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Lewis takes House oath

New state lawmaker resigns as Silverton mayor

JUSTIN MUCH
STAYTON MAIL

Rick Lewis was sworn in as the State Representative for House District 18 Thursday after being appointed to fill the vacant seat on Wednesday.

Prior to taking oath of office, Lewis resigned his post as mayor of Silverton, a position to which he was first elected in 2014 and reelected to in 2016. Lewis was not required by law to resign his city post.

"The decision to step away from my role with the city was far and away the most difficult part of this process," Lewis said. "I was hopeful that I might be able to continue serving as mayor while also serving as a member of the legislative assembly, but it became clear that there were some outstanding constitutional questions that could expose both the city and the legislature to some risks."

Silverton municipal code provides procedures for replacing vacant city council or mayoral positions:

"Vacant elective city offices shall be filled by appointment by a majority vote of the remaining members of the council. The appointee's term of office begins immediately on appointment and continues throughout the unexpired term of the appointee's predecessor."

Lewis' term runs through 2018. The former mayor said he would aid the city in the transition process.

"I have pledged to be as helpful as possible to my colleagues in Silverton as they navigate this unexpected transition," Lewis said on Thursday. "Today is very bittersweet for me, but I am comforted by the fact that I will still have an opportunity to work closely with my friends at the city as I assume my new role in the legislature."

Lewis was appointed to the position vacated earlier this year by Rep. Vic Gilliam of Silverton, who had served HD 18 since 2007. Gilliam was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease and had been battling health issues during the 2016 session.

Lewis was one of three potential appointment candidates delivered to the Marion and Clackamas board of commissioners by the Oregon Republican Party. The other candidates were Jerome Rosa, of Gervais and Glenn Holm of Hubbard.

Oregon law requires that a legislative vacancy be filled by county commissioners representing the district in which the vacancy exists. House District 18 includes voters in Clackamas and Marion counties. Finalists were selected by the Republican Party, as deemed by state law. The commissions met jointly in Mt. Angel on Wednesday.

"The commissioners had three good nominees to choose from and we appreciate the willingness of each of the candidates to serve," said Marion County



ANNA REED/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Silverton Mayor Rick Lewis, facing, is escorted by Rep. Mike McLane and Rep. Jennifer Williamson before he is sworn in as House District 18 Representative during a House of Representatives floor session at the Oregon State Capitol in Salem on Thursday, Feb. 23. Vic Gilliam resigned from the seat before the start of the legislative session this year due to his diagnosis of ALS.

Commissioner Sam Brentano, who chaired the appointment meeting. "This is one of times that it hits home that we're making decisions on behalf of other people, and I take the responsibility seriously.

"Rick Lewis is thoughtful and pragmatic and will represent House District 18 very well, as Vic Gilliam did," he added.

"House Republicans are looking forward to formally welcoming Rick Lewis as a member of the legislative assembly when he is sworn in tomorrow," House

Republican Leader Mike McLane (R-Powell Butte), said following Wednesday's appointment. "Rick's decades-long career as a public servant will be a tremendous asset to the Legislature, and I believe the residents of House District 18 will be well served by his leadership in Salem."

In addition to serving as Silverton's mayor, Lewis is a military veteran, retired police chief, and past president of the Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police.

"It is an incredible honor to have the

opportunity to serve the residents of House District 18 as a member of the Oregon Legislature," Lewis said. "Throughout my public service career I have always strived to maintain a healthy respect for all viewpoints, collaborate and compromise when possible and put the interests of the public above all else. I pledge to continue to abide by these principles as I begin my legislative career today."

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Student behavior, mental health needs rising

CHRISTENA BROOKS
SPECIAL TO THE APPEAL TRIBUNE

SILVERTON - The number of students who have behavior problems and are dealing with trauma has increased noticeably this year in the Silver Falls School District. It's a trend seen throughout the state, the school district's special services director told board members last month.

"It's everywhere. Every district is facing this. It's the new epidemic," Director

of Special Services Dana Pedersen said.

Some students' behavior problems include low "self management" and "emotional regulation" skills, while they and others may also deal with traumatic situations at home. More students are coming to school with problems stemming from their out-of-school time and situations beyond teachers' control, she said.

The district's 28 licensed special education teachers and 50 assistants are being required to provide more mental and behavioral help to more students.

"We're trying to make sure we have enough support out at our K-8 buildings," Pedersen said.

Because so many school districts in Oregon are seeing similar increases, in October the Oregon Department of Education created work groups between school districts and the Oregon Health Authority throughout the state. The move came in response to urging from special education directors.

"The hope of many directors is that these work groups will provide an oppor-

tunity for schools to collaborate with mental health and county caseworkers in supporting students and families with emotional and mental health needs," Pedersen said.

In the Silver Falls district, the total number of students receiving special education is 471 students, or 12 percent of the student population.

Pedersen noted that the district is collaborating with FACT Oregon, an advocacy group for families whose kids have disabilities.

Scotts Mills vandalism investigated

JUSTIN MUCH
STAYTON MAIL

Marion County Sheriff's deputies responded to reports of early Friday morning vandalism involving a small-caliber weapon in Scotts Mills.

Lt. Chris Baldrige reported that two separate residents in the small town east of Mt. Angel reported having windows shot out at around 2 a.m.

Deputies responded to discover one resident in the 6900 block of Crooked Finger Road NE reported a sliding glass door shattered by gunshot. Roughly 20 minutes later a resident in the 18000 block of Mt. Angel-Scotts Mills Road NE reported a window that had also been damaged in the same manner.

Both reports described a car speeding away from the area of the shots.

At around 10 a.m., Silverton Po-

lice reported four windows had been shot out at Scotts Mills Elementary School with damages estimated at \$2,000.

Baldrige said investigators think a small caliber gun, possibly a pellet gun, was used in all three cases.

Marion County Sheriff's Office asks anyone with information regarding these events to call 503-588-5032 or text anonymous information to TipMCSO at 847411.

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In the Top 10*

Valerie Boen
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*Top 10 Agents in Harcourts NW Region for 4th Quarter 2016