

# Local

## City: Fire prevention poster winners announced, Harvey expresses concern over 911 contract

### • DEQ WASTEWATER FINE AND GOLF COURSE OPERATIONS DISCUSSED,

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Tuesday's first monthly regular City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Mosier right on time at 7 p.m.

Councilor Downing Lead a very full house in the pledge of allegiance and invocation.

Downing said, "Tonight, with it being Fire Prevention week, I'd like to take a moment of silence to honor our fallen soldiers, fallen police officers, firefighters, EMS staff all emergency personnel."

Julie Smith, City Recorder, called roll, all members of council were present.

Council immediately turned to the agenda.

### Consent Agenda (Council Meeting Minutes from September 27, 2016 Big Deal Grant HFT2 LLC – Short Term Gallery Baker Elks Lodge Social Gaming Application)

Mayor Moiser asked if there were any additions or corrections to the agenda. With none voiced Councilor Downing moved to approve with a second by Councilor Lowe.

A unanimous vote was cast.

### Citizen's Participation

Mary Miller from the Public Arts Commission came forward to update Council on the Art on Loan Program.

She advised that the first project had been completed Thursday, October 6 with the installation of an interactive steel sculpture created by Don Herman that had been placed in Central Park.

Miller advised Council, "Within 24 hours it was vandalized."

Miller stated she called Herman with the news and, "He was positively gleeful about it."

Saying he was delighted to know where the weaknesses were and immediately began formulating a plan to repair and enhance the sculpture.

Repairs were made and Miller indicated she has since seen many interacting with the sculpture including a group of preschool children just that morning.

Miller added that the Public Arts Commission does feel that this venture has been successful and would continue to update Council of future endeavors.

### Fire Prevention Week Proclamation

Mayor Moiser read a proclamation declaring October 9th through October 15th Fire Prevention week. The proclamation stated that The City of Baker City is committed to ensuring the safety and security of all those living in and visiting Baker City.

According to the proclamation fire safety is a serious concern both locally and nationally.

Homes are where people are at greatest risk from fire. 369,500 home fires were responded to across the U.S. in 2014 accord-

ing to the National Fire Protection Association resulting in 2,745 deaths. It is estimated that in 1/5th of homes with smoke alarms, those alarms are not working.

Three out of five home fires that involve deaths result from fires in properties without smoke alarms. Having working smoke alarms cuts the risk of dying in a house fire in half.

The theme for this year's Fire Prevention Week is 'Don't wait, check the date' this campaign is to prompt replacement of smoke alarms every ten years. "I urge all of the people in Baker City to find out how old the smoke alarms in their homes are and to replace them if they are more than 10 years old. And to participate in the Public Safety activities and efforts of Baker City's Fire and Emergency Services." She then signed the proclamation and stated light heartedly "I'm going home and check to see if my fire alarms are more than 10 years old."

Chief Mark John addressed Council briefly advising that the date of manufacture of alarms can be found on the back of alarms.

John told Council, "The Baker City Fire Department has taken a very active role in our smoke alarm program, in conjunction with our State Fire Marshall office."

According to John, Baker County Fire has installed 400 smoke alarms, and they are currently working with some local businesses seeking contributions to purchase another 100 smoke alarms to make available free of charge to the citizens of Baker City. The goal for John is to reach the 500 mark.

John said, "I think you'd be proud to know that Baker City is one of only nine fire departments in the entire State of Oregon that has installed over 300 alarms."

Gary Timm, who manages the fire division of the Baker County Emergency Management department, joined John in addressing Council.

He told Council that he chaired Baker County's interagency fire prevention team consisting of federal, state and local agencies across Baker County.

He advised that they do a lot of outreach in the community, in the spring they gear information toward wildland fires and in the fall home fire safety is addressed.

Timm said, "The Fire Prevention team decided to do a poster contest to help promote National Fire Prevention Week, which is in recognition of the great Chicago Fires of 1871 which left hundreds of thousands of people homeless.

"We've come a long way in fire prevention and smoke alarms.

"We had over 100 students county wide participate in the poster contest, we had a lot of great posters to go through.

"The review committee was made up of federal, state and local fire agencies that found it very difficult to choose but we do have three winners from grades



Chief John with, L-R, Lilly Anna Wilson, Keegan Slobig and Miriam Ocampo.

Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

4-6 and uniquely enough all were from a single school, South Baker. We are honored to have not only those students here but lots of friends and family too."

Posters were designed to help promote National Fire Prevention Week.

Timm and John called the winners forward to present them with awards.

The winners were Lilly Anna Wilson, 4th grade. Keegan Slobig, 5th grade and Miriam Ocampo, 6th grade. Each received a gift certificate to Papa Murphy's and will ride on the Baker City Fire Department Fire Truck during the annual Twilight Christmas Parade in December.

The winners were then individually congratulated by each Council member.

### Authorizing Mutual Agreement and Order Negotiations with DEQ

Public Works Director Michelle Owen addressed Council advising that it is in the city's best interest to begin negotiations with DEQ on a mutual agreement and order (MAO).

Council was reminded that the City was issued a notice of violation from October 2015 in which affluent water released exceeded allowable BOD (Biological Oxygen Demand) levels.

The City was again over that level just this past September.

The fine for the October 2015 violation is \$6,800.

The City learned of the second violation at a September meeting in which a discussion was being conducted regarding a reduction of fine in the October 2015 violation.

Owen stressed to Council that what was being requested of them tonight was not approval of any type of agreement it was for approval to begin working on a MAO that would likely be brought before council for approval in roughly 60 days.

The MAO would protect the City from any further potential effluent discharge challenges and protect them from any third party litigation, such as environ-

mental organizations, related to permit violations.

It is clear that upgrades to the City Wastewater system are needed.

Owen advised she is working on a grant to get a feasibility study done on ways to improve our storage, dredging of current ponds, land application uses and just general upgrades to improve the system.

After much discussion, and clarification of what this MOA might do for the City Councilor Lowe moved to approve allowing talks of a MOA with a second by Councilor Joseph.

The Council vote was unanimous to allow those talks to begin.

Owen advised Council that they should see an agreement somewhere within the next 60-day range, the upcoming Holiday season may cause some minor delays, that they will vote on to approve or deny.

Councilor Lowe moved to approve with a second by councilor Joseph. A unanimous vote was cast in favor of beginning negotiations.

Owen indicated those negotiations would begin immediately.

### Golf Course Operations Proposal

City Manager Warner presented a contract signed by Mike Brooks outlining the agreement for Brooks to run the Golf Course.

He advised Council it was a straightforward four-year contract and hit a few significant points.

"The lease fee for the golf course is set at \$1 per year," noted Warner.

That is the same amount as in previous agreements. The contract also allows for Brooks, the contractor, to keep 33% net profit the course makes.

The contractor pays all operational cost except for the capital costs for the irrigation system and the equipment belonging to the City.

The City will take care of paying those capital costs, maintaining their assets. The contract allows the contractor to pay himself a

salary of up to 65,000/year. Bill Tiedemann who has run the course for the last three years is retiring.

Tiedemann addressed council briefly and commended the work that was done on this contract. After hearing more about the particulars of the contract Councilor Lowe moved to approve the contract with a second by Councilor Downing.

### 911 Consolidated Dispatch Contract

At the direction of Council, Warner has updated the contract between the City and County for the 911 center, that is eight years old.

Before the Council was the contract Warner had prepared.

The goals for the update were to address budget concerns, the city funds 71% of the center, make changes to the 911 board including increasing the total of the members of the board and increase transparency.

Commissioner Bill Harvey attended the Council meeting and strongly opposed this contract stating, "We didn't get a chance to sit down and discuss this."

Several changes were of grave concern to Harvey including wording that would remove his supervision of the 911 director and place it under a revamped 911 Board.

Harvey said that one of his main concerns is that the 911 center staff are county employees and therefore his responsibility and shouldn't be interfered with.

As the banter back and forth between the Council, City Manager Warner and Commissioner Harvey escalated and Harvey continued to proclaim he was never even given a copy of the contract Councilor Lowe stated, "You did have Mr. Warner's proposal and you X-ed out everything."

After the statement Councilor Lowe moved to approve the changes to the contract with a second by Councilor Abell.

A unanimous vote to approve was cast. It should be noted that with the City's passage the contract with the proposed changes will then need to go to the County Commissioner's for approval.

As Commissioner Harvey left, obviously upset and frustrated it seemed evident that was not likely to happen.

LOC Conference Review Councilor Lowe and City Manager Warner recently attended the League of Oregon Cities Conference, where they heard updates on concerns that had been raised at the recent City Hall Week meetings held throughout the State.

The LOC will be preparing to lobby these concerns such as PERS and transportation issues when the legislature reconvenes early next year.

Lowe stated that from what he heard at the conference many communities are facing the same issues as we are such as water management and budgetary concerns but that he heard several "innovative ideas for solutions."

The LOC also hosts training seminars for newly elected City Councilors and urged any that had not yet been and any newly in coming elected Councilors to attend. He said that his experience was excellent. Councilor Abell agreed stating that the training was "worthwhile."

### City Manager/Director Comments

Warner advised council that he and community development coordinator Robin Nudd were preparing for a meeting with businesses on 10th street in the coming days.

He mentioned a banquet being held on Saturday night for Crossroads Art Center and also said that he was going to be talking with the food co-op about their interest in securing grants to complete some upgrades they were in need of.

With no Council comments being heard, the meeting was adjourned.