

Local

BCPD: Body cameras

Once an officer returns, the camera is docked, and all of the videos are automatically downloaded to the server. Organizing and marking the videos (as evidence or not, for example) by the officer is made easier, with the new system.

Chastain indicated that each camera (there are 18 in the server-connected Dock and Go charging station, which stores every video to a server in a secured location) is labeled with an identification (ID) number, matched to a specific officer. When an officer logs in to access a video (a Sergeant can log in to view a team's group of videos, however, he said), a record is made of the date, the time, and the ID number. To log in, an officer would use the local network at the department, and camera-associated software, called DEMS (Digital Evidence Management System).

He said that last year, new legislation was passed that requires the blurring of faces (and other personally identifiable information) in video whenever a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) public request is made, and that the only portion of a video released would be the contact between the officer and the person requesting the record. Chastain said that

the only person who will be allowed to redact the video portions not released is Administrative Assistant Phoebe Wachtel, using Silicon Valley-based MotionDSP's Ikena Spotlight video and audio redaction software. He also said that Evidence Technician Lynn Magnuson will handle any deletions of video stored and organized as evidence (when no longer needed), and officers will not receive this same permission at any point.

The delay in having the system fully operational is the lack of complete installation of the DEMS software, Chastain said. Reveal can access the system remotely in order to finish that, but Sergeant Mike Regan, who is more knowledgeable in the area of information technology, needs to be present, and the Department is currently short-handed, Chastain said. (Regan would need to be available during shifts, without the added cost of overtime).

Once the software is completely installed, a Reveal representative will be present, to provide the department with training on the system, after which Chastain can issue the cameras to officers (possibly around mid-December, he said).

Funding was available, because instead of ask-

ing for a patrol car (which would have been more costly, and that purchase wasn't necessary this year), this system was requested, Chastain and Police Chief Wyn Lohner said. Chastain said that the purchase was made in July, the beginning of the 2016-2017 fiscal year, and the cameras arrived around August or September. The Dock and Go charging station arrived last week.

In speaking about the inspiration for the move to acquire the cameras, Chastain said (noting that this is his personal opinion only), "I honestly believe that it's not going to be too long before every agency in the U.S. is going to be required to wear these. So, I think we're getting ahead of the curve a little bit, and getting ahead of that rush, and we're saying, 'Hey, look, we're going to be proactive about this.' It's the future of law enforcement..." He said that it's a type of system that's proven to reduce the number of complaints, and the use of force. Chastain noted that the department hasn't seen many complaints in general.

Chastain said that the Department body camera video recording policy had to be totally rewritten because of the new legislation. The legislation required almost every incident or interview to be

recorded, but Chastain said that departmental policy will allow for the protection of rape victims, or child sexual abuse victims, for example, by not requiring video recordings in those cases. The policy will address other issues as well, such as the Stealth Mode operation of the cameras only to be used at night (this mode also conserves battery power, he said). Reveal provided a sample policy, which Chastain said has been very helpful.

Lohner said, "We see that within the next few years it's going to be mandated (the use of body cameras), so that's why we tasked Sergeant Chastain with diving in, researching, finding out what the best one was out there, and finding out what the best way was to go about the program ... We wanted to test it out, and to see what was the best out there, for our use ... This is the only fully articulating camera out there, and we're going to capture more than most people will ... We just wanted to make sure that, if we did it, we did it right, and I think we have a good product (noting every system has limitations) ... Reducing complaints, and other things—that's just a statistical fact, at this point... There's nothing negative about it..."

Digital speed signs active



Submitted Photo.

Legal speed limits will adjust to road conditions and show on these new digital signs.

Digital speed limit signs mounted over a thirty-mile stretch of Interstate 84 between Baker City and La Grande have replaced the standard speed signs in that area.

The new signs will use traffic, road, weather and visibility sensors to lower the legal speed limit when ice, snow, fog or a wreck ahead requires everyone to slow down. Along with identifying the current legal speed limit, the digital displays can also show the reason for a reduced speed, such as "ice" or "low visibility."

The new variable speed limit signs were installed this summer and have displayed the current freeway speed limits for about two months. The signs are now connected to road sensor and fully functional. Drivers are reminded to watch for and obey these new digital speed signs, which will show the current legal speed limit for the area.

Community Orchestra to hold concert

The Baker Community Orchestra will hold its Fall Concert Friday, November 18 at 7:00 p.m. at the South Baker Intermediate School Gym, 1285 Third ST, Baker City. There is no admission and all are welcome.

The orchestra, under the direction of Kelly Brickman, will perform a mix of classical, popular, movie themes, and Christmas Music. Included are Beethoven's Turkish March, Rosamunde Overture by Franz Schubert, Slavonic Dance #8 by Antonin Dvorak, a medley movie themes from John Williams (think Star Wars!), some creepy classics you might recognize, and of course a nod to the coming Christmas season! Oh, and The Magic Flute Overture from Mozart!

The Baker Community Orchestra is made up of volunteer community members who have a passion for making music. The orchestra is open to any community member who can play a band or orchestra instrument. There is no audition requirement, just come and play!

Holiday music festival ahead

The Annual Holiday Music Festival is coming to Eastern Oregon University with two shows set for 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3-4 in McKenzie Theatre in Loso Hall.

The gala event features more than 200 area performers and holiday music from around the world.

General festival seating admission is \$8 for adults and \$6 for students and senior citizens. Tickets are available at Looking Glass Books downtown and at the EOU Bookstore on campus.

ASH GROVE

Happy Thanksgiving!

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County Commission Work Session: Call center and road obstruction key topics

BY TODD ARRIOLA
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The Baker County Board of Commissioners held a special session on Wednesday, November 9, 2016, 9 a.m., in the Commission Chambers of the Baker County Courthouse.

Two main topics were: a public hearing regarding the abatement of a road obstruction on Sutton Creek Road; and the City/County Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement For Dispatch And Records Keeping Services, a discussion which has ultimately been continued to the next work session, on Wednesday, December 14.

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

Following recitation of the optional Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance, both led by Harvey, he explained that a special session differs from a work session, in that the Board would possibly be making decisions, whereas, work sessions usually just involve discussions regarding agenda items.

Bennett noted an agenda addition, an Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Public Transit Division Agreement No. 31372, which would be discussed as part of Scheduled Business, and the agenda was adopted, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

There were no comments provided during Citizen Participation, and Harvey

noted that there were no previous session minutes to approve.

Baker County District Attorney Matt Shirtcliff and Baker County Road Master Jeff Smith discussed, during a public hearing, the Sutton Creek Road obstruction, fences and gates placed within the right of way, in violation of ORS (Oregon Revised Statutes) 368.256, according to an Order For Abatement Of Road Obstruction, issued by Smith, to property owner Dwight Berglund, on October 24, 2016.

Pursuant to ORS 268.261, according to the document, Smith has ordered Berglund to remove any and all fixtures and personal property located within the right of way of the portion of Sutton Creek Road located in Lot 2 of Section 1, Township 11 South, Range 40 East of the Willamette Meridian, in the County of Baker.

Shirtcliff said the road had been obstructed at different times by two gates, as well as other items, and the road is under the jurisdiction of the County, and should not be obstructed.

Testimony during the hearing was provided by Smith, an employee of the County for 29 1/2 years, 3 1/2 of those as Roadmaster.

Shirtcliff showed Smith a couple of exhibits, which included Berglund's adjacent property, and two gates, one of which spanned a cattle guard the County had installed, in order to partially resolve the issue, Smith said.

Shirtcliff entered other

items into the record, proving ownership by Berglund.

Smith said he had discussed the issue with Berglund at least three different times, beginning approximately April 2016, and on June 9, 2016, Smith sent Berglund a letter.

On October 23, 2016, Shirtcliff had done the same, Shirtcliff said.

Earlier this year, Smith, accompanied by a Sheriff's Deputy, asked Berglund to open the gate spanning the cattle guard, which he did, however, it was closed later.

Shirtcliff said, in addition to this abatement hearing, the Road Master has the power, in an emergency, to remove the obstruction.

Smith said that, in August, after Berglund placed a chain and a padlock on one of the gates, the chain and padlock had been removed by the Road Department, Nolan Perkins having filed a report, citing fire danger, and the need to allow the free flow of traffic.

Shirtcliff said that Berglund (who was not present at this hearing) had received the abatement order, on October 24, 2016, he received notice of the hearing, and he had until November 4, 2016 to remove the gates.

Smith said that, as of November 9, 2016, the gates still had not been removed.

Shirtcliff asked the Board to order Berglund to remove the obstructions within ten days of the date of the hearing, and if they're not removed, the Road Department would do so.

Bennett asked if there had been any response in writing from Berglund, and Shirtcliff said no.

Smith said the County had installed one of the cattle guards in Spring 2016 (there are two, on opposite ends of a 200-foot road span), but that normally is the property owner's responsibility.

Smith said that, with private signs associated with the road span, it gives the public the impression that the road is private.

Shirtcliff said that the two gates are actually sitting on County-maintained, County road, which gives the County the jurisdiction to pursue the matter.

Discussion was closed, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

Order No. 2016-160, Baker County Commissioners Order Of Abatement, was approved, along with the findings of Shirtcliff, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

ODOT Agreement No. 31372 was approved, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

Prior to approval, Harvey explained that the agreement, for grant funding of \$27,000 from ODOT, is for the purpose of installing a total of eight video cameras on County senior citizen and transit buses, to aid with potential liability claims.

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