

LOGO Union will turn over logo items

Continued from page A1

future.” The fire district said in its suit that the similar-looking logo the union had created could cause confusion. The union endorses candidates and supports labor causes, and with the similar-looking logo, the district argued, it could create the misimpression that the fire district itself was the one making endorsements. The union has to turn over to the district all union logo-embazoned items, from brochures to pants and shirts to banners and challenge coins. They also have to turn over the means and materials for making the logo. The parties agreed that, in the development of any future logos, they will give each other the chance to comment on any proposed logo and will avoid adopting logos that might be “confusingly similar.”

The labor violation the district admitted occurred when district officials approached a firefighter last year about settling an unfair labor practice complaint, saying the firefighter was “reasonable.” The district thought the firefighter was on the union executive board, but he wasn’t. Settlement discussions can only happen with union executive board members. The district settled that complaint by paying each of its 18 firefighters \$1,000. Last August, the district provided a written apology for the mistaken contact. Retired MCFR Division Chief Dan Hammel has called the lawsuit a waste of taxpayer money. He learned last month by filing a public records request that the district had spent over \$88,000 through last year on the lawsuit. In a press release last month, the district said the money to cover the unexpectedly high legal bill would come from contingency funds or by adjusting the ending fund balance. Hammel said at the

meeting, “Don’t lie to the public and say you will either use contingency funds or adjust the ending fund balance. The use of contingency funds only delays the impact, since that line item would be funded back to where it was in next year’s budget. Adjusting the carryover also impacts services by having to potentially borrow money next year to cover your costs between July 1 and the collection of property taxes” later in the fiscal year. Hammel also said the press release stated it was the board’s decision to pursue litigation. But Hammel said he couldn’t find any record of such a decision in meeting minutes from last year. “It is my understanding of the public meeting laws that no decision is allowed to be made while in executive session. So when did this board make that decision?” He said he believed that was a violation of public meeting law and that he’d filed a complaint with the Oregon Ethics Commission. “It appears that this board has not only wasted a significant amount of our tax

dollars, they proceeded with this action under a potential violation of Oregon Revised Statutes,” Hammel said. He also noted the board said it pursued the litigation on advice of its legal counsel. Hammel said that law firm, Peachey Davies Myers & Dunn, was paid nearly \$60,000, or 68 percent of the \$88,000 the district had spent through last year on the lawsuit. “It makes this taxpayer wonder if a conflict of interest isn’t involved,” Hammel said. After the settlement was announced, Hammel said he applauded the parties for reaching it. He said “the firefighters obviously decided that the public’s safety was a higher priority than keeping their logo.” He said it was “disheartening” to see that the initiation of the lawsuit “appears to have been conducted in violation” of state public meeting law. Hammel said that while the monetary loss from the suit has stopped, “the internal relationship damage will continue on for some time.

Unfortunately, the mental impact of an employer suing their own employees after a settlement is not something you can just change with a flip of the switch.” He said the board would have to ensure that recommended changes to improve the relationship are implemented. He said district and union leadership both need to follow advice from the book “Extreme Ownership: How US Navy SEALs Lead and Win,” which states, “The leader must own everything in his or her world. There is no one else to blame. The leader must acknowledge mistakes, admit failures, and take ownership of them.” Casey DePriest, the wife of a retired firefighter, also spoke to the board, saying a settlement was a step in the right direction. “I applaud the board for finding your common sense as it seems to have escaped you for some time.” She said, “now let’s put this behind us and move forward in a positive manner, restoring trust and respect to this district.”

WHAT'S HAPPENING

SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS AT THE DALLES CHAMBER.COM/ EVENTS OR EMAIL ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE TO MGBISON@THEDALLESCHRONICLE.COM. LISTINGS ARE FREE.

FEBRUARY

Wednesday, February 19
CAREGIVER SUPPORT: Family & Caregiver Alzheimer’s/Dementia Support Group 3-4 p.m. Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month. at Flagstone Senior Living, 3325 Columbia View Drive, The Dalles. Also, Alzheimer’s & Dementia Related Support Group, 3 to 4 p.m. on the Terrace at Flagstone.
Thursday, February 20
AFTER HOURS: Business after hours, Curtis Homes, 2191 Radio Way, 5 to 7 p.m.
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS: Governmental affairs, 7 to 8 a.m. at The Barbecue, 1013 W. Sixth. St., The Dalles. Open to public.
KIWANIS PROGRAMS: Kiwanis meetings are held every Thursday at noon at Spooky’s and visitors are welcome. This week’s events include Philip Mascher on the Blue Zones Project. For more information visit www.thedalleskiwanis.org online.
Friday, February 21
PRESCHOOL YOGA: Preschool Yoga, 10 to 10:30 a.m. at The Dalles-Wasco County Public Library, 722 Court St., The Dalles. Free.
Saturday, February 22
ADULT YOGA: Adult Yoga, 10 a.m. at The Dalles-Wasco County Public Library, 722 Court St., The Dalles.

POT Kids have more ways to use THC

Continued from page A1

outbreak. Vitamin E acetate is an additive used by producers to increase their product. Vaping devices heat a liquid to produce an aerosol that users inhale into their lungs. The devices come in a variety of sleek forms,

from ones shaped like USB devices or flash drives to vape watches. There are thousands of flavors of e-liquids, the vast majority of which contain nicotine, the same highly addictive ingredient found in cigarettes. Other e-liquids contain THC. Debby Jones, Wasco County prevention specialist with YouthThink, said the data shows kids are taking advantage of new mechanisms for

using pot, particularly vaping and dabs, which were the two highest increases locally. Dabs are highly concentrated, waxlike doses of THC that are heated, and the resulting smoke is inhaled. “We don’t have more kids using it, the kids that are have more ways to use it and abuse it,” she said. Steps like banning flavors of vape “are really important because that’s one of the easier ways for kids to get it. But we have to get ahead of it,

the industry is always ahead of us,” she said. A bill in the Oregon Legislature would ban all flavored nicotine vapes. The ban wouldn’t include marijuana vapes. “At some point making money has to be less important than the health of our children, and that to me is the biggest challenge,” Jones said. “Anything addictive is all about, on the other side, somebody making money, be

it opioids, gambling, porn, you name it,” she said. The data from Wasco and Sherman counties are reported together because they are part of the three-county North Central Public Health District. Gilliam County is also in the district, but did not participate in the latest survey. For more information on vaping, visit SmokefreeOregon.com or www.youthnow.me/schools.

Green Home Design + Build now offers gutter services!

- ✓ Fabrication & installation of new seamless gutters
- ✓ Removal of old gutters
- ✓ Leafguard products
- ✓ Gutter Cleaning

Green Home

DESIGN + BUILD

- + Build Services
- + Gutter Installation and Services
- + Weatherization & Home Performance

541.490.1951 | greenhome-designbuild.com

WEATHER FOR THE DALLES, OR | FEBRUARY 19 - 25, 2020

Today	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
51° /26° Plenty of sunshine	49° /27° Mostly sunny	54° /32° Mostly sunny	54° /39° A couple of showers possible	49° /34° Cloudy, rain possible; breezy	53° /29° A couple of showers possible	56° /31° Partly sunny

Actual High/Low
Feb 10 - 16

Monday	55/31
Tuesday	57/31
Wednesday	56/30
Thursday	48/26
Friday	52/37
Saturday	46/39
Sunday	53/38

Updated 2.17.20, 11:30 AM PDT
Data from Accuweather.com