

Local

Marijuana businesses may be welcome in Sumpter soon

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Sumpter City Council met August 9, 2016 to hear reports and discuss several items of business. Carey Clarke conducted the meeting with members Samantha Rowan and Robert Armbruster also present.

Bills

Payment of all bills was approved except for an Ed Staub and Sons bill for dust abatement submitted by Stage Stop owner Mike Davidson.

Utility Manager Report

Utility Manager Jeff McKinney was absent. During the meeting, City Recorder Julie McKinney passed out a book of before and after photos taken at the water treatment plant.

Fire Dept. Report

John Young reminded everyone there is to be no burning at all, including in burn barrels or recreational fires in rings. Lightning on Sunday started several fires, one of which Sumpter responded to, assisting the Forest Service by pumping water up to them. Young said the fires started were all pretty small, but the Forest Service is jumping on them right away.

Young passed on thanks from Kurt Clarke to Marlene Bork for again making use of Neal's bulldozer available to the Fire Department.

With the low water situation, a draft point on the river has been reconstructed and the Department is training on drafting.

Planning Report

LeAnne Woolf reported they continue to review applications and work on the Comprehensive Plan and Evacuation Plan.

Dawn Kitzmiller of the County Building Department mentioned that woodstoves and fireplaces are considered mechanical and installing new ones requires permit and inspection.

If they are not permitted and inspected and happen to start a fire, most likely an insurance company won't cover the damages.

Two positions are available on the Planning Department. One of those can be someone who lives outside of city limits.

Mitration Station

Shawn McKay is representing a potential marijuana dispensary to be located in Sumpter.

The recreational dispensary will serve patrons 21 and older during regular business hours.

They will have one full-time on-site manager (Anita Lewis) and one to three employees.

They are looking at the "Tinman Building" as it has a nice storefront and aesthetic features to make a nice business.

McKay said the licensing process is fairly lengthy and the State won't start issuing licenses for recreational retailers until October 1st of this year.

McKay said mitration is the process of consuming cannabis through inhala-



Meghan Andersch / The Baker County Press

Shawn McKay addresses Council and citizens about plans for recreational marijuana store.

tion (specifically related to self-medication). They thought of the business name "Mitration Station" because a railroad theme could help the store fit in with the aesthetics of the town.

Armbruster asked about experience. McKay said he is co-owner of a laboratory in La Grande that does all state-required marijuana-related testing. He has been a medical marijuana patient and grower for almost ten years. He considers himself the "Eastern Oregon expert," providing garden and business consulting services.

Lila Young asked about prices.

McKay stated it varies by vendor but he would say the cost will be between \$8-20 per gram for "flower."

To multiple questions about crime and traffic, McKay replied that residents can expect to see increased traffic.

He said he has been talking to business owners in Huntington and has heard nothing but good feedback, including from the grocery store and café.

Rowan stated they also had a meeting with Huntington and heard only positive comments about the marijuana business. McKinney stated there is no more housing or property for sale in town; Huntington is experiencing a boom.

Clarke stated he does not like marijuana a bit, but after going to the meeting in Huntington and learning that the business has not caused increased crime and all businesses have benefited, he thinks there could be positives for the town.

McKay explained recreational marijuana is taxed at 17% by the State. A portion of that will be re-disbursed to the town. The City of Sumpter could also impose a 3% tax on sales.

Marijuana businesses are regulated by the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC). McKay said this business is regulated more than anything else in

the State, and that maybe transporting nuclear material would be comparable in regards to oversight and regulation.

When asked about not being able to deposit drug money in the banks as marijuana use is still a federal offense, McKay said there are bills in front of the Legislature right now to try and correct that.

John Young asked if there a similar obligation to refuse to sell to someone who is high as there would be for a bartender to refuse to serve someone who is drunk. McKay replied absolutely, and that is part of the OLCC-required training for everyone who works in the industry, from growers to sellers.

Lila Young asked where the product will come from. McKay stated there is a pretty big farm in Huntington, as well as farms in Bend and other parts of the state. The product will be packaged and labeled at the Sumpter store. Oregon guidelines state that any product that leaves the store be in childproof packaging and meet all labeling requirements.

A resolution to allow the town to tax recreational sales at 3% will be going to City voters. John Young clarified if this is voted down, Sumpter will still have the businesses, just won't be able to collect the tax.

Introduction of Marijuana Dispensary Ordinance

Copies of draft ordinance 2016-3 to require city permits for marijuana retailers and medical marijuana dispensaries were made available to attendees.

McKinney explained this is a draft and there will be a future workshop for input.

In response to comments that law enforcement does not respond to concerns, Rowan stated Travis (Ash) will be invited to the workshop.

Resolution 327: Ballot Title 3% Tax on Sales of Marijuana Products
Julie McKinney read

the resolution to submit a ballot title to City voters to impose a three percent tax on the sale of marijuana products by marijuana businesses. Council approved unanimously.

Planning Commission Leave of Absence

Council unanimously approved a written request from Dave Stellman for a leave of absence from the Planning Commission July 30th to October or November.

Possible Franchise Agreement with Oregon Telephone

McKinney explained this is just developing. Oregon Telephone would like to use the cables that are already hanging from a former cable TV service to provide Internet service. Sumpter would receive a franchise fee for this which would go into the general fund. More information is upcoming.

Public Input

Woolf reported that the Sumpter Valley Railroad Starlight Express is running August 13th. The train will depart McEwen around 7 p.m. and get to Sumpter about 7:45. On the return trip to McEwen, riders will be able to observe the Perseid meteor shower.

The train currently has 70 reservations.

Clarke asked about Music in the Meadow. Woolf said she just about has the band line-up squared away. Music in the Meadow will be held September 17th and 18th.

McKinney reported a visit from Arnie, "the county weed guy," and said he is very distraught about the knapweed.

He said natural biocontrols are not working. He will be up in the fall for the herbicide giveaway, and residents need to get a handle on this invader.

John Young announced Sumpter Valley Community Volunteers will be paying for an adaptor to allow Sumpter and Powder River Fire Departments to conduct mandatory annual testing of air pack masks.

for this option at the same locations.

Question about the course you can contact Bill Taylor at 541-403-0900.

Fatal crash in City Limits

On August 4, 2016 at about 11:56 a.m., Oregon State Police (OSP) troopers and emergency personnel responded to the report of a two-vehicle fatal crash at an intersection of A Street and 2nd Street in Baker City.

Preliminary information indicates that a 2002 Dodge Stratus, operated by Yvonne N. Hesseltine, age 59, of Baker City, and passenger, Raisan C. Hesseltine, age 40, of Baker City, was traveling westbound on A Street when the Stratus struck a southbound 2015 Chevy Equinox, operated by Ronald R. Fisher, age 59, of Pendleton, on the driver's side. This resulted with the Equinox rolling over onto its top. Fisher was ejected and fatally injured and lack of safety restraint use or a failed safety restraint may have been a contributing factor.

Fisher was pronounced deceased at the scene by emergency crews and Raisan Hesseltine was transported by ambulance to Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Baker City for minor injuries. Yvonne Hesseltine was not injured in the crash.

The intersection was closed for four hours as the investigation was conducted and the wreckage removed. This is an ongoing investigation and more information will be released as it becomes available.

OSP was assisted by the Baker City Police Department, the Baker City Public Works, the Baker County District Attorney's Office and the Baker City Fire Department.

Vandalism ends the BCPD's prescription drug disposal

Several years ago the police department, as a service to the community, placed a prescription drug drop off box in the lobby of the police department. Its purpose was to provide members of the community a convenient and safe way to dispose of outdated or no longer required prescription medications. Over the years the drop off box has been appropriately used for the purpose it was intended to serve.

Recently there have been multiple instances of person(s) placing inappropriate and in some cases potentially dangerous items in the box. That poses a health and safety risk to those who must periodically empty the contents of the box and destroy the drugs as required by law. As a result of this misuse and the dangers such misuse pose to those who empty the box this service, effective immediately, has been discontinued.

Persons wishing to properly dispose of outdated or no longer needed prescription medications are encouraged to contact their medical provider to learn of alternate means of disposal.

On a slightly different, but perhaps related matter, the police department has recently experienced damage to numerous tires on its patrol vehicles. That damage has been caused by someone placing roofing nails in the parking lot of the police station.

According to a press release from the Baker City Police Department, "It is regrettable that at a time when so many members of this community have expressed an outpouring of support for our police personnel someone would engage in vandalism of this sort."

Both of the actions noted in this press release constitute violations of law. Anyone found to be involved in either will be subject to arrest and prosecution.

The recent expansion of the video surveillance camera system at the police department, which includes night vision capability, will insure that those involved are identified.

Bears might be pests in John Day area

Wildlife managers urge residents in the John Day area to take steps to avoid bear conflicts this fall. Secure garbage and food waste, clean up fallen fruit around trees and don't leave pet food outside.

ODFW expects there could be an increase in bear problems this fall in the wake of the Canyon Creek Fire which burned 110,000 acres last year. Burned areas will produce fewer berries, grasses and other natural food sources which will increase the temptation for bears to eat inappropriate food sources.

"Bears spend fall feeding on berries, grasses and other food sources in order to build up fat stores for winter hibernation," said Ryan Torland, ODFW district wildlife biologist for Grant County. "There are likely to be fewer berries and other foods available this year due to the fire, but it's important bears don't start raiding garbage cans or fruit trees in residential areas as that habituates them to this food source."

"We'd appreciate residents taking steps to avoid any conflicts with bears," he added. "We have already seen a few conflicts this spring and hope to avoid more."

The fire could have short term impacts on the local bear population, as fewer cubs may be born next year or bears could leave the area. But the overall bear population is doing well and should recover.

Hunters' ed classes available

The last hunter education

class for 2016 in Baker City is scheduled to begin August 18th.

Students can register for the class at license outlets or on the ODFW website course fee is \$10 payable at sign up a complete

schedule of the class is available at these sites.

A field day for students that have completed the home study workbook or did the online course will be September 3.

Students can register