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INSIDE

GET READY FOR SUMMER CONCERTS **GO!**



Elgin, county agree on new deal

Elgin City Council unanimously accepts new contract with sheriff's office, reversing prior decision

By ISABELLA CROWLEY
The Observer

ELGIN — Residents of Elgin and the surrounding area packed themselves into city hall Tuesday, June 21 — filling every seat and overflowing to standing room — for a rowdy city council special session.

After listening to concerned citizens, Elgin City Council and Mayor Risa Hallgarth unanimously voted to move forward with a new contract with the Union County Sheriff's Office.

"Please come to council meetings, not just when there are big decisions, but all the time. We are here for you," Councilor Teresa Hylton-Shaffer said.

After bringing the session to order, Hallgarth outlined the agenda for the meeting. First the mayor shared the unfortunate news that City Administrator Brock Eckstein resigned due to illness. Eckstein will work as much as possible with whoever fills the position, but he is unable to continue in a day-to-day capacity, she said.

Tyler Crook from the public works department has been asked to temporarily fill in the position. However, he has requested the position be opened to the public for two weeks. Elgin's city administrator is an elected position. The individual who the council appoints to the role will fill the remaining time left on Eckstein's term, which is up at the end of the year.

Hallgarth then announced the council would be making a decision on how to move forward with the issue of law enforcement: signing a new contract with the Union County Sheriff's Office or creating its own police department.

Hylton-Shaffer brought forward the motion to keep the sheriff's contract, which Councilor Rocky Burgess seconded. The meeting was then opened for public comments.



Hallgarth



Bowen



Eckstein

See, Elgin/Page A8

THE HEAT IS ON?

One year after an oppressive heat wave, the region hasn't yet hit 90 degrees — but summer has just begun

By JEFF BUDLONG
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Last year's scorching hot temperatures and lack of precipitation took a heavy toll on the area, but thankfully this year spring and the beginning of summer have been much more pleasant.

Eastern Oregon has yet to reach 90 degrees this year with the last triple-digit day coming on Aug. 3, 2021, in Union County when it hit 101 and Aug. 15, 2021, in Wallowa County when it hit 101 as well, according to forecasters with the National Weather Service office in Pendleton. The final triple digit days last August came on the heels of an incredibly hot summer, highlighted by one of the most historic and unprecedented heat waves the area has ever experienced.

"Last year we had the heat wave at the end of June that was out of the ordinary," Larry Nierenberg, a senior forecaster for the National Weather Service, said. "That was a record for a heat wave across the Northwest."

During the height of the heat wave in 2021, La Grande broke five consecutive daily record highs, from June 28 to July 2, and ultimately tied the daily record on July 3.

For La Grande, the hottest temperature recorded was 108 degrees on June 30 and July 1. The reading of 108 degrees also broke the record for the highest monthly temperature recorded in June

While empty in this photo on Tuesday, June 21, 2022, the playground at La Grande's Pioneer Park will likely be a busy place with the wet spring finally yielding to warmer summer weather.

Isabella Crowley/The Observer

See, Summer/Page A8

Road repair projects planned in La Grande



A vehicle on Gekeler Lane in La Grande approaches the 12th Street intersection on Wednesday, June 15, 2022. This is a portion of the roadway that will be repaired in August or September. The work should take about one week.

Dick Mason/The Observer

City to spend \$1.3 million on street repair projects

By DICK MASON
The Observer

LA GRANDE — A large portion of one of La Grande's busiest roadways is set to receive a major makeover this summer.

A 1,200-yard stretch of C Avenue and Gekeler Lane, running from Fourth Street to Aries Lane, will be repaired with funding from the city of La Grande. It will be one of three street repair projects that will cost a total of \$1.3 million the city has planned for 2022 and 2023.

The work on C Avenue and Gekeler will be done by a private contractor.

"We are taking bids now," said Kyle Carpenter, the La Grande public works director.

He said the stretch of roadway is in serious need of repair because of its age.

Carpenter said the work on C Avenue and Gekeler Lane will begin either in August or September and will take about a week to complete. The roadway will be closed

See, Streets/Page A8

INDEX

- Business.....B1
- Classified.....B2
- Comics.....B5
- Crossword....B2
- Dear Abby....B6
- Horoscope....B2
- Lottery.....A2
- Obituaries....A5
- Opinion.....A4
- Spiritual.....A6
- Sudoku.....B5
- Weather.....B6

WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight 48 Low Clear and cool

Friday 74/46 Sunny and nice

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Email story ideas to news@lagrandeobserver.com. More contact info on Page A4.

