

DAILY
PLANNER

TODAY

Today is Thursday, June 11, the 163rd day of 2020. There are 203 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On June 11, 1776, the Continental Congress formed a committee to draft a Declaration of Independence calling for freedom from Britain.

ON THIS DATE

In 1770, Captain James Cook, commander of the British ship Endeavour, "discovered" the Great Barrier Reef off Australia by running onto it.

In 1947, the government announced the end of sugar rationing for households and "institutional users" (e.g., restaurants and hotels) as of midnight.

In 1962, three prisoners at Alcatraz in San Francisco Bay staged an escape, leaving the island on a makeshift raft; they were never found or heard from again.

In 1993, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled that people who commit "hate crimes" motivated by bigotry may be sentenced to extra punishment; the court also ruled religious groups had a constitutional right to sacrifice animals in worship services.

In 2007, Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, was arrested at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport in a restroom sex sting. (Craig, who denied soliciting an undercover police officer, later pleaded guilty to disorderly conduct and paid a fine.)

LOTTERY

Megabucks: \$2.5 million
4-11-18-33-38-44

Mega Millions: \$20 million
1-5-9-10-23-22 x2

Powerball: \$20 million
1-17-38-68-69—PB-18 x2

Win for Life: June 8

7-22-67-70

Pick 4: June 9

• **1 p.m.:** 4-6-5-9; • 4 p.m.: 2-3-0-4
• **7 p.m.:** 5-4-3-3; • 10 p.m.: 2-1-5-6

Pick 4: June 8

• **1 p.m.:** 6-5-4-0; • 4 p.m.: 4-6-3-6
• **7 p.m.:** 5-1-0-9; • 10 p.m.: 5-0-1-0

TODAY'S QUOTE

"Forgetfulness is a form of freedom."
— Khalil Gibran, American poet and artist (1883-1931)

City of Union adopts \$4.8 million budget for 2020-21

Two summer part-time positions cut

By Dick Mason
The Observer

UNION — The Union City Council voted Monday to adopt a total budget of \$4.8 million for 2020-21, down about \$200,000 from the present budget.

The spending plan will allow the city to maintain its programs and staff, with the exception of two part-time summer positions, which have been cut. The employees in the posi-

tions did general labor, said Doug Wiggins, Union's city administrator.

The upcoming budget is down because it includes a \$650,000 grant for the installation of sidewalks for the Safe Routes to School program. All of the grant money was spent in 2020-21, which means that none of it remained for the 2020-21 budget.

Wiggins said the city's budget is in solid condition but there are reasons for concern because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which crippled Oregon's

economy when many businesses were shut down.

An indication that more residents are struggling financially in Union is that an increasing number of residents are late in paying water and sewer bills. Wiggins said many are now three months late. He said when people fall this far behind it becomes increasingly less likely the money will be collected. To help residents deal with the poor economy, Wiggins noted, the city previously waived late fees for water and sewer bill payments and

disconnection fees.

Wiggins also said the gas tax revenue Union and all cities receive from the state may decline because people are traveling less due to the pandemic and the poor economy. The Oregon Department of Transportation is tracking gas tax receipts and reporting they are down, Wiggins said. This could reduce the money Union has available for street and sidewalk work, which gas tax revenue funds.

In other action at Monday's meeting, the council

voted to award Pioneer Consulting Group of North Carolina a contract to conduct a study of the city's water and sewer rates. Wiggins said the city wants to determine if its rate structure needs revision. He said the city last evaluated the rate structure more than 10 years ago.

Pioneer Consulting Group was the low bidder for the project at \$24,500. Wiggins said Pioneer Consulting officials indicated they will travel to Union in the process of conducting the study.

Joseph abandons law enforcement contract with Wallowa County

City officials unhappy with code and ordinance issues, not patrols

By Bill Bradshaw
EO Media Group

JOSEPH — The Joseph City Council voted unanimously to terminate the city's contract for law enforcement services with Wallowa County, saying the county is in breach of contract. The council met at the Joseph Community Center for the first time June 4, after a two-month hiatus because of COVID-19 restrictions.

The three-year contract, signed in November 2018, is composed of two major parts: police patrol duties by the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office, and code and ordinance enforcement by the Wallowa County Circuit Court.

Council members and Mayor Teresa Sajonia emphasized they were satisfied with the sheriff's portion of the contract, but the court portion made it appear the code and ordinance enforcement didn't exist.

"This contract would not even have passed

without the ordinance-enforcement clause," Sajonia said. "Our ordinances mean nothing. We're going to be a city of no rules."

Larry Braden, city administrator, said the codes and ordinances most often violated have to do with junk or wrecked vehicles or uncontrolled weeds and grass within city limits. When it's determined a property owner is in violation, the owner is called, then visited and informed they have 10 days to remedy the problem. After that, the owner is fined \$500 a day until remedied.

Sajonia again emphasized it's not the sheriff's office patrol efforts that are a problem.

"It's about the prosecution end of it," the mayor said.

Braden said often when property owners are informed they are in violation of an ordinance, it is usually because they were unaware of it and they are more than willing

to remedy the problem. But some property owners simply don't care, he said.

Sajonia told of at least two places on Main Street that have been notified of violations four times and still haven't corrected the problems.

Councilwoman Pearl Sturm asked Braden what the county commissioners had to say about the city's complaints. He said the commissioners are willing to work things out.

"But the district court won't even hear the cases," Braden said.

He said he thinks District Attorney Rebecca Frolander was not aware of the ordinance and code enforcement portion of the contract. She was not a signatory to the 2018 contract.

Frolander said that while she was not a party to the contract, her office is short-staffed and doesn't have time for the extra load required to prosecute municipal code and ordinance violations.

"We don't have the time to handle the prosecution of crimes and violations we have as it is," she said.

Stolen giraffe is back

By Sam Anthony
EO Media Group

BAKER CITY — On the night of May 29, a metal giraffe disappeared from the sidewalk outside Mad Habit Boutique in downtown Baker City.

The 5-foot-tall statue seemingly walked off on its own (or, for those without an active imagination and a belief in "Night at the Museum"-esque phenomena, was stolen and carried away), and was nowhere to be found on the morning of May 30.

On June 3, police located the giraffe at Mount Hope Cemetery.

The giraffe, which has an estimated value of \$2,000, has since been returned to its family — it was one of three giraffes — beside the store.

Police Chief Ray Duman said he suspects the thief or thieves might have been intoxicated, and what seemed like a good idea at the time didn't seem so wise when they sobered up. He said he thinks they dumped the giraffe when they realized how conspicuous it was.

Chelsea Mitchell, who owns Mad Habit Boutique and the giraffes, said her



Photo by Sam Anthony/EO Media Group

The giraffe on the right, stolen May 29, was found June 3 and reunited with the two other sculptures in front of the Mad Habit Boutique in Baker City.

son was happy to have the giraffe back.

"My son Knox is very happy to have it back since it's the one that's supposed to represent him as the older of the two giraffe children," Mitchell said.

Duman said police are reviewing images from cameras on the street where it was stolen, and hope to identify the suspect or suspects.

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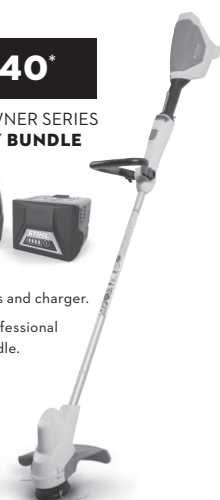
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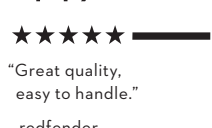
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