

# Local

## Sumpter City Council

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### Planning Commission Report

LeAnne Woolf reported that the Commission met on September 15. They tabled two zoning applications for lack of information and worked on goal seven of the Comprehensive Use Plan. Goal seven has to do with natural hazards, which for Sumpter are snowfall and risk of wildfires.

On October 6, the Commission met and approved one of the tabled applications. Messages had been left with the owner of the

other property. The Commission discussed two new applications for indoor marijuana grows. They asked Council members at the next evening's marijuana ordinance workshop if the grow operations should be included in the ordinance currently under development or put in a separate one.

### Oregon Telephone Franchise Agreement

The Council briefly reviewed a sample franchise agreement from Oregon Telephone. Representative Ken Gross confirmed Oregon Telephone is looking at using the old cable lines running along the power poles to provide Internet service to Sumpter, probably starting next spring. Council agreed they would need the opportunity to read through the franchise agreement and then ask more questions.

### Letter from Kathy Vinson

The Council discussed a letter received from Bookkeeper Kathi Vinson confirming that she would like to retire next June. Clarke stated he guessed the Council should accept her letter, and start the process of looking for a replacement.

### Burn Pile

Clarke said his phone has been "burning up lately" regarding this issue. He would like to open the burn pile on a trial basis for 30 or 60 days. Clarke stated, "It's a burn pile, not a dump," and asked that residents police each other if they see garbage going in there. The pile should be used strictly for yard debris and small limbs. City Recorder Julie McKinney stated that it used to be people would have to come get the key at City

Hall and have their load inspected before dumping it off. She said she would be willing to take that on and asked if it could be set up by Friday.

There was some discussion of a fee. Clarke stated the Fire Department burns the pile for free and it gives them some practice. As long as no more tires or other prohibited items are left, he is good with keeping it free. Sheller stated there are "millions of piles of needles around town right now" and said they like to take care of the burn pile when it's low instead of getting a huge pile. He asked that if the City sees the pile getting too bad, they let him know so he can get a crew together and get it burned down. Sheller stated if the burn pile doesn't get opened, the town will be full of smoke from all the piles in yards

as soon as ODF lifts the burning restrictions.

Catherine Dodgens asked about the building with the antique fire truck being locked up and said someone stole the brass hose nozzles from the truck.

### IFA Application

The application has been waiting for signature of a mayor. Clarke stated he can come in and sign this week.

### Marijuana Business

McKinney printed and distributed Bend's ordinance NS-2257, regarding marijuana businesses operating license, as a reference. There will be a third marijuana ordinance workshop in Sumpter at 6:30 PM on Friday, October 21st.

### Public Input

Woolf announced the Spaghetti Feed Fundraiser will be held Tuesday, October 25th. All funds

raised will go to Sumpter Volunteer Fire Department and Powder River Rural Fire Department.

Sumpter Valley Community Volunteers also has Christmas planning underway. They have discussed possibly moving the tree closer to the railroad depot to allow more participation from older train riders. They also discussed having a children's Christmas program the third weekend in December, if they can find a chair for it.

Dodgens requested the Council review ordinance or resolution for recalled politicians within the City limits. She stated that instead of going through the State, which is expensive, there needs to be a local process.

She also asked for a review of timelines for a recalled person.

# County: Mining dominates First Friday meeting

BY TODD ARRIOLA

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The subject of mining dominated the majority of this month's First Friday with the Commissioner discussion, held on Friday, October 7, 2016, 9 a.m., in the Commission Chambers of the Baker County Courthouse.

Commission Chair Bill Harvey, host to the informal conversation, was joined by John Creighton, Guy Michael, Ed Hardt, Chuck Chase, and Ken Anderson.

Michael said, "We're killed out there, in mining..." speaking about dealing with regulations, delays (including with approving mining Plans of Operations, by the federal government, and with invocation of the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA), lawsuits, etc., and he spoke about the decline in mining operations, in general. "If you have a property right to mine, they can't set that aside; that's exactly what they're doing...The miner has the FIRST right of use of surface resources, for mining purposes...They're violating your right to the surface FIRST..." Michael said, as he talked about

delays of up to ten years in some cases.

Michael introduced the subject, and after asking Harvey how the agency-to-agency coordination discussions (between the County, and members of the U.S. Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management) were progressing in general, he asked Harvey to include the topic of mining in these talks.

Harvey said, "I'm trying."

Both Michael and Chase said they've encountered problems while trying to discuss the issues with Whitman District Ranger Tomac, and Chase said that progress was more attainable with rangers in the past. Harvey said, about the agency-to-agency coordination progress, "The Forest Service (representatives) sat right there (motioning to the north end of the Commission Chambers, ), and after a year and a half, finally admitted, 'Yes, we have to coordinate, and, yes, we will coordinate.' That was huge..."

Anderson said, "It gets me that the 9th Circuit Court can make a ruling that is against what the U.S. Supreme Court has

previously decided," as the group discussed issues with Oregon Senate Bill (SB) 838, which, among other details, includes the following: a moratorium on suction dredging and other forms of motorized mining, on certain Oregon streams, from January 2, 2016, through January 2, 2021; a cap of 850 authorizations annually, from 2014, through 2016; and new operating restrictions, including a 500-foot distance between equipment, operating hours between 9 a.m., and 5 p.m., and a prohibition against unattended equipment in the waterway.

Harvey said, "But, you understand, that the 9th Circuit Court's rulings have been overturned more than any other court..."

Michael spoke about the benefits of logging, and how it helps with forest management, but he spoke about the issues with supply, and Hardt mentioned the closing of the Tri-Post Forest Products mill, located in Orofino, Idaho, last week, putting 40 people out of work.

Hardt cited as the cause, litigation initiated by Friends of the Clearwater, and Idaho Rivers United,

against the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), which halted a transaction between Tri-Post and the USFS, for between 3 and 4 million board feet of cedar, following the Johnson Bar Fire.

Hardt said, "The saw mill was sawing up that timber that burnt...The enviros (environmentalists) file a lawsuit, and all 40 of them are gone; they're not working...This is not right."

Harvey said he told staff of the USFS that if this were to happen with a potential Baker County logging transaction, he would want to be involved with assisting the defense (he said the USFS said that a lawsuit has not yet been filed by any environmentalist group, to attempt to block a transaction).

Michael and Harvey launched into a debate about the potential for a Sumpter Dredge tailings project.

Michael voiced concern that exploration of the possibility includes a limited area in acreage, in order to determine viability of the project, and he said that disturbance in the area would be limited, and Harvey said that for now, the idea is to "get a foot in the door," and to possibly

expand the scope of the project later, with more evidence of viability.

Creighton commented about the issues with the educational system, and about the focus on colleges, and he emphasized that attention needs to be paid to students early on, since they may be behind, and not ready for college, by the time they get there. "We need to be working as hard on our grade school, and high school, or else, the colleges aren't going to do them much good, if they can't get in..." he said.

Harvey said that he's attempting to deal with the issues of the County losing tax revenue, and he'd also like to see the County/Blue Mountain Community College situation resolved.

Harvey mentioned the upcoming (at the time) Rural Organizing Project's (ROP) presentation at the Baker County Library last Saturday, regarding topics in the ROP/Political Research Associates co-published, 100-plus page book, "Up In Arms: A Guide to Oregon's Patriot Movement," which Harvey calls a "manifesto." The presentation was part of ROP's statewide tour, "Beyond Burns: the Grow-

ing Patriot Movement in Oregon."

Harvey had other previously planned commitments during the time of the presentation, but he said that he saw it as an obvious opportunity for members of ROP to continue to attack him, rather than to attempt to have a civil discussion about any perceived issues.

Harvey was named personally throughout the book, as part of the so-called "Patriot Movement," and he was criticized for his views, actions, and perceived views and actions. "He's (PRA Associate Fellow Spencer Sunshine, PhD, co-author of the book) written about every conservative group in Oregon, badmouthing everything ... He is attacking me for everything in God's creation, that he can find...They're not trying to accomplish anything, and I don't want to give them more credence to this..."

Anderson said, "You must be doing something right."

Creighton said, "I was going to say, I would be kind of proud of that."

First Friday meetings are held on the first Friday of each month, at 9 a.m. at the Courthouse.

# BMCC again topic with County Commissioners

BY TODD ARRIOLA

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The Baker County Board of Commissioners held a work session on Wednesday, October 12, 9 a.m. in order to address concerns with staff of Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC), the Baker School District 5J, and others, as part of the continuing discussion regarding BMCC funding versus services provided.

Present from the Board were Chair Bill Harvey, Commissioners Mark Bennett and Tim Kerns, and Assistant Heidi Martin.

Attendance also included BMCC President Cam Preus, BMCC Baker County Director Dan Koopman, Baker School District 5J Board Chair Kevin Cassidy, Baker School District 5J Board Vice Chair Andrew Bryan, Baker School District 5J CFO/Business Manager Doug Dalton, Pine Eagle Charter School District Superintendent Cammie DeCastro, former Pine Eagle Charter School District Superintendent Mike

Corley, Burnt River School District Superintendent Lorrie Andrews, BMCC Board of Education Member Bob Savage, former BMCC Associate Vice President Peggy Hudson, Baker City Council Member Dan Lowe, Baker County Commissioner-elect Bruce Nichols, Dotti Miles, and Ed Hardt.

After Harvey called the meeting to order, Preus, BMCC President since July 2013, began a discussion with the Board, regarding BMCC services. As part of the discussion, she provided the Board with copies of a BMCC Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) information sheet, which included details about the BMCC SBDC's Baker City 2015-2016 economic impact numbers. The following statistics were included: 105 clients were counseled; 67 start-ups and 38 existing businesses were counseled; 34 were women-owned, 2 were veteran-owned, and 9 were minority-owned; 121 people attended 12 SBDC training events; 8 new

businesses opened; 17 new jobs were created with the SBDC's help; 3 existing jobs were retained with the SBDC's help; every dollar invested resulted in \$2.53 in federal revenue, and \$2.47 in state revenue; and there was \$155,100 in capital infusion (Savage mentioned later, the BMCC SBDC's involvement in the recent grand opening of the Eagle Cap Grill, 2916 10th Street). Hudson had provided the Board with documents and information during the Wednesday, September 21, 2016 regular session, regarding claims about issues with BMCC funding, versus services provided to Baker County (as reported in the September 23, 2016 issue, and September 30, 2016 issues of *The Baker County Press*).

Preus and others had been invited by the Board to discuss the matter during this Wednesday's work session.

Preus explained that, initially, the voters of Baker County (as well as other associated counties) had chosen to become part

of the BMCC District (in 2000, after an Advisory Board handled the matter), party because the BMCC District tax rate was \$.66 per \$1,000, whereas, the Treasure Valley Community College (TVCC) District rate was \$1.22 per \$1,000, but she believes that it wasn't just purely an economic factor, but that BMCC services, in general, were factored in.

Harvey asked what Preus had envisioned, with the BMCC program, and Preus said that, across the state, the economy is growing, and enrollment increases can be seen with that growth, but that community colleges are "cyclical," for example, declining numbers during the recession of 2008. She said Baker County did see an increase in enrollment once the economy recovered, 10 to 12%, which has leveled off now. Koopman said that, at the start of the fall term, September 26, the student head count was 142, and right now, it sits at about 126, in Baker County (physically at the BMCC Baker City Center).

Preus spoke about what services the Baker City BMCC Center provides, including adult basic skills (literary college skills preparation), GEDs, and lower division transfers. Services also include non-credit programs, to gain work experience with a local employer, for example.

Harvey asked about any intention to compete with the Baker Technical Institute (BTI), and its career and technical programs, and Preus said that BMCC doesn't want to compete with BTI, but rather, to be complementary. She added later that she would not expect to have a facility built that BTI already has.

Bennett asked about the statistics for the percentage of students who are pursuing different educational paths, and Koopman said that roughly 75% are taking lower division transfer courses, including general education courses, and that a large percentage of those are headed into nursing professions. He said that they are choosing to remain here to seek

that education, because the AAOT (Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer) is more streamlined, and a better path, once further education is pursued elsewhere.

Harvey asked about the graduation success rate, and Preus said that the three-year rate, for full-time students (the unit of measurement) at BMMCC is 93.4%, a very high number, she added. Harvey asked about plans to increase enrollment numbers, and Preus provided some details. She said a Baker County survey on the subject revealed, among other things, that the majority of respondents gave BMCC a positive rating; 51% said they, or someone in their family had taken a course, or courses, at BMCC; they saw a benefit in partnerships between BMCC and local employers; they indicated a desire to have more career and technical training available; and not all respondents were aware of where the BMCC Center is located (3275 Baker Street).

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