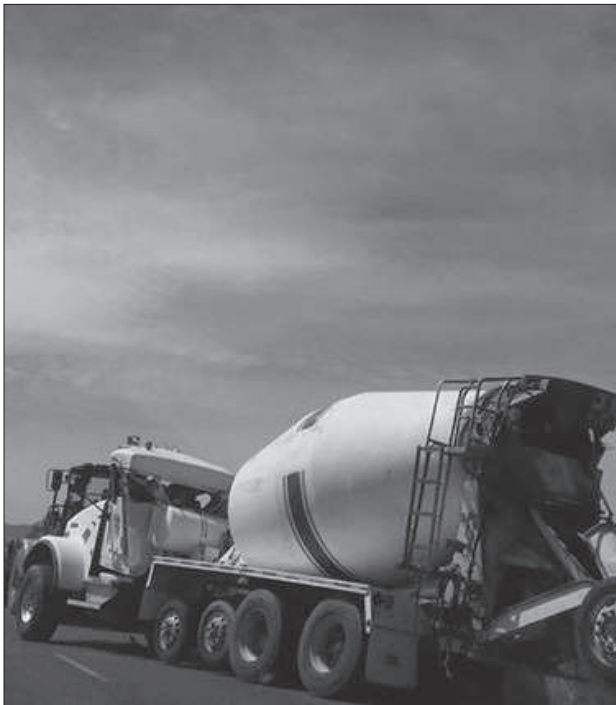


Local

Cement truck rolls near airport



Photos courtesy of Jim Howerton

On Wednesday, June 14, a Farwest cement truck rolled onto its side, slowing traffic near the Baker Airport. The truck flipped onto the driver's side before being eventually righted again (photo at right) that same morning with minor damage.

Non-specified gender choice coming to DMV

• CHANGE TO BEGIN JULY 3

Beginning in July, Oregon residents will have the option to mark their sex as "not specified" on their application for a driver license, instruction permit or identification card.

Under a new administrative rule approved June 15 by the Oregon Transportation Commission, card holders who do not wish to identify as either male or female will have a third option when they obtain, renew or replace their license, instruction permit or ID card at Oregon DMV.

An X will appear instead of M or F in Oregon driver records and on the driver license, instruction permit or ID card.

The new rule came about after an Oregon resident's court order authorized a sex change from female to "non-binary."

In order to comply with the order, DMV needed about a year to implement the change. Time was required to study state laws, update computer systems, work with business partners such as law enforcement and courts, and change administrative rules.

If you wish to make a change on your card more than a year before your renewal date, you must pay a replacement fee.

City Council

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Downing stated, "This is a short-term solution. It is not the ideal solution and not something we've taken lightly."

Councilor Thomas added, "This wasn't just a 'Let's see what we can do to make people mad' type of thing here. Lots of folks are upset and I'm in agreement—I don't want to see this at all either."

Joseph moved to have the third reading of the ordinance. Thomas made a second with Council voting unanimously for the second reading by title only.

Warner read aloud by title only and declaring an emergency the Ordinance #3354 establishing a Public Safety Fee. Joseph moved to accept. Nilsson seconded and Council voted to unanimously accept.

A \$3 residential fee and \$5 business fee will be added to City Utility bills beginning July 1, 2017.

Resolution #3787 2017-2018 Fees

Every year City Council must approve the fees that are charged by the City for a variety of different services, permits and applications.

These fees must be set

before the fiscal year budget is adopted by Council. Council first reviewed proposed fees at the April 11, 2017 Council meeting. Since that time additional fee discussions with public comment have taken place during May Budget meetings, May 9th and May 23rd regular Council Meetings, a Special City Council Meeting held June 6th and this June 13th meeting.

Passing resolution #3787 will set the Public Safety Utility Fee passed by Council earlier in the evening, increase water rates and included a new fee that will allow for the Baker City Fire Department to bill a \$100 lift fee when dispatched to assisted living facilities to help residents who have fallen but do not need a medical transport or emergency services.

Joseph moved to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Thomas. The Council vote was 6/1 with Andersen opposing. It should be noted that because fees must be approved annually, the public safety fee will be addressed annually, until the sunset clause expires in 2020.

Resolution #3792 Amending 2016-2017 Budget

City Council can amend the budget, by resolution, when unforeseen expenditures are incurred. Finance Director Jeanie Dexter addressed Council explaining that the Pelton wheel generator which produces hydroelectric power that is sold to Idaho Power creating revenue in the general fund had needed repairs to the rectifier unit.

A faulty regulator was replaced under warranty. However, costs incurred for an electrical engineer and some other parts were not covered by the warranty. \$6,000 was needed to be transferred from contingency in the general fund to the Hydro Electric Plant Department.

Dexter also stated that Baker City/County Planning Department had updated the Development Code during the 2016-2017 budget year. In doing so, notices were required to be sent by mail to all applicable households in Baker City.

The cost for those mailings had not been budgeted for. Dexter noted that the City had seen savings in the Community Development department of \$1,850 and suggested that amount be transferred to the Planning Department.

Joseph moved to approve the resolution with a sec-

ond by Councilor McQuisten. Council passed the resolution unanimously.

City Manager/Director Comments

Warner said that he was waiting for the County to pass their budget, which was expected to happen within the next few days, before he would have a final number to plug into the City's 2017-2018 budget that would be before them for approval at the next Council meeting.

He told Council that with the newly formed Baker City Downtown he felt Robin Nudd, Community Development Coordinator, would begin tackling new ideas for completion of Court Plaza.

He told Council he knew that had been of the goals that had been expressed in recent goal setting sessions they had had and he was excited to see what may come of it.

Owen added very simply that the long-anticipated airport project was finally underway.

City Councilor Comments

Andersen voiced concerns over the watershed and stated that there was "a lot of work to do."

Downing then adjourned the meeting.

As everyone prepared to leave, following through with his threat of citizen arrest, Joseph Martin stood and approached Council with purpose. City Police Lt. Dustin Newman stood by. Martin stated loudly and firmly that he was "placing all Councilors under Citizen's Arrest for charges of conspiracy to commit extortion, racketeering and conspiracy to overthrow the constitution of the United States of America."

"You have the right to remain silent, anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to talk to a lawyer and have him present while you are being questioned. If you can't afford to hire a lawyer one will be appointed to represent you at no expense. Do you understand your rights? If not, I'm sure this officer will be happy to explain them to you."

One by one each Councilor left the Council chambers, none being taken into custody.

Lt. Newman then accompanied Mr. Martin as he left the Chambers.

Bentz suffers heart attack

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Rep. Bentz is very appreciative of the visits, texts, emails, and phone calls he has received from family, his friends and colleagues in the Capitol. Rep. Bentz appreciates the thoughtfulness of those who may wish to send cards, flowers, or other well wishes, but in lieu of these items he would suggest donations be made to The Boys and Girls Club of the Western Treasure Valley or the Southeast Oregon Food Bank.

Those addresses are: Boys & Girls Club of the Western Treasure Valley P.O. Box 876, Ontario, OR 97914, and Southeast Oregon Food Bank, 773 S. Oregon St. Ontario, OR 97914.

Library tree to come down

The Baker County Library District is preparing to remove the giant cottonwood tree at the corner of Resort and Campbell Streets due to signs of rot and risk to public safety.

An assessment by the Baker City Tree Board dated June 2, 2017 determined that the main trunk suffers from "severe rot" and that the canopy and other trunks are also rotten. The tree is adjacent to two of the busiest streets in the city, as well as the heavily-used sidewalk and library parking lot, making it a hazard to pedestrians, traffic, and nearby property.

The library's Facilities Specialist Ed Adamson is crafting a work plan in coordination with the city and county public works departments. Other trees on the library property will also be pruned as part of the project. Materials suitable for firewood will be donated to the Northeast Oregon Compassion Center.

The Tree Board has requested removal no later than August 2, in anticipation of the influx of solar eclipse tourists. The library aims to accomplish the work before the end of June.

Library Director Perry Stokes said, "This is one of the grandest old trees on our property and it pains us to have to take it out. But you can hear the hollowness when you kick the trunk, and we hate to imagine what could happen if any of the large limbs or the whole thing fell into Campbell or Resort Street traffic. We greatly appreciate the assistance from the City and County with this project."

Roads closed for bike event

Expect full closures on US30 between Chico Road and Pocahontas Road/Hughes Lane and US30/OR7 (Main St) between Church St and Auburn Avenue soon.

On Saturday, June 24, 2017, the following highways in the Baker City area will be closed to facilitate two bicycle events:

- US30 between Chico St and Pocahontas Rd / Hughes Ln, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 12 noon.
- US30/OR7 (Main St) between Church St and Auburn Ave, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Detour Route Information:

During these closures there will be signed local detours in place. Motor Carriers need to provide this information to their drivers, by copy of this letter or other means, to assure their awareness of the restriction.

NOW IS THE TIME Healthcare for Everybody.

The newly released film, "Now is the time: Healthcare for Everybody" will be screened at the Baker County Library in Baker City, June 28 at 6:30 PM.

Residents of Eastern Oregon are concerned about health insurance availability, rising premiums, pre-existing conditions, and the many proposed changes to the current health insurance system.

Join your friends and neighbors in viewing this documentary to better understand America's current health care system and to learn more about other options and possibilities.

Baker Library Meeting Room, June 28, 6:30 PM, FREE