

Local

OLCC cultivates public discussion on legalized pot

By Brian Addison

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Baker City was the site of the first in a series of 10 statewide “listening sessions” conducted by the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) to take public input as the state prepares for the legalization of recreational marijuana on July 1, 2015.

More than 100 people from northeastern Oregon and western Idaho attended the meeting at the Baker City Armory, January 22. Of those, most appeared to be prospective business people looking for information pertaining to Oregon’s budding recreational marijuana industry. A few, on the other side of the table, came to the meeting to voice concern for the safety of children.

OLCC has been tasked with developing policies and regulations to take to Oregon legislators as the state of Oregon implements the new recreational marijuana law. The listening session in Baker City was led by Rob Patridge, OLCC Commissioner for the Second Congressional District. Patridge is one of five OLCC commissioners in Oregon and the only one representing the eastern side of the state. Patridge works as the District Attorney for Klamath County and mentioned his disagreement with the legalization of marijuana in Oregon.

As a concerned parent, Karen Howton of La Grande was in the minority of those attending the meeting. “I’m a parent and I’m scared to death of it,” Howton said.

Baker City resident Roxanna Swann echoed the concern of Howton. Swann listed the top concern of the people at her table. “The first priority is kids and how it’s presented to the public,” she said.



Brian Addison/The Baker County Press

Karen Howton of La Grande voices her concerns as a parent about the legalization of marijuana in Oregon during the listening session held by Oregon Liquor Control Commission at the Baker City Armory, Thursday, January 22.

Protecting children also topped the list of questions OLCC presented to the public.

“One of the OLCC’s main priorities is to prevent sales to minors. The measure prohibits recreational marijuana sales to people under the age of 21. The act gives the OLCC authority to regulate or prohibit advertising. The OLCC may regulate packages and labels to ensure public safety and prevent appeal to minors,” states OLCC.

During the next several months, OLCC commissioners are traveling around Oregon taking public comment to help develop the guidelines for legal marijuana possession and sales. They are taking opinions on what advertising should be and what it might look like, on how the retail stores should carry out business, and how to regulate production and sales.

The use of legalized marijuana authorized in the

new law, beginning July 1, 2015, allows those 21 years of age and older to possess up to eight ounces of marijuana and allows the growing of up to four plants per residence. An individual may carry up to one ounce but may not consume marijuana in public.

Those planning to enter the marijuana sales business are required to purchase licensing from the state. There are four types of recreational marijuana license required for the Producer (grower), Processor, Wholesaler, and Retailer. License fees are established at \$1,000 annually with a \$250 application fee. OLCC begins accepting license applications on January 4, 2016.

The new legalization law provides for an excise tax place upon the Producer (grower) set at \$35 per ounce for flowers (buds), \$10 per ounce for leaves, and \$5 per immature plant. The tax is expected to raise between \$17 million and

\$40 million per year. The law provides for distribution of the tax dollars at 40-percent for the Common School Fund, 20-percent to Mental Health, Alcoholism, and Drug Services, 15-percent to State Police, 10-percent to cities and 10-percent to counties for the enforcement of the measure, and 5-percent to Oregon Health Authority for alcohol and drug abuse prevention.

Local governments may not prohibit the licenses in their jurisdiction. Local jurisdiction may prohibit licenses and retail sales only through a vote of the public through a general election.

Possession, use, growing, and sale of marijuana remains illegal until July 1, 2015.

More information on the legalization of recreational marijuana may be found at website www.marijuana.oregon.gov. Questions and comments may be sent to marijuana@oregon.gov

Heart ‘n Home Hospice

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Dickinson continued, “We must take care of ourselves as caregivers first, so we can take care of our patients and their families in the best possible manner. One way we recently honored our patients was in a staff and Volunteer Balloon Release Ceremony. Balloon release ceremonies are a powerful way of helping to create a visual ceremony of remembering. Balloons with messages on them can be viewed as a release of the grief. It is important to process grief in a healthy, supported environment.”

The balloon ceremony gathered staff and volunteers together in the parking lot of the business at 3370 10th Street at 8:50 a.m. to release the white dove balloons in a touching ceremony that not just physically released balloons into the air to float away but also symbolically “released” staff and volunteer emotions.

“We put a lot of heart and soul into caring for people. As much as family needs to have closure, so do the caregivers. We really love a lot of these people,” said Ron Hunter, Heart ‘n Home employee.

Many hugs were exchanged and some tears flowed at Wednesday’s profoundly moving ceremony that was just for staff and volunteers.

“We have the honor and privilege of getting to know so many amazing people in our community. It is important for us to take time to grieve, say goodbye, and celebrate those whose lives have touched us in so many ways. This is a good way to get your feelings out,” Valerie Potter, Executive Director of the Baker City Heart ‘n Home said.

Before the outside balloon release ceremony everyone gathered inside to pay tribute, share a few stories and then a touching poem written by a staff member was read.

A Celebration of Life event that is open to the public will be held on February 18th from 5:15 p.m.-6:15 p.m. at Heart ‘n Home, 3370 10th Street, Suite E.

Those who plan to attend are asked to please RSVP 541-524-7688.

Heart ‘n Home also holds regular Grief and Loss Support Groups that are free and open to the public.

Local farmers market opens new poster art contest

The Baker City Farmers Market is seeking artwork for the 2015 Market Poster. Submissions must be received by April 17, 2015.

Artwork should depict an aspect of Farmers Market (such as fresh produce or colorful vendor stalls) that will translate well into poster form.

Prize awarded to selected artist. For more information please call Ann Mehaffy, 541.519.0698. Baker City Farmers Market, PO Box 794, Baker City OR 97814.

Wolf plan has changes for livestock producers

SALEM, Ore.—Oregon is moving to Phase II of its wolf recovery plan after wildlife biologists documented seven breeding pairs of wolves in Oregon in 2014.

Of nine known wolf packs, only the Imnaha Pack is not a breeding pair. The Umatilla River pack still needs to be surveyed. A breeding pair is a pair of adult wolves which produce at least two pups that survive to the end of each year. Six of Oregon’s 2014 breeding pairs are in eastern Oregon.

While surveys are not completed on all of Oregon’s wolves, confirmation of at least four breeding pairs for the third consecutive year in eastern Oregon moves the eastern part of the state to Phase 2 of the state’s Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. “This is an important step for Oregon. Wolves have now met one of the initial milestones envisioned by the public and the Commission,” said Russ Morgan, ODFW wolf coordinator. “In the past seven years, Oregon has gone from no known wolves, to resident and reproducing wolves, and now to

meeting our conservation objective for the eastern part of the state.”

In addition to breeding pairs, the department documented four new pairs of wolves in 2014, including confirmation of a second wolf in the Keno Unit.

Changes for livestock producers east of Hwys 395-78-95

Most known wolf activity, including eight of the nine known wolf packs, is east of Hwys 395-78-95. This is the area of the state where wolves are also delisted from the federal Endangered Species Act. Wolf-livestock conflict in this area is now managed under Phase 2 rules of the Oregon Wolf Plan. Non-lethal measures to prevent wolf-livestock conflict are still emphasized in Phase 2 but livestock producers now have more flexibility to protect their livestock. Specifically, producers in the easternmost portion of the state are allowed to take (shoot) a wolf caught chasing livestock under certain circumstances. See this handout for more information, or see the rule online. Livestock producers are also encouraged to visit the Wolf-Livestock

page and sign up for automatic Wolf-Livestock section email updates to get the latest information on wolves in their area. West of Hwys 395-78-95, wolves remain listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regulates all take and harassment of wolves where wolves are federally listed. The only known wolves in this area are the Rogue Pack (OR7) and two new wolves recently confirmed in the Keno Unit.

Next steps: Annual report, potential delisting of wolves from Oregon ESA ODFW biologists are now working to finalize 2014 wolf population counts. Population surveys are nearly complete and the number of wolves may be updated through February as biologists collect information. The 2014 population will be reported in March.

The transition to Phase 2 also marks the initiation of the state delisting process in Oregon as outlined in the Wolf Plan. ODFW will begin conducting a full status review and will present the results of that review to the Fish

and Wildlife Commission in April 2015. Delisting from the Oregon List of Endangered Species is a public process and the Commission could make

their decision as early as June 2015.

“The Wolf Plan is working and the wolf population in Oregon expanding as the original crafters of

the Plan thought it would,” said Brett Brownscombe, ODFW interim deputy director.

THANK YOU!

Saturday, January 17th, a multiple vehicle accident occurred on I-84, east of Baker City

“Due to our geographical location, we train for events like what we experienced on January 17th. The Colleagues of Baker City put this training and expertise into action. I am proud of everyone involved in this response.”

**-Terri Brandt Correia, CNO
VP of Patient Care**



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Saint Alphonsus Health System would like to thank all of the Baker City Medical Team, including EMS, Dispatch & Law Enforcement. Together we demonstrated the value of being prepared to serve our community.

Saint Alphonsus Medical Center
BAKER CITY