

Local

Sumpter: Department reports

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Sumpter's Tuesday night City Council meeting was well-attended. The Council heard department reports.

Utility manager

Jeff McKinney reported a mainline break in May. The city backhoe would not start, so Carey Clarke brought out his excavator and assisted in the repair. McKinney stated the City has yet to receive a bill.

Total THMs (trihalomethanes), byproducts of disinfection, slightly exceeded MCL (maximum contaminant level) during a recent water test. McKinney explained there is no danger and he is working with OAWU and OHA. Excessive runoff, high turbidity, and large amounts of organic particulate combined to cause the issue. THMs are usually tested annually, but that has been bumped to quarterly. The last test was within normal limits.

Another filter cell has been cleaned and is back online. Cleaning the last filter was delayed due to the main valve used to control flow to that filter breaking. McKinney estimated repair or replacement by the end of the week.

McKinney secured an agreement with High Desert Contractors to supply water for the highway construction project. To date, \$3500 has been received and will go into the water fund.

Fire Department

Jim Sheller reported one fire and one medical call-out during the Flea Market. Also during the Flea Market, the US Forest Service got in touch with Clarke and offered a bunch of wildland fire-fighting equipment. John Young went to look at it and came back with brand new hoses, brass fittings, wildland turnouts, helmets, etc. Training last Tuesday was over wildland fires.

Planning Commission

LeAnne Woolf reported members went to La Grande on May 17th. Paul Daniello and Heidi Williams from Pendleton sat with them and discussed parameters of responsibility. The Commission has also met to review zoning permits, work on the comprehensive plan, compile an emergency kit list, and update the zoning permit application.

The Council approved removal of Dan Patton due to absentee issues.

Flea Market

The Flea Market cleared over \$5,300.

Rella Browne

Browne stood to read a letter in response to a communication received from Councilmember Robert Armbruster. She stated she and her husband joined the volunteer fire department and Sumpter Valley Community Volunteers because they want to do good in the community and help improve it. They do not volunteer in support of or against any councilor.

She said they have attended meetings for years, listening to the fighting among councilors.

Browne said she has read the statements in support of recalling Myers and council members Samantha Rowan and Carey Clarke and does not think

there is sufficient reason, based on what she has personally heard, seen, and experienced, for recall.

She said in response to an allegation of taking a "two-faced stance" that she has personality flaws, but that is certainly not one of them. She stated her husband is one of the most honest people she knows.

She stated she did not support or vote for Melissa Findley as mayor and did vote for her recall because she did not believe Findley was the right person for the job, based on her personal observations.

Browne stated she does support the McKinneys based on the good performance she's seen them exhibit.

She stated the lawsuit is not the way to solve problems and that the money could be much better spent.

Browne said she believes the actions by Armbruster, Finley, and Council President Annie Oakley will be damaging to the community if they succeed. She said, if those plans succeed and the community is improved by them, she will be the first to say she was wrong and give her support.

She concluded, that if she was misinformed to inform her. Armbruster stated he had no comment. Findley stated she did.

Myers explained he was not going to recognize her at that point, as there were other agenda items that needed to be covered, but that he would then open it up for anyone's comments.

Engineer Contract

Myers explained the engineer is unwilling to do a contract until the City settles its recall issues.

Letter from Mike Hobbs
Myers stated a letter was received from Mike Hobbs requesting waiver of the \$150 conditional use permit fee for the Allens. The fee has already been paid. There was discussion on the matter, and Jeff McKinney stated if it was an issue, he'd pay the fee. Clarke stated he'd split the cost.

Findley said that many properties are being utilized for conditional use that have never gotten a permit and that Armbruster and herself were the only ones who paid \$150 for conditional use fee.

Sumpter Pines RV Park

Armbruster stated that on 4/29, he sent letter to all council members relating to a 1/8/08 council meeting decision that had to do with waiving laundry fees for the RV park. The council found an extra charge for the laundry building unnecessary. Owners, Dan and Nan Martin, are looking for reimbursement of \$925.

City Recorder Julie McKinney displayed a payment history and stated that Sumpter Pines RV Park violated the agreement, which was that if they paid for water and sewer all year long, they would not be charged for the laundry building. They stopped paying in September 2010 and resumed the next spring and did the same the next year. Nan Martin stated Toni (Thompson) told them they didn't have to pay during the winter months and so they didn't. She said there were only about two years they didn't pay through the winter.



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The road project on the way to Granite.

Myers stated he would like to get all commercial accounts on meters, and those that don't use as much won't pay as much. Those that use more water will pay a bit more, "but it will be a fair more."

Clarke suggested meeting with the Martins and Thompson. Julie McKinney stated the meeting would have to be announced and open to the public. Findley suggested having Armbruster and Clarke sit down with them and chat, so there would not be a forum or official meeting. Myers asked Clarke and Armbruster to act as a committee to work on the resolution.

Leuenberger Letter

Armbruster stated there is an allegation about theft of water. His attorney produced a letter saying that they are willing to meet to talk through and resolve the issue and he wanted to make sure that was received.

Jeff McKinney stated the letter also threatened lawsuits to employees of the City. He stated ordinance provides the proper procedure for contested water bills: the bill is to be paid, the money held in trust, and the issue discussed.

Myers acknowledged receipt of the letter. Clarke stated the utility manager was correct about the ordinance and that it should be followed. Myers stated, "One of the issues I see is some of this stuff is something that having our attorney's advice on is appropriate. That's the way I see it. We are not attorneys, and it is not our prerogative to act as attorneys." After further discussion, Council assented to consult with City attorney.

Personnel Records

Myers stated this is an issue that cannot legitimately be talked about in an open meeting.

Cell tower

Myers explained the cell tower people want to extend their lease for 30 years for a one time payment of \$10,000 and continue current rent and escalators. The issue was tabled for councilors to do further research.

Sumpter Valley Community Volunteers (SVCV)

SVCV requested permission to do a painting job on the front of City Hall. Jeff McKinney asked if the manlift would cost the city to use and who owned it. Myers stated there would be no cost and that he is 10/13ths owner. McKinney stated Myers and Clarke own the lift and are making it available to the City for free. Council approved the project.

SVCV also proposed preparing an area for a basketball half court at Volunteer Park, if the Road Depart-

ment had extra asphalt from the Granite highway paving project and would be willing to donate it. If asphalt cannot be donated, the group will not further pursue the project.

Licensed Contractors

Armbruster said that Clarke recommended a list of Sumpter-approved contractors be established and that he thought it was a good idea. Timberline Builders, Clarke Construction, and Sackos Excavating are City-approved.

IFA Application

Myers explained that with an engineer not on board, they cannot complete the application and will address this immediately after July 1.

Myers then stated, "I am going to excuse myself, go home with my wife and enjoy our anniversary." He turned the meeting over to Oakley.

Public input

Oakley asked for Council input, then opened the meeting to public comments. Shirley Bender thanked EMTs for their work when her grandmother passed away. There was some discussion on confusion over the address and Sheller explained he got a book with City addresses in the response rig. Kathi Vinson suggested being diligent about remembering north, south, east, or west designations as there are address numbers duplicated on north and south sides of town.

Armbruster stated there have been a lot of accusations going around about Oakley and himself stealing files from the City office. He said since the information is out to the community, it's inflammatory and libelous. He read a letter from the Attorney General in response to Baker County DA. Armbruster stated he assumes this arises from when he delivered an evaluation draft to council in preparation for employee evaluations, to give them an idea of what had happened in the twelve months prior. He said the documents forwarded to council did not come out of the files and were not signed or dated by employees.

Jeff McKinney asked if this was not what the mayor had said not to discuss. Clarke stated the information from Armbruster was distributed to only three council members. Armbruster said it was put in all council members' boxes. Julie McKinney stated it was also given to Bill Harvey. Armbruster responded this is proprietary information and he did not send it to Harvey. He stated employee evaluations are private, but everything else in the files is accessible as public record.

Bookmobile

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According to Library Director Perry Stokes, the bookmobile carries 1,700 books, 60 audiobooks, 200 DVDs and 150 magazines for a total of 2,110 items available for checkout.

Witham said thanks to Superior Towing, they had air and electricity, and were able to safely lock up both the large vehicle and equipment used on it each night.

On Friday afternoon, said Witham, "We finally got to the point that we could steam clean it and Bill Steele, Superior employee, insisted that he steam clean it for us. Back in the shop, Casey Poe and Vanessa Fregoso installed the new upper text to the driver side, reading 'Baker County Library District.' I installed new text to the lower driver side panel, reading 'Info To Go.' The first of our BSU crew arrived, Chris Oldfield and Kelly, and they installed the same text to the passenger side."

On Saturday morning the rest of the BSU crew arrived and the wrap began.

"Vanessa, Chris and Kurt farthest setting up the first panel as they did on all seven panels. We had a bunch of rivets to go over which get tricky and take patience. I would jump in and squeegee those areas with Chris mostly, Pete would get in here and there. Vanessa and Casey followed up behind us heating the vinyl into the rivets and tucking into edges, paying attention to detail for us and finishing up each panel."

Each panel was five feet high by four feet wide, requiring two hands holding the graphic while two people squeegeed.

Steve, who runs the BSU sign shop is also Witham's satellite graphic designer. He was there from Friday afternoon through the installation.

Russ Witham came in and removed rivets holding a handrail and door keeper. "He was our nuts and bolts guy and delivered lunch on Saturday, always worried that we are doing the right thing!" Witham said.

All printed and cut graphics were produced in the Oregon Sign Company shop in Baker City

In the past, Steve designed the image on the library cards and painted the wall of the Sumpter Library.

"We have worked together for a few years—our first big project together with the BSU crew was the painted mural inside Lefty's Tap House; we make a great crew and work well together. I hired Steve to design Lefty's, Charley's and Beloved Tattoos among others and all graphics are produced in house here in my shop. In turn, I have worked over at BSU with the same crew and had a great time helping them with jobs around campus," said Witham.

Now that the bookmobile is out and rolling again, Stokes says he can expect roughly 300 checkouts per month—80% books.

Said Stokes, "The bookmobile logs an average of 1,300 miles per month. The current odometer reading is 221,304."

The current bookmobile, said Stokes, is a 1998 Thomas Built Freightliner, which was purchased in 2002 for base price of \$90,500. He said, "Ordinarily, bookmobiles cost about twice that price but Library Director at the time, Aletha Bonebrake, was able to wrangle this unit at a bargain. It was then customized with interior shelving and exterior graphics for \$16,391."

By way of trivia, the bookmobile is 28'8" long, and has a weight (GVWR) of 25,900 lbs.

The old bookmobile (a 1967 Gerstenslager model) was donated in 2006 to Cameron Parish Library System, Louisiana, to help the community recover from Hurricane Rita losses, said Stokes.

Schedule History:

- The bookmobile has been serving areas of Unity, Oxbow, Medical Springs for as long as staff can remember.
- Huntington and Sumpter also received Bookmobile service for decades up until branch libraries were opened in those communities.
- Bookmobile service to Durkee has been intermittent. In 2008, the Durkee run was suspended due to the high cost of fuel and availability of libraries in Baker City and Huntington. It was re-booted in 2011 due to community interest, but again discontinued in late 2015 due to diminished use.
- Service to Powder River Correctional Facility ended in 2010 due to discontinuation of the reciprocal work crew for library services arrangement. After that cancellation, staff identified service to Senior Care Centers in Baker City as a need and began visits in 2011.

Other info:

With a fairly small collection size, some bookmobile users exhaust the offerings of their interest fairly quickly. Bookmobile staff work hard at keeping the collection regularly refreshed with new items and devote much of their time to fulfillment of special requests.

Checkout periods on the bookmobile are double the regular checkout period, six weeks as compared to the standard three weeks, since the bookmobile is a moving target for returns. This gives users a comfortable margin of error, said Stokes.

Alvin Ward is among the former bookmobile drivers. Stokes said, "He has a thrilling tale of the brakes going out on the 1968 model coming down the Sparta grade. He was able to save himself and the vehicle thanks to his experience with heavy farm equipment."

The bookmobile's current schedule follows:

- Oxbow (1st & 3rd Tue). Two stops: Oxbow, Hells Canyon Inn
- Keating (1st & 3rd Wed). Five stops: Keating School, Ponderosa Store, Medical Springs
- Unity (2nd & 4th Tue). Two Stops: Burnt River School, Hereford
- Baker City Care Centers (2nd & 4th Wed). Four stops: Settler's Park, Meadowbrook, St Alphonsus, Beehive Homes.