

# Local

## City Council

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The regular session of the City Council meeting convened at 7 p.m. with all Councilors present and Councilor Thomas leading the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Council voted to approve the minutes for regular council meetings from November 24, 2015 and December 8, 2015. Without there being any citizen participation Council jumped right into the meeting.

### City Councilor Appointment

With the resignation of Mack Augenfeld in November 2015, Council accepted applications for a replacement councilor to fill his seat. Applications were required to be accompanied by a letter of interest before the January 12, 2016 meeting.

Three citizens applied: Dawn Bucklew, who submitted an application in October 2014 to fill Ben Merrill's vacated seat and lost to Sandy Lewis, Judy Head and Daniel Lowe.

According to City Human Resource Manager/City Recorder Luke Yeaton, Head withdrew her application leaving only Bucklew and Lowe.

All Councilors voted unanimously for Lowe who was then sworn in immediately by Yeaton.

Lowe took a seat with his fellow councilors for the remainder of the meeting. Mayor Mosier addressed Dawn Bucklew who was also present.

She said, "We have a number of seats coming open in the next election and I would encourage you to consider that avenue as well. We also have a couple of seats available on Boards or Commissions, that if they interest you, you may volunteer for."

### Financial Audit Presentation

Bob Seymour of Guyer and Associates, Certified Public accountants addressed Council in regards to his audit.

He had worked closely with Jeannie Dexter City Finance Manager and Council had been provided

an 88-page annual financial report for the June 30, 2015 fiscal year end detailing his findings and each departments numbers.

Seymour did not have any shocking findings to report and state, "Baker City was in a far better financial position" than many other cities in Eastern Oregon.

Seymour indicated that management was cooperative even helpful in the audit and noted that Dexter had even worked as an auditor herself at one time.

Seymour advised to council only trivial things were found and brought to management's attention; ways to improve the issuance of bill credits to deter fraud better sign off on internal audit sheets and those sorts of things.

The City was found to have one bank account that was not noted in financial statements.

Dexter explained to Council that this was a fund that was the volunteer firefighter's money opened long ago under the City's tax ID number.

Dexter indicated that they were currently working with those individuals who were the rightful owners of the money to get it reassigned so it was not a City asset. If interested the Annual Financial Report is available for any citizen to review on the City website [bakercity.com](http://bakercity.com) and Dexter has offered to answer any questions as well.

### Discuss East Campbell Annexation Water/Wastewater Fees

City Manager Kee stated that it was his opinion that this item be removed from the evenings agenda. Council was all in agreement that the matter needed no discussion and they moved forward.

### City Council Email Policy

City Manager Kee indicated that at a 2015 Goal setting session then Councilor Augenfeld expressed concern that City government be more transparent. His fellow councilors agreed. Since that time Kee, as well as other members of City staff have been reviewing other cities email policies and procedures. IT Technician Julie Smith had outlined what Kee felt was a "really good policy" encompassing staff as well as Councilors. Much discussion was had as to whether or not citi-

zens would be so willing to contact councilors if there was a thought that their confidential emails may be made public. Mayor Mosier expressed extreme concern over this matter and who gets to decide what is made public and what isn't. She used the example of what if someone showed up on her doorstep and spoke to her or called her on the phone? Those communications were expected to be confidential why shouldn't email. Councilor Lewis weighed in on Copyright infringement laws in certain instances if all emails were to become public but also stated she did not expect her emails to be private anyway. After much debate and discussion Council chose not to vote on the matter only to take it under advisement for now.

### Resolution #3765 Modifying Parking Downtown

Public Works Director Michelle Owen addressed council that she had been contacted by Ryan and Kailyn Chaves requesting the addition of a loading zone and removal of an ADA parking space along a north side of Court Street west of the Main Street intersection.

She explained in her staff report that the Chaves have contacted other businesses along the area and indicated they had heard no objections.

The Chaves even indicate that the other businesses are excited at the opportunity to beget to use the loading zone as well.

The Chaves intend to open a distillery, Glacier 45 at 1901 Main Street. Because of the volatility of the product being delivered to them, 190 proof alcohol, the state requires certain specifications for delivery be met in order to ensure safety during those deliveries.

The Chaves also have an upcoming hearing with the planning commission regarding a conditional use permit for the space.

The Chaves addressed Council on the matter.

Councilor Langrell found issue with the request stating, "I will not vote for this. I do not see the need to take away from the citizens (referring to the ADA space) for something that may be used a few minutes once every month. It's not a good use of space."



Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

Bob Seymour gave a favorable financial report for the City.

Councilors Lewis and Abell, both of whom need either for themselves or family members ADA spaces, also expressed concern.

Both expressed the lack of ADA spaces along Main street with Lewis specifically noting extensive use of the space in question. Both voiced disapproval of a space on First Street being available as an alternative trying to make it understood that the distance was not acceptable.

In an effort to satisfy them, Ryan Chaves suggested the ADA space in question on the north side of Court Street at Main Street be relocated to the south side of Court at Main as a compromise.

This suggestion was acceptable to Lewis and Abell, however Langrell was still unswayed in his opinion.

Mayor Mosier said she for one was very happy to see life being breathed into a downtown building, "It's refreshing."

The building in question has long been utilized by a non-profit with little to no use or contribution to our downtown. And while Mosier stated she was glad to see new plans for it she did not at all want to take away from the non-profit that had been able to use it.

Council, after lengthy discussion about the ADA relocation all voted to approve the changes and allow the loading zone with the exception of councilor Langrell.

It was agreed that the ADA relocation would be addressed at a future meeting.

### City Manager Recruitment

Mike Kee addressed Council advising that the Slavin Management is prepared to move forward with recruitment after visiting Baker City, talking with Staff, City Councilors and Citizens at large.

They have developed a profile to place for advertising the position.

Kee said Human Resource Manager Luke Yeaton had put together what he felt was a great job description.

Kee asked Council to review the description as well as the salary range in which the job was going to be advertised. City staff had reviewed the profile and made changes they deemed necessary such as mistakes and typos and he just felt a consensus among council was needed to allow Slavin to move forward. A discussion regarding salary was had noting an increase in starting salary to be competitive with communities similar to ours like The Dalles and Ontario who are also in the market for new city managers.

"We don't want to be scrapping the bottom of the barrel, stuck with leftovers," said Councilor Downing in favor of the salary to be offered.

That beginning salary is in the \$98,000 range. Council agreed that the

range was within what they felt it should be. They also passed a motion to adopt the job description.

### City Manager/Director Comments/Council Comments

Kee advised Council he had provided labor trends for their review and had an annual report on recycling.

When asked if curbside recycling was an option here in Baker City he indicates he was told the recycling center does a good job in our community.

Public Works Director Micelle Owen addressed council regarding the award of grants for the heating system and new credits available through energy trust.

She also mentioned the recent updates completed at the pool including new sand filter installation and the pool resurfacing.

Councilor Lewis mentioned an upcoming YMCA fundraiser dinner and it was noted that Best Friends of Baker City and New Hope of Eastern Oregon, both animal rescue entities, were combining some of their efforts.

Mosier indicated that it had been brought to her attention that she was closing Council Sessions incorrectly that a motion needed to be made and voted on before adjourning.

She jokingly asked if there were any motions and upon a unanimous vote to adjourn, she closed the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

## January storm swim meet results announced

Baker Swim Team and La Grande Swim Club both had athletes compete in the January Storm swim meet on January 8-10 in Walla Walla, WA. There were 265 swimmers from Oregon, Washington and Idaho representing 11 teams.

Baker had six competi-

tors and La Grande had 19 attend. Riana Scott and former Baker City resident Kristal Jensen were two of the La Grande athletes. The following are their results.

**Kristal Jensen (14)**  
Girls 13 & O 200 Free 2:19.01 8th  
Girls 13 & O 100 Fly

1:20.33 12th  
Girls 13 & O 200 Breast 3:05.80 8th  
Girls 13 & O 100 Back 1:15.59 11th  
Girls 13 & O 100 Free 1:03.68 6th  
Girls 13 & O 200 IM 2:47.07 8th  
Girls 13 & O 100 Breast 1:27.56 8th

Girls 13 & O 50 Free 29.30 7th  
**Riana Scott (13)**  
Girls 11 & O 400 IM 4:55.03 1st  
Girls 13 & O 200 Free 2:03.46 1st  
Girls 13 & O 100 Fly 1:06.49 2nd  
Girls 13 & O 200 Breast 2:33.88 1st

Girls 13 & O 100 Back 1:07.46 2nd  
Girls 13 & O 100 Free 58.05 1st  
Girls 13 & O 200 IM 2:19.05 1st  
Girls 13 & O 100 Breast 1:13.77 1st  
Girls 13 & O 50 Free 27.24 1st  
Girls 13 & O 200 Back

2:21.48 1st  
Girls 13 & O 500 Free 5:42.15 1st  
Riana Scott was the high point 13-14 girl and qualified for the Northwest Regional Age Group meet in Federal Way, WA in March. Jozie Ramos from BST also qualified for the Northwest Regional meet.

## Grants available for museums

The Oregon Heritage Commission is offering grants to qualified museums for collections projects, heritage tourism, and education and interpretation projects. Awards typically range between \$2,000 and \$10,000.

Collections projects may include cataloging, archival storage, disaster preparedness and conservation. Heritage tourism projects may include museum marketing and

promotions, enhancing visitor experience, and training for museum staff. Education and interpretation projects may include exhibits, online education, school classes, workshops and camps.

While the grant applications are online, they are simple and there is plenty of support for completing them.

"Our goal is to support organizations of all sizes all over the state in their

valuable work. We provide assistance in the application process," says Kuri Gill, the grants program coordinator.

The Heritage Commission is comprised of nine people representing Oregon's heritage and geographical diversity who have been appointed by the Governor. There are nine advisory representatives from state agencies and statewide organizations. The commission's mission

is to secure, sustain, and enhance Oregon's heritage by ensuring coordination of heritage initiatives by public and private organizations; advocacy on its behalf; education of the public about its extent and value; and promotion and celebration of its diversity.

To learn more about museum grants, visit [www.oregonheritage.org](http://www.oregonheritage.org) or contact Kuri Gill at Kuri.Gill@oregon.gov or 503-986-0685.

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