

Local

5J Board focuses on 'The Promise of Oregon'

BY SUNNY WERNER
Sunny@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Last Thursday's School Board meeting was called to order and the Pledge of Allegiance recited. Immediately following, a brief video on "The Promise of Oregon" was presented to the attending public.

The "Promise of Oregon" is a project of the Oregon School Board Association (OSBA), and the video briefly explains the goals of the "Promise:"

1. To create "a groundswell of public support for K-14 education, in hopes of meeting our 40-40-20 goals and lifting student achievement and graduation rates."

2. To "advocate for funding levels necessary for all of Oregon's students to compete in the 21st century world economy." Members of the Board have recently returned from an OSBA conference. They related their experiences and described their reactions later in the meeting.

Students of the Month were presented. McKenzie Flanagan from South Baker Intermediate School was selected as "Promise of Baker Student of the Month."

Jasmine LaBonte was Baker Middle School "Promise of Baker Student of the Month."

The Meeting Agenda was approved, as were the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of October 20.

A revision was made to Board meeting dates with the Board agreeing to meet henceforth on the third Thursday of each month.

Bryson Smith, BHS liaison, gave his report to the Board.

Smith reported on the sports scores, Christmas drives by each grade, and the fundraising by groups such as the FBLA. He informed the Board that the drives and fundraisers

were very successful.

Reports on the OSBA Convention were then given by Board members and administrative staff.

Jerry Peacock reported that he "presented the Baker Technical Institute to OSBA members attending the conference, to standing room only crowds." Peacock described to the conference attendees "the evolution of BTI, how programme has been developed, the goals and design ideas." He told the 5J Board and attendees that he had received "great questions" and that the information on BTI was met with "a very enthusiastic reception."

Kevin Cassidy, Board Chair, reported that he had also made a presentation at the Conference. He taught a workshop on "How to integrate 'The Promise of Oregon' into educational efforts."

Cassidy also mentioned that he had been struck by the fact that "it is the arts that we honor most, but they take the biggest hit when it comes to funding."

Melissa Irvine said, "I came home energized, but humbled."

Andrew Bryan told the group, "Baker is very involved in leadership, and we are a good example to eastern Oregon."

Autumn Harrell said, "It was a great experience."

Assistant Superintendent Betty Palmer talked about how much she had appreciated the presentations by performance groups from around the state. "There were native dancers and drummers from Umatilla, the Silverton Woodwinds, and the Sherwood Acappella," she explained.

5J Superintendent Mark Witty said the conference provided "a balance between knowledge and inspiration."

The Board then discussed policies and how best to implement them.

Following that discussion

was the Superintendent's Report.

Witty told the Board about Senate Bill 447 and the possibility of more funding with matching grants.

He also discussed the Technology Survey, in which data is being gathered on how infrastructures work for each school.

There is also a Medicaid survey underway.

The Parent/Community "Input Nights" are gathering data to gain a better picture of services needed. In January, said Witty, there will be a Promise of Oregon "legislature opportunity day," to which all elected representatives will be invited to a round table with community members and school administrators to discuss "educational issues from the cradle to the grave."

Palmer then presented her Report.

She informed the Board that she had sent three teachers to a training in Clackamas for math curriculum.

She has held four parent Math Nights so far.

Math teachers in K-6, 7 & 8, and 9-12 have met with all teachers to discuss applied math in non-content math classes. The goal is to strengthen those instructors.

Palmer explained to the Board that she and the Math teachers have attended meetings in Ontario where publishers and sales representatives have presented their math curriculae.

Palmer and the teachers are in work groups to deliberate the benefits of each curriculum, so they can present their findings to the District.

The Federal government has issued recommendations that all states adopt the Open Education Network, which is all online. Palmer told the Board that the District has 17 new certified teachers this year,

all of whom are receiving training.

The Parent Advisory Committee will have its first meeting on Tuesday, December 8th.

Doug Dalton presented the Financial/Transportation/Maintenance Report. Dalton presented the Board with copies of the budget. He commented that, with property taxes coming in, there were no current issues.

Dalton is overseeing the new bus and facility evaluations. He has an engineering report on seismic issues.

Moving forward on the High School gym and that at Brooklyn, the cost will be \$1.5 million to bring both facilities up to seismic grade.

Dalton reported that the boiler at the High School is currently the biggest facility issue, because it will have to run all winter.

Bryan suggested that SB447 might be available for capital improvements, which could be sought after bonding.

Dalton then covered the latest PERS changes, explaining that the market had not performed as expected and therefore has negatively impacted PERS budget planning.

Dalton told the Board that he has been appointed to a state group with educators and employers, in which he will be representing Baker Technical Institute.

Action items for the Board were then presented. These included:

Extra duty new hires: approved.

Second and Final Reading of Policies: decision made to reevaluate at a later date.

2015 OSBA Election for Board Position 1 and Legislative Policy Committee Position 1: approved.

Resolution 16-05: Bus Lease: approved.

Future Agenda Items were agreed upon, and the Board's Regular Session was adjourned to Executive Session to conduct deliberation with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labour negotiations.

Christmas tree

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Wrote Nelson in an email, "Chuck Carey was our certified tree-cutter."

Beverly Andrews from 840 Lund Lane was the owner and generous donor of the tree.

Baker City Public Works will be decorating the tree this year. New lights and ornaments were purchased by HBC last year and seen for the first time on that tree.

The lighting will take place on the corner of Court and Main, Saturday, December 5, just following the City's annual Twilight Parade.

The parade begins just after dusk at 5 p.m. this year.

Fire barrels will be located on corners as temperatures are expected to be below freezing.

Lawsuit

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Addison believes, as stated in court filings, "Since, and as the result of, the publication of his editorial, plaintiff has been the subject of a series of harassing, defamatory and economically damaging actions by Baker City police officers."

The plaintiff's case was outlined in the November 6, 2015 issue of *The Baker County Press*.

The defense's points, which were included in the November 21 response, include:

- At all material times, defendants had the right pursuant to the First Amendment of the United States Constitution to express their opinions and views; therefore, the defendants can not now be held liable for such expressions, since any comments made by the defendants about the plaintiff were protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.
- Defendants would have made the same decisions regardless of any of the alleged acts set forth in the plaintiff's complaint.
- Plaintiff's claims, or a portion thereof, are barred by the statute of limitations, or other statutes, rules, or laws, which limit the time in which the plaintiff had to initiate his claims.
- Plaintiff's claims, as alleged, resulted from an act or omission of an officer, employee or agent of Baker City, when such officer, employee or agent was immune from liability; therefore, defendant Baker City is immune from liability.
- Plaintiff's claims are based upon the defendants' performance of or the failure to exercise or perform a discretionary function or duty; therefore, defendants are immune from liability.

In total, sixteen defenses are listed. Addison is represented by Clifford S. Davidson of Sussman Shank, LLP out of Portland. Since the initial filing, Addison has also requested a special hearing to outline terms of police interaction with him while the suit is ongoing, as well as a motion to expedite discovery in the case.

Addison is seeking an unspecified amount for damages. He is also seeking "reasonable attorneys fees" and "punitive damages" to be determined at trial, should the case continue that far.

The City of Baker City and Lohner ask that if the Plaintiff's complaint is dismissed, that Addison provide reimbursement for their costs and disbursements incurred during the suit, together with "reasonable attorney fees to be fixed by the Court pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983."

Interim 9-1-1 call center director named—twice

BY KERRY MCQUISTEN
News@TheBakerCountyPress.com

An interim 9-1-1 Call Center / Dispatch director has been appointed, but the appointee has changed twice in one week and is slated to change again in January. The interim director replaces Jason Yencopal who filled the role for a time, and continues on in his other capacity with Baker County Emergency Management.

On November 20, the County/City 9-1-1 Advisory Board met and decided to conduct a renewed search for a permanent 9-1-1 director, opening up the search continuously across multiple states until a fully qualified candidate can be located and hired.

Baker City Manager Mike Kee also mentioned during this Tuesday's City Council meeting that the recruitment process will be opened up again for the position, as a qualified applicant pool had not been garnered during prior efforts.

In the interim, Baker County Commissioner Bill Harvey appointed Margaret Sackos, a current 9-1-1 call center employee, to manage that center and maintain the current records system. Sackos was to report directly to Harvey beginning December 1, as announced by Councillor Mike Downing, also during Tuesday's Baker City Council meeting.

However, on November 25, Harvey stated in a memo that Sackos would be unable to act as interim call center director after all, citing family health reasons.

Effective December 1, Jerry Boyd, who serves as Reserve Commander, will oversee the 9-1-1 Dispatch center, with the exception of supervising his daughter and employee Ruthie Boyd, in order to avoid a conflict of interest. Ruthie Boyd will report directly to Harvey.

The arrangement is expected to be temporary, with Boyd staying on only until January, "when Mr. Boyd's replacement can take over until a permanent director is placed," wrote Harvey in a memo.

Thus far there has been no announcement of who the new interim director may be come January 2016.



Submitted Photo.

Reporter Brian Addison.



Kerry McQuisten / The Baker County Press

Baker City Police Chief Wyn Lohner.

Saint Alphonsus Foundation—Baker City
Invites you to . . .

Festival of Trees 2015

Preview Among The Trees

Thursday, December 3, 2015

6:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$15 per person

Hors d'oeuvres

No-host Bar

Silent Auction

Gala

Friday, December 4, 2015

5:30 p.m.—11:00 p.m.

Cocktails 5:30 p.m. ~ Dinner 6:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$55 per person

Buffet Sit Down Dinner

No-host Bar

Silent & Live Auction

Following the auction, dance to the live music of "Colorblind"

Events are held at the Baker County Event Center—2600 East Street Baker City, Oregon

☞ Tickets Available at Betty's Books, The Sycamore Tree and Saint Alphonsus Medical Center—Baker City

Family Day—Saturday, December 5, 2015

Viewing of the Trees

"Make It, Take It" ~ Sponsored by Crossroads Art Center

Photos with Santa ~ Sponsored by Baker City Kiwanis

For more information contact
Laura Huggins at 541-523-8102.

 Saint Alphonsus
Foundation
BAKER CITY

