellarswinebistro.com.

Sisters Rental Carving Artist Skip Armstrong 12 to 4 p.m. Master wood carver Skip Armstrong will carve "Sägen," the god of chain saws into Sisters Rental's saw retirement tree. Call 541-549-9631 for more information.

OCT 22 MON

Tower Theatre (Bend) Wild Kingdom's Peter Gros 7:30 p.m. Use discount code "Nugget." For more information call 541-317-0700 or go to towertheatre.org.

Hardtails Bar & Grill Open Mic & Jam Night 7 p.m. Every Monday, no cover! For information call 541-549-6114 or go to hardtailsoregon.com.

OCT 23 TUES

Sisters Saloon Trivia Night 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Sign-up is at 6:15 p.m. Free, every Tuesday! For additional information call 541-549-7427 or go to sisterssaloon.net.

The Belfry Everything is Genetic Sisters Science Club presentation by Barbara Handelin, Ph.D. 7 p.m. with Food & Drink Social Hour before. $5 admission. Call 541-912-0750.

OCT 24 WED

Sisters Saloon Poker Night 7 p.m. Every Wednesday! $20. For information call 541-549-7427 or go to sisterssaloon.net.

OCT 25 THUR

Cork Cellars Tasty Thursday Hosted Wine Tasting 5 to 7 p.m. For additional information call 541-549-2675 or go online to corkcellarswinebistro.com.

Sisters Saloon Karaoke Night 9 p.m. to midnight. Every Thursday, no cover! For additional information call 541-549-7427 or go to sisterssaloon.net.

OCT 26 FRI

The Belfry Halloween Costume Party with David Jacobs Strain and the Crunk Mtn. Boys 8 p.m. For information call 541-815-9122 or go to BelfryEvents.com.

Hood Avenue Art Artists' Reception with Breezy Anderson and Katherine Taylor 4 to 7 p.m. With live entertainment and refreshments! For more info go to hoodavenueart.com.

Downtown Sisters 4th Friday Art Stroll 4 to 7 p.m. Galleries and shops feature live entertainment and refreshments, every fourth Friday of the month! For additional information go to sistersartsassociation.org.

Hardtails Bar & Grill Karaoke and Dance Party with DJ Chuck Boogie 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Free, no cover! For more information call 541-549-6114 or go to hardtailsoregon.com.

OCT 27 SAT

Cork Cellars Live Music with Cuppa Joe 7 to 9 p.m. No cover! For additional information call 541-549-2675 or go online to corkcellarswinebistro.com.

Hardtails Bar & Grill Annual Halloween Bash with The Hwy 97 Band 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Free, no cover! Food & drink specials all night. For more information call 541-549-6114 or go to hardtailsoregon.com.

OCT 29 MON

Hardtails Bar & Grill Open Mic & Jam Night 7 p.m. Every Monday, no cover! For information call 541-549-6114 or go to hardtailsoregon.com.

Events Calendar listings are free to advertisers. Submit items by 5 p.m. Fridays to lisa@nuggetnews.com