

# Local

## 5J math curriculum set

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The Baker District 5J School Board held its regular meeting on Thursday, June 2, 2016, 6 p.m., in the North Conference Room, of the District Office, at 2090 4th Street, in Baker City, which included, among other items, adoption of the 2016-2017 School District budget.

Present from the Board were Chair Kevin Cassidy, Vice Chair Melissa Irvine, and members Andrew Bryan (at 7:08 p.m. via telephone), Autumn Harell, and Chris Hawkins. Present District staff included Superintendent Mark Witty, Assistant Superintendent Betty Palmer, Chief Financial Officer (CFO)/Business Manager Doug Dalton, and Executive Secretary Norma Nemec.

The meeting was called to order, and Cassidy and the Board led in recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentations were to include the District's Business Partner of the Quarter, the Baker City Police, however, this was postponed until the July meeting, due to an emergency.

The meeting agenda, revised, was approved, with a motion from Irvine, and a second from Harrell, and the minutes from the May 19, 2016 regular meeting, and the May 31, 2016 work session were approved, with a motion from Irvine, and a second from Hawkins. Administrators Reports were provided to the Board.

The budget hearing was opened, and a presentation of the 2016-2017 budget was made by Dalton. He noted that the budget has been approved by the Budget Committee, and it is ready for the Board to adopt. Dalton printed new budget booklets (Fund 550 and Fund 564 were not titled), Witty added the process to the Budget Message, and Cassidy read the addition.

Cassidy introduced incoming ASB (Associated Student Body) President Kara Bennett, who will be

filling graduating senior Bryson Smith's role, and providing the BHS (Baker High School) reports to the Board next year.

Discussions included the K-12 Math adoption, Witty's Superintendent's Report, Palmer's Assistant Superintendent's Report, and Dalton's CFO's Report.

Merrie Hensley, representing the Math Cadre, reported on the K-12 Math adoption process, and how the final decision was made. This included having monthly meetings, attending a Curriculum Caravan, selecting pilot materials, inviting parents and the community to review the materials, and then making the selection. The recommendation to the Board is: Grades K-3 Bridges Curriculum, published by The Math Learning Center; Grades 4-6 Ready Common Core/i-Ready, published by Curriculum Associates; and Grades 7-12 Glencoe Math, published by McGraw-Hill.

Among other details, Witty reported that 80 Leo Adler scholarships were presented during EAGLE CAP graduation, June 3, 2016. He said that OEBB (Oregon Educators Benefit Board) would like to charge \$10.00 a month per person, for anyone wishing to opt out of the District's insurance, which would cost the District \$62,000, and that OSBA (Oregon School Board Association) and COSA (Confederation of Oregon School Administrators) are showing opposition to that proposed fee, while the District waits to see how that scenario turns out.

Palmer said the RTI (Response to Intervention) group met this same day, regarding K-6 grades, and that most grades have shown a consistent growth pattern, with the 6th grade having the best year ever. She noted that not many students have opted out, and the Summer Academy, which will run from July 5, 2016, to August 12, 2016, has 150 students confirmed.

Dalton's report included the detail that the boiler

at BHS is in its final stage of design. He said that abatement, and prep work is already in progress, and the expected delivery date of the boiler is within nine weeks, with October 1, 2016 as the ribbon cutting day.

No participation was noted for the Public Comment segment of the meeting, and the budget hearing was adjourned.

The following were approved, with a motion from Irvine, and a second from Hawkins: certified new hires Trace Richardson, Kindergarten teacher at Brooklyn Primary, and Angela Johnson, BMS (Baker Middle School) Math teacher; and administrative new hire Phil Anderson, Brooklyn Principal. Irvine asked about the process for Brooklyn Principal selection, and the Board discussed that it had received Principal Gwen O'Neal's resignation. Palmer and Nemec met with the Brooklyn teachers, asking them about what qualities in a new administrator they'd like to see, and the interview team used the criteria to make the selection, after interviewing six candidates. Witty said the candidate fits the Board's Guiding Principles.

Resolution 16-10, Approving The Permanent Tax Rate; Resolution 16-11, 2016/2017 Adopting The Budget; Resolution 16-12, Making Appropriations; Resolution 16-13, Establishing Policies For Fund Balance; Resolution 15-14, Additional Revenue Recognition; and Resolution 16-15, PERS Debt (Fund 300), were approved, with a motion from Hawkins, and a second from Harrell.

Per Resolution 16-10, the Permanent Tax Rate is \$4.6051 per \$1,000 of assessed value for operations, for tax year 2016-2017.

Per Resolution 16-11, the budget of \$34,525,889 is adopted for the year 2016-2017. Per Resolution 16-12, the total budget is broken down as: General Fund, \$26,197,566; Special Revenue, \$4,609,368; Capital Projects, \$1,923,000; Debt Service, \$832,000;

Agency and Trust Funds, \$521,055; and All Funds, \$442,900.

Per Resolution 16-13, the following commitments are made, of 2015-2016 ending fund balance, and revenues, for specific uses in 2016-2017: about \$10,000 of the special revenue fund balance with regard to the BHS Athletic Fund 253, for athletic and related activities, through a transfer of general fund resources and other revenues; about \$38,000 of the special revenue fund balance with regard to the Baker Middle School (BMS) Athletic Fund 251, for athletic and related activities, through the same type of transfer; about \$184,000 of state school fund formula revenue, for use by the BHS Athletic Fund 253, through all allocation of state school revenues; about \$61,465 of state school fund formula revenue, for use by the BMS Athletic Fund 251, through the same allocation; and about \$447,000 of the general fund, to be used to cover the potential shortfall in revenue, because the State of Oregon is no longer allowing the accrual of revenue, from one year forward, back to the current year.

Per Resolution 16-14, the additional revenue of \$1,238,411 received from the State School Fund, ESD Flow-Through, and Federal Forest Fees revenues (received in excess), appropriated in the fiscal year 2015-2016 for the following purpose: \$400,000 (5200 Transfers), and \$838,411 (1000 Instruction).

Per Resolution 16-15, the additional amount of \$11,873, received from current year PERS State School Fund set aside revenue, and prior years revenue, be appropriated in the fiscal year 2015-2016, for the following purpose: \$11,873 (5100 Interest Payment).

The K-12 Math adoption was approved as presented earlier, with a motion from Harrell, and a second from Irvine.

## First Friday at the Courthouse



Todd Arriola / The Baker County Press

First Friday regulars John Creighton, Tork Ballard and Wanda Ballard.

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Baker County Commission Chairman Bill Harvey hosted another installment of First Friday with the Commissioner, on Friday, June 3, 2016, 9 a.m., in the Commission Chambers of the Baker County Courthouse, discussing a variety of topics.

Joining Harvey for this monthly, informal conversation were Tork and Wanda Ballard, John Creighton, Chuck Chase, and Bobbie Danser.

Wanda kicked off the meeting, discussing issues with agency-to-agency coordination, always a heated topic, between the United States Forest Service (USFS), and Baker County. Harvey said he was impressed with the input of Baker County Commissioners Mark Bennett, and Tim Kerns, during the USFS's informational Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision (BMFPR) meeting with all three Commissioners, and other community members, on Thursday, June 2.

The group discussed issues with the USFS's Inventoried Roadless Area designations, noting many roads and areas which should be open, and Danser said she had wished to make some comments during the BMFPR meeting regarding mining plans, but she had difficulty trying to determine precisely how to form some responses about the lack of USFS's claim of its adherence to the 1872 General Mining Act.

Danser voiced her concern that, regarding the standoff involving John Guthrie, Jr., which began on the afternoon of Thursday, June 2, she hadn't received an emergency notification from the County, until early Friday morning, June 3 (the standoff ended around 3:08 a.m.). This emergency notification is a service of the Baker County Consolidated 911 Dispatch Center, termed "Code Red," installed by Emergency Communications Network (or ECN, as displayed by Caller ID), which allows registered users to be informed, via telephone, in the event of an emergency, or for critical community alerts. This includes evacuation notices, bio-terrorism alerts, boil water notices, and missing child reports (see baker911.org, for more information).

Danser's concern was about the timing of the notification, and for public safety, and Harvey responded that he first saw information about the standoff on The Baker County Press's Facebook page on Thursday (he was a spectator at a sporting event at the time, he said), and he regularly shares those posts. He said, while he understands the safety concern, the need to inform the public immediately has to be weighed against the potential that community members may show up at the location of the emergency to spectate, possibly putting them also in danger, if notified early on. Harvey said he would prefer an early notification, which relays the message to avoid the area of the emergency.

Harvey said he attended a meeting recently, regarding the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) initiative, "Planning 2.0," for which he said the BLM is getting "hammered," and he again emphasized the role or agency-to-agency coordination. Chase noted that historically, the Vale District BLM (Don Gonzalez is Vale District Manager) has been the easiest to work with.

This prompted Tork to ask Harvey about his thoughts on the BLM's newly formed division, Security, Protection, and Intelligence (SPI), which would operate independently of the BLM's already existing Department of Law Enforcement and Protection. Harvey told the group he told Gonzalez to keep the SPI away from Baker County, and Tork called the SPI a "Gestapo force." Danser also voiced her concerns about such an organization.

Wanda said she didn't think that Nichols' election to County Commissioner was a "big win," with a difference of less than 40 votes, between Nichols, and candidate Kody Justus, and she said she understood that Nichols doesn't wish to stand up against federal overreach. Harvey said that federal agencies have a duty to obey laws, and he would like to have Nichols state, on the record, which laws Nichols thinks the federal government (and the County) should obey, and which it should ignore.

Tork asked about the County's progress on RS (Revised Statute) 2477 roads, and Harvey said that the County is taking a strong stance against road closures.

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## Sumpter dredge tailings

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Yencopal was asked by the Board to determine associated costs and the process, with the RFP.

During discussion regarding drought concerns (Kerns had asked about a possible Drought Declaration), Yencopal said that, this year, he learned at an Emergency Management conference, there is a more streamlined process which would allow Baker County to avoid having to declare a full drought, before possibly receiving assistance from the Oregon Water Resources Department.

He said the County is up to the D1 stage of the Drought Index (the driest conditions would be D4), in an abnormally dry state. Bennett mentioned that he hasn't seen the County past the D3 stage before (if in the D2 stage for around at least three weeks, Yencopal said that automatically, a declaration would be

implemented).

Harvey asked Yencopal about the County's train derailment emergency response (the recent Union Pacific train derailment in Mosier, involving tankers with oil, and an explosion, was cited, as an example). Yencopal explained that 911 would be contacted, first responders would arrive to assess the scene, automatic notification would be sent to community members via the County's "Code Red" system, and there would be a group effort between law enforcement entities, and fire departments, with possible evacuation implemented.

Harvey wished to emphasize to the public that the County has been preparing for this type of potential scenario for several years, with different agencies, and local plans, which are always being updated.

Bennett added that there are many challenges, and many miles of railroad

track and roadways to consider as a potential threat area.

Harvey said he wishes to see some form of training for local fire departments, for example, to respond in some way to the scenario (hazardous material crews would be dispatched from either Ontario, or Hermiston).

Bennett said it would afford more protection if local responders received training and equipment, in order to at least secure a valve, for example, in the event of a derailment.

The Board also discussed the possibility of offering to provide storage for special foam, used in hazardous material fire-fighting.

The last item discussed was a response to the County's offer to sell its 1/2 mining interest, property identified as Reference #9923, for \$6,181, which includes the sale price of \$6,000, plus back taxes owed in the amount of

\$181, to Whitney Ellison.

Ellison responded on June 2, 2016 (the County sent communication on May 9, 2016, detailing the offer), with questions about whether the zoning would be altered, to recreation, or something other than mining.

Harvey said that the County would not be agreeing to change any zoning at this time, but the County would agree to sell the property, as-is, comments echoed by Bennett.

Bennett said a zoning change would be costly, and would take much staff effort, and the purchaser would be free to pursue that, if desired, after the sale.

Martin said Ellison would need to speak with Baker County Assessor Kerry Savage, and Bennett and Harvey said Ellison would be given Baker County Planning Director Holly Kerns' contact information, as well.