

# Local

## Meeting held about the Orpheum Mayors Council

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Saturday, January 21, Eastern Oregon Regional Theater invited community members for a meeting about the renovations they are making to the Baker Orpheum Theater.

The meeting welcomed community members to state their opinions, ask questions, and give feedback regarding the new theater.

Building Committee Chair Aletha Bonebrake began the meeting by explaining the background of the theater and the project for reconstructing the Orpheum Theater.

The Orpheum Theater did not exist until between 1915 and 1921 and was used for traveling shows and theater performances. In 1943 a fire destroyed the theater and the property was sold to Western Amusements, who reconstructed the building in 1948 making it a movie theater and named it the Baker Theater.

Bonebrake explained that EORT named it the Baker Orpheum Theater to keep the historical names.

EORT is working to recreate the Baker Orpheum Theater, restoring it to its original purpose.

The theater falls under the Historic Building Code and they are working under this code.

In the building, EORT discovered murals on the walls from the original theater that represented a Greek god. Bonebrake explained that they are going to repaint the murals on panels so they can angle them in different ways for people to view them. The theater was closed in 1956 due to competition from television and the outdoor drive in movie theater.

It then became different establishments and the most recent was Marilyn's



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Laura Prado from PARC Resources.

Music, which moved out of that location a year ago.

Local Baker City man David Burris gave a donation to EORT allowing them to buy the building. Bonebrake explained that they have written grants for some of the demolition and restoration, and to do the feasibility study.

They received \$50,000 from the Leo Alder Committee, \$11,000 from the Oregon Community Foundation, and a \$5,000 Technical Services Grant from the Ford Family Foundation to hire a Capital Campaign Consultant.

EORT hired Laura Prado from PARC Resources to help them with their program and help with the capital campaign. Prado then asked those who attended for their feedback, what they wanted to see from the restoration effort, and any concerns they had.

In regard to the current theater, she asked them what their experiences with the theater were. Some answers were; it is too hard to get up to, it is intimate, and that not many people

know where it is.

Prado continued to ask those attending questions regarding both theaters.

Burris commented, "Every place they've done these theaters, the downtown has benefited because it generates flow into the town at night."

Prado asked those attending about community support and if EORT can expect support for this project.

"I think we've had a hell of a lot of support," explained Burris. "I haven't had one person not say they liked it."

Prado explained that EORT is working on a timeline for the theater. "Ultimately, we'd like to see it done in a few years, and that's doable based on other projects that have happened around the area. Although, there are other projects, for example the Gem Theater Project in Athena Oregon. They started that project in 2005, so it can take a while. It's really, really helpful if you start out with a solid plan and a committed group and

I think that this community has that, not to mention you guys have a really strong history of success. You know the ropes at this point. I think the timeline that we're looking at setting right about now is somewhere in the ballpark of three years but it is going to happen in phases, so it could take a little longer."

"I know people ask 'Are you sure the board can do these types of things?' and I've been in theater work for 50 years and I have to say, out of all the theater companies I've worked with, this board is the most unified board I've ever seen," explained Leanne Hinkle, an EORT board member. "And everyone has a job and a responsibility. So if you're looking for a board who can achieve this, I believe this board is one of the very few I've ever worked with that I know can achieve this project and I know the community will back it when they see things going on."

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They testified that their property, one 20-acre parcel, tax lot 1400, is directly adjacent to tax lots 1600 and 1700, and lot 1600 is the right-of-way onto their property, with their electrical supply running underneath.

They spoke about the history of ownership of their property, which they purchased in 2009, with the understanding that it was then zoned RR-5, and that they didn't envision a mining operation at their doorstep. They said they felt they were initially protected from mining operation noise and visual issues, when they bought the property, and that they need a buffer, between them, and any operation.

Harvey asked for further testimony, and Clark provided some concerns (he said he was not providing testimony in favor of, or in opposition to the application) brought to his attention, by several Sumpter citizens, prior to this session. He said they voiced concerns about the mining hours of operation, and about making certain that reclamation is com-

pleted, since he mentioned that there were some past issues. After rebuttal testimony from Jan, no further testimony was offered, and Bennett, Nichols, and Harvey all agreed that the zoning process needs to be cleared up, including seeking legal advice from County counsel. This matter is scheduled to be continued to the next regular session (two hearings are routine), on Wednesday, February 15, 2017, 9 a.m.

After a short break, a discussion was held with Ash, regarding a Baker County Sheriff's Office purchase request, for two patrol cars. One existing patrol car, according to the request, would be transferred to the Juvenile Department, a Chevrolet Tahoe would be traded to Powder River Motors for roughly \$13,000 (which would offset the cost of replacement vehicles), and two vehicles would be purchased, a 2017 Dodge Pickup 1500 SSV, for \$30,173, and a 2017 Dodge Durango SSV, for \$31,147 (five different bids were received).

Harvey said that he would like to approve the purchase of one of the vehicles (this request didn't include asking for any ad-

ditional funds, since funds were approved and adopted in the 2016-2017 budget), and keep the remainder of the funds for potential Sheriff's Office building projects (he mentioned a training room). After a discussion regarding holding off on the purchase of one of the vehicles, studies about patrol vehicles and mileage, and Nichols's question about whether rebuilding brakes, etc., on existing vehicles is feasible (Ash said law enforcement agencies normally don't do that, but rather, they buy new vehicles, and he expressed concerns about waiting on purchasing a second vehicle), purchase of one of the vehicles was approved, with the remaining funds to be set aside for now, with a motion from Harvey, and a second from Bennett.

Bennett discussed some minor changes, which were necessary, to the job classification of Public Health Director, in order to clear up some confusion, between in and another classification. The staff report was accepted, and the job description and range was modified, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Nichols.

Brundland discussed an NRAC advisory letter, dated January 24, 2017, and provided to the Board, requesting that the Board engage the United States Forest Service (USFS) as a coordinating partner, and bring to the USFS's attention, that the federal government needs to follow its own laws and regulations.

The main issue pointed out is the length of time it takes for Baker County miners to receive a Plan of Operations from the USFS (as one example, Brundland said that a miner had waited eighteen years for a Plan of Operations to be completed). Further discussion included Bennett's comment that one year is unreasonable, let alone eighteen years, which he said is appalling. He recommended sending correspondence on the subject to Congressman Greg Walden, and Sappington added that staff of the White House should receive it, too. This was approved, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Nichols.

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Mike Ybarguen Idaho Power Community Liaison for Oregon, reported that they are watching the water levels in the Snake River very closely to prepare for snow melt and to avoid flooding problems. He also told of the problem that has delayed Idaho Powers license application. It seems that the State of Oregon want them to reintroduce anadromous fish the river above Hells Canyon and the State of Idaho does not. So until they can agree they can't go any farther.

The final item on the agenda was an Emergency Management update by Jason Yencopal the Baker County Emergency Services Manager. Yencopal reported that he is working on an Incident Action Plan for the Eclipse event with a focus on transportation and communication which will be keys to making the event successful rather than to stressful. About the current weather situation, Yencopal stated that he sent out two forms for damage assessment, one focusing on homes and businesses, while the other is for carports, shed, outbuildings, etc.

He would like the initial data from the forms sent back to him by February 1 if at all possible. At this point we may or may not be eligible for FEMA funds and this information will help determine eligibility.

Yencopal explained that right now the snow and ice on roofs are exerting 39 pounds per square foot of snow. He is now trying to work on sandbag needs, total need, distribution and costs all have to be figured out. He also mentioned that it is very important to keep roof vents and gas meters clear of snow.

Others who attended the meeting were Fred Warner Jr., Baker City Manager, Shelly Cutler, Baker County Chamber and Travis Ash Baker County Sheriff.

The next Mayors Council meeting is scheduled for March 23 at 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in Baker City.

## Raptor rescued



Submitted Photo

Maverick the hawk became the first member of OSP's "Raptor Unit" this week.

Trooper Schuette, Baker City Office, received a report of an injured raptor at the local truck stop this week.

A truck driver found the bird laying on the ice in front of his truck frozen to the ground. He gently picked it up and took it into the truck stop, where he placed it in a box with towels.

Once Trooper Schuette arrived, he took possession of the hawk, which he named Maverick. Unfortunately, due to it being late at night no one was able to assist him until the morning. So Trooper Schuette secured the box closed, tucked the box away in a quiet location, and monitored it throughout the night in the Patrol Office.

The next morning the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife was contacted and took the bird to a local rehabilitation center. It looks like Maverick is set to make a full recovery and has been deemed the first member of the Oregon State Police's "Raptor Unit."

## Trailer burns



Submitted Photo

This trailer burned to the ground last week.

At 1:15 a.m. early last Thursday morning Baker City Fire Department personnel respond to a General Alarm fire at the Trails West RV Park, 42534 Cedar Rd. Upon arriving firefighters found a 20-foot long trailer engulfed in flames. The occupant of the trailer said she awoke to flames and escaped outside into the night air. Firefighters deployed a hose line from the fire engine and extinguished what was left of the trailer.

The occupant suffered minor injuries and was treated and released at the scene by paramedics. Baker Rural Fire Department arrived and assisted with extinguishment and overhaul. The Red Cross was notified for lodging assistance for the occupant and eventually the scene was released to Baker Rural Fire Department because it was their jurisdiction.