

# Local / Opinion

## Sumpter City Council tackles events, bills

BY MEGHAN ANDERSCH  
Meghan@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Despite tackling some difficult topics, the Sumpter City Council moved through Tuesday night's agenda with expediency and courtesy. Mayor Leland Myers opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Minutes/Bills

After review, minutes of November 10 (Council meeting) and November 12 (special meeting regarding procedure for employee assistants and coverage) were held for correction. Minutes for November 18 (special meeting regarding assistants) and December 2 (special meeting to review proposed City Charter) were approved, as was payment of all bills.

### Appointment of 2016/17 Budget Officer

Myers stated Kathi Vinson is the City bookkeeper and has been their budget officer. He suggested reappointing her. Motion passed. City Clerk Julie McKinney stated Vinson said the 2014/15 financial review meeting will be later this month.

### Community events

Myers read a letter from the Sumpter Valley Community Volunteers regarding upcoming activities.

A Christmas bazaar will be held at the Museum Saturday and Sunday, December 12 and December 13. The Christmas parade will be the evening of the 12th. A short tree-lighting ceremony will start as soon as the parade is over.

Barbara Malone stated there have been rumors going around that preregistration for the parade is required and that ATVs are not wanted. Both rumors are false.

Malone stated that if anyone wants to participate, they should show up at the groomer shed about 4 p.m. on the 12th. Utility Manager Jeff McKinney asked if he could drive his lawnmower in the parade and Malone said she didn't see why not.

Myers said a request had been made to use the City's state and national flag for the colors for the parade. A motion to allow this was passed.

John Young said the Snowmobile Club has traditionally held the December 31st hot dog/chili feed at the Grounds, but there are problems with this space including issues with electricity and lack of a warm building.

The Club would like to hold the event at Volunteer Park.

Fire Chief Clarke has stated he is okay with a bonfire there. A motion to allow the use of Volunteer Park for the event was passed.

### Planning Commission

Young gave the Planning Commission report. The Commission has done inspections on a couple of projects.

A request from the Scoop 'N Steamer was revoked due to DEQ and septic restrictions.

The business has proceeded with something else and the Planning Commission will be looking into it.

LeAnne Woolf stated that easement for pipelines and tanks is the big issue

there.

Young said the Commission has also done an inspection on a request by Greg Lucas regarding an area being vacated. A public hearing is scheduled for January 7.

### Mayor's Report

Myers stated he is pleased that staff was able to get out and get the streets plowed off so that when it freezes again, it will not be a pain to get around. Myrna Clarke shared concerns from Mike at the Post Office regarding accessibility.

Myers stated things seem to be going well with the Charter. Council met December 2 to approve the new charter version, which will be presented to citizens at a workshop on December 16.

### Utility Manager's Report

McKinney asked Myrna Clark to thank Mike for his input and explained that when plowing, "We address the higher elevations first and then work our way down. We get to everyone as fast as we can."

He reported that water is flowing in well and sewer is going out. "We're in good shape. Thank you."

### Fire Chief's Report

Chief Kurt Clarke reported no recent runs. He said the overhead doors on the Fire Station are having issues and need to have some work done.

Several fire trucks will be in Saturday's Christmas parade. Dinner for the Sumpter Fire/Auxiliary and Powder River is December 15.

The oil leak in the QRU was repaired. A fire truck is in the shop for brake work.

Don Taggart of Baker City taught a CPR class using a new system Baker is adopting. There is a little to finish on Firefighter 1 Hazmat.

Clarke stated he will have a list of new firefighters to bring to the first January City Council meeting.

### IFA Grant

Myers stated that nothing has been done on this yet, but that per the City Handbook, they can choose to use the engineer that worked on the system before without going through the bid process. He said that would be for the future, if everyone was in agreement.

Council member Cary Clarke asked if it would be okay to proceed now. A motion was made to move forward.

Young stated he has concerns about using the same engineer (Joe Hitz). He said in working with him previously there were constant delays and his boss had to finish the project.

He also mentioned a list of items sent by DEQ.

Myers said he has spoken to and worked with the company (Sisul) before and that DEQ has no problems with them.

McKinney asked if there were issues with the company, how long would it take to terminate them. Myers stated that there will be a contract with conditions and deadlines. If those aren't met, the company would be terminated. Young stated Hitz has never done a project like this before and there are

lots of good companies that have.

Myers stated they needed to move on. A motion was on the table and he called for a vote. The motion passed.

### IFA Watershed Grant

Council member Robert Armbruster stated he has tried several times to reach Randy Jones at DEQ, but has not received a return call.

He said he can try to find out once more the scope and conditions of the grant, but thinks they are out of time.

Myers stated that Commissioner Harvey is working with the Forest Service to get watersheds better protected without the cities having to do more.

### Charter

Those in attendance received the latest draft, and a public workshop will be held December 16 at 7 p.m. Myers stated no changes will be made on that date, but comments from everyone will be taken to the next meeting.

### Volunteer Restrooms

Myers stated he has been cleaning the restrooms for the last month and discovered today that the lights weren't working. He reported finding a mess where someone had an accident and stated it was definitely an accident, not vandalism.

### Council input

Council President Annie Oakley asked about the surplus. Myers stated they will need to work on it when things warm up. Jeff McKinney said he thinks the items are junk and would like to push them into the burn pile.

Oakley said she was talking to Sharon Harris, HR for City/County Insurance Services (CIS), and Harris is adamant about having one person as supervisor for all City employees.

Oakley stated she would like to proceed on that. Council member Sammi Esposito stated it sounds like a good idea, and would protect both sides if any issues come up.

She stated, "Not someone to look down you guy's necks, but to know what's going on. Communication is the biggest problem we have." After discussion, Cary Clarke was nominated to supervise. Motion passed.

Myers stated something was mentioned in the latest issue of Local Focus that everyone needs to be careful about. He said even if contacting only one person at a time, if you contact at least two other people discussing City business in a decision-making type of conversation, it is considered conducting an illegal meeting.

### Public Input

Myrna Clarke asked if the concerns Oakley had regarding the Charter were addressed and was assured they were. Myers stated the new charter is very much in line with the LOC model, which takes into consideration all the different laws in effect at this time. Further explanation will be given at the upcoming meeting.

SEE SUMPTER CITY  
COUNCIL  
PAGE 8

## Community Bank gets high FDIC rating

Community Bank, headquartered in Joseph, Oregon, recently received the highest possible rating from the FDIC for its most recent performance under the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA). The Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 requires federally insured depository institutions to support the borrowing needs of all the communities where they do business, including low- and moderate-income areas.

The "Outstanding" rating is based on Community Bank's performance under lending, investment and community development tests. These tests measure residential, small business and community development lending, community development investments and community develop-

ment services in the communities the bank serves.

In Oregon specifically, the bank achieved an Outstanding rating for both lending and community development. Community Bank is currently the only active Oregon chartered bank to receive an Outstanding in both areas. On a national level, just 347 of 6,247 (5.5%) of federally insured financial institutions have an active overall CRA rating of Outstanding\*.

"We are honored to receive this rating, which demonstrates our commitment to the communities of Eastern Oregon and Southeast Washington where our bankers live, work and operate your Community Bank." said Tom Moran, President and CEO of Community Bank.

The CRA performance evaluation made specific references to Community Bank's strengths, including its lending efforts to small businesses, farming operations and participation in community development. Since the last CRA rating, Community Bank originated 14 community development loans totaling approximately \$24.7 million that directly benefited the bank's rural communities - including municipal improvement projects, economic development loans and the construction of medical facilities.

Additionally Community Bank team members and directors provided 4,227 service hours directly relating to community development and economic development.

## GI fairness bill passes senate panel

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senators Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and John Boozman, R-Ark., today announced that their bill to ensure wounded members of the Guard and Reserve will receive the GI Bill benefits they've earned passed the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

The bipartisan GI Bill

Fairness Act would ensure that servicemembers of the Guard or Reserve who are wounded in combat are eligible for the same GI Bill benefits as active duty members of the military.

Currently, wounded Guard or Reserve members are often given orders under 10 USC 12301(h) for their recovery, treatment

and rehabilitation.

Unfortunately, federal law does not recognize such orders as eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill education assistance, meaning that unlike other members of the military, these members of the Guard and Reserve actually lose benefits for being injured in the line of duty.

## — LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

### Pork: the practical solution

To the Editor:  
Before WWI John J. "Black Jack" Pershing was the commanding general of the U.S. Forces in the Philippines. Islamic jihadists were on a killing rampage. The general learned that the Islamic terrorists believed pork was unclean and if they died while exposed to pigs or pig parts they would be defiled in heaven. The general buried terrorists in graves with pigs or pig body parts. The jihadists backed off and the uprising was con-

trolled.

As you learned from recent news articles there should be plenty of bodies to bury with some pigs or pig parts. If no bodies are available, put a live jihadist in a cell with pig parts.

This might solve our problem with the Islamic jihadists. Unfortunately, at the present time our administration contains enough people in favor of Islam that this would not be practical.

Dr. Carl Kostol  
Baker City

**Letter to the Editor Policy:** The Baker County Press reserves the right not to publish letters containing factual falsehoods or incoherent narrative. Letters promoting or detracting from specific for-profit businesses will not be published. Word limit is 375 words per letter. Letters are limited to one every other week per author. Letters should be submitted to Editor@TheBakerCountyPress.com.

**Advertising and Opinion Page Disclaimer:** Opinions submitted as Guest

Opinions or Letters to the Editor express the opinions of their authors, and have not been authored by and are not necessarily the opinions of The Baker County Press, any of our staff, management, independent contractors or affiliates. Advertisements placed by political groups, candidates, businesses, etc., are printed as a paid service, which does not constitute an endorsement of or fulfillment obligation by this newspaper for the products or services advertised.

## — CONTACT US —

### The Baker County Press

PO Box 567  
Baker City, Ore. 97814

Open Monday-Thursday for calls  
9 AM - 4 PM  
Open 24/7 for emails  
Office location: TBA

Phone: 541.519.0572

TheBakerCountyPress.com

Kerry McQuisten, Publisher  
Editor@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Wendee Morrissey, Advertising and Sales  
Wendee@TheBakerCountyPress.com

David Conn, Advertising and Sales  
David@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Published weekly every Friday.  
Subscription rates per year are \$29.95 all areas, e-mail delivery. \$39.95 print issue, home delivery, Baker City city limits only. \$49.95 print issue, mail delivery, outside Baker City city limits only. Payment in advance.

A division of  
Black Lyon Publishing, LLC

Copyright © 2014

## YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

**President Barack Obama**  
202.456.1414  
202.456.2461 fax  
Whitehouse.gov/contact

**US Sen. Jeff Merkley**  
503.326.3386  
503.326.2900 fax  
Merkley.Senate.gov

**US Sen. Ron Wyden**  
541.962.7691  
Wyden.Senate.gov

**US Rep. Greg Walden**  
541.624.2400  
541.624.2402 fax  
Walden.House.gov

**Oregon Gov. Kate Brown**  
503.378.3111  
Governor.Oregon.gov

**State Rep. Cliff Bentz**  
503.986.1460

**State Sen. Ted Ferrioli**  
541.490.6528

**Baker County Commissioners Bill Harvey; Mark Bennett; Tim Kerns**  
541.523.8200  
541.523.8201