

Outdoor Rec / Local

Swim committee reviews projects



L-R: Paula Moe, Andrew Bryan, Noel Scott, Michelle Owen.

Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

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Monday night the Sam-O Swim Committee held a meeting to review projects.

The Committee met with only Chairman Andrew Bryan, Noel Scott, YMCA Aquatics Director Paula Moe, City Council Representative Sandy Lewis and Public Works Director Michelle Owen in attendance.

Bryan called the meeting to order but without enough voting members present those in attendance were unable to vote on approving minutes from the previous meeting so that would have to wait.

They did agree, however, that they could go on with the meeting without the rest of the committee present.

Committee member Jason Bybee had been scheduled to speak about his idea of adding a waterslide and splash park to the pool but was unable to attend as he was travelling from Seattle where he had participated in the 25th annual Scott Firefighter Stair Climb, a fundraiser which benefits the leukemia and lymphoma society, along with several members and volunteers of the Baker City Fire Department.

Owen said she had "no good news" for the committee.

The circulating pump that circulates hot water to the showers had not been working properly and was taken out for service, which of course required waiting on parts. The pump

that was supposed to have been returned that day; however, it had not.

"There is enough hot water in the tank for some showers but it can't circulate anywhere but to the women's room because it feeds directly into there. So the rest of the building had nice cold showers," said Moe.

"But, it's just regular maintenance stuff; its being worked on," added Owen. "So, while on the topic of showers, let me jump into showers."

She advised that she had gotten a revised number back to replace the poorly functioning units currently in place with newer units to be closer to \$12,500 rather than the \$10,000 they originally thought.

"But that is with the labor to install them," she said.

She also stated that that number allowed a little leeway for higher labor costs just in case and was for a "more robust unit brand with parts and pieces that I can get replacement parts and pieces for easier. Action Plumbing has a good plan for us moving forward."

Bryan asked if when plugging a number into the budget to ask for it shouldn't be higher and Owen said she could do that maybe even account for grab bars as they had discussed.

All agreed that would be a good idea. She did have some encouraging news that will help the current units some parts were located in the mainte-

nance shop that can help repair them until they get replaced.

They moved on to talk about the family restroom.

Owen felt that the easiest and least expensive way would most likely be to combine the men's and women's restrooms in the lobby into one bathroom constructing a doorway between the two and reconfiguring the two into one with a shower added and full ADA accessibility.

She is having staff look into how best the space could be used, what would be unable to be changed easily and what was structural and what electrical issues would require an electrician to give her a cost estimate to present to the budget board.

City staff will be utilized as much as possible to reduce costs. They talked about a few minor maintenance items and the addition of an electrical outlet needing to be added to the pool deck near the lifeguard table so that the water aerobics classes could have music since use of an extension cord to get a boom box out there was as Moe stated "illegal."

Owen then talked about the heating system update. Abacus Engineering helped her in writing the specs for the RFP however upon a second look they felt they did not budget enough money.

They are now estimating the project to be around \$230,000. \$190,000 has been secured for the project, which until now was thought to be enough to get

it completed.

Owen gave options that they could go to Council and request a loan from another fund to cover the \$40,000 shortfall or reduce the project leaving them still with manual controls on the lobby air handling system but have automated controls on the natatorium; however, she was unsure how the energy saving credits would be effected with those changes.

Owen told the committee what she wanted to do was "Go out to bid with the specs but have things as added alternates so that we can choose, piece it out, kind of like we did for the resurfacing project. Then decide 'do we need this... do we not need this, is this going to cost us energy trust dollars or not?'"

Bryan asked, "So we would have that in time to make a recommendation before you submit all your budget numbers?"

Owen nodded. Bryan noted that originally the pool "was supposed to be seven lanes, there were several supposed to's and so there's this long history of not quite accomplishing what the goal was. So if we could somehow figure out how to do it right this time."

Owen agreed but said, "It just always costs more. You're darned if you do and you're darned if you don't."

Moe asked if the boiler that they were planning to replace could handle an expansion of the pool should Bybee's idea of a waterslide and splash park be realized. Owen stated that she had been told that the new boiler system could handle an expansion as long as it was not a massive expansion, which it would not be, so they would be fine.

As the meeting wound down, the committee bounced around ideas of fencing between Truck Corral property and the YMCA property, addition of a misting pole and children's water features in the already existing park area, which Moe said she thought would be a really great addition and deterrent to keep skate park users from entering the pool facility to "cool off" or get a drink in the summer.

A sandy beach volleyball court was also mentioned as was approaching the public arts commission to partner in beautifying the space.

The Sam-O Swim Committee has some innovative and exciting ideas ahead once they get beyond the initial phase of restoring our community gem of a pool.

Behold the Bur Buttercup



Submitted Photo.

The Bur Buttercup.

Submitted by Arnie Grammon

While we'd all prefer crocus and daffodils to remind us of spring's arrival, too often we're confronted with Bur Buttercup instead. You can choose to ignore it, at your own peril. Just don't plan on going bare-footed this summer.

In any case, conditions are perfect right now to treat this weed. As long as we have temperatures near 50 F and low wind conditions, it's go time.

Originally from southeastern Europe, it is a member of the buttercup family and grows two to five inches in height. In early spring, bur buttercup sends up narrow-leaved stems tipped by solitary, yellowed-petaled flowers. By mid-spring, it forms solid, three to four-inch-tall mats.

The real problem with this weed is seen later on in the summer, when spiny seed heads appear. When the seed head dries out it becomes hard and sharp, regularly lodging in shoes, bare feet, clothing, and even thin bicycle tires. It is also a nuisance with dogs and cats, and actually can cause mild poisoning when they try to clean their paws.

Bur Buttercup can also be toxic to livestock, especially sheep and horses. Problems usually arise when animals are dry-lotted. When there is little alternative forage present, it forces animals to consume large quantities of this weed. In most cases, a lack of general health within the herd is the result, although mortality is not uncommon.

This weed is found primarily on disturbed sites, but can also spread out onto range and pasturelands with sufficient spring moisture. Bur Buttercup can also quickly spread into sagebrush range ground, occupying sites once held by native forbs and grasses.

Bur buttercup can be controlled, but action is needed before it flowers and drops seed. In its late-winter seedling stage, it's susceptible to foliar-applied herbicides like glyphosate, Weedmaster, or 2,4-D. Use glyphosate (Roundup is a common brand) only as a spot-treatment on driveways and similar areas, as it will kill non-target, preferred vegetation if not careful. As always, please read, understand, and follow label directions when applying herbicides.

Solid stands of healthy, competitive grasses will not allow bur buttercup to gain a foothold. If you'd rather not spray, digging will work, but can be very labor-intensive. More information on control methods can be obtained by calling Arnie Grammon, the Baker County Noxious Weed Supervisor at 523-0618, or stop by at Weed Office at 1050 South Bridge in Baker City.

OCA endorses Sen. Ferrioli

John Day, Ore. - "The Oregon Cattlemen's Association is proud to endorse Ted Ferrioli as a candidate for Senate District 30," said Oregon Cattleman's Association Executive Director Jerome Rosa. "Ted understands the issues facing ranchers in Eastern Oregon and he's willing to do what's best for small businesses in our state. At a time when our industry faces increasing regulatory challenges from government and more difficulty competing regionally and globally, he has been an outspoken voice of reason and sensibility. The livestock industry couldn't have a better champion in Salem."

Senator Ferrioli has represented Senate District 30, the largest Senate district in the state, working hard to advance Oregon's agricultural and forestry industries, fighting for common-sense land use laws and protecting rural small businesses from excessive regulations.

"I have appreciated worked alongside the Oregon Cattlemen's Association and other groups advocating our way of life in rural Oregon throughout my time in the State Senate," said Ferrioli. "I am proud to have the support of the Cattlemen in my campaign for re-election and pledge to continue fighting for rural Oregon values in Salem."

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