

Opinion / Local

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

Nilsson should resign

To the Editor:
First let me state quite clearly that my comments reflect my opinion and not necessarily that of any agency, entity, or organization to which I belong or am affiliated with. I have read the letter (August 18th issue) from reader Kevin Luckini regarding Baker City Council member Adam Nilsson and I agree with Mr. Luckini. Mr. Nilsson either needs to resign from the city council immediately or a recall effort must be initiated. I understand that under our system of law Mr. Nilsson is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. I am rather confident that day will come.

My call for Nilsson's resignation or recall is based upon his social media posts as well as his post arrest public comments, not his alleged criminal behavior. Neither represent the perspective or attitude of one who holds public office. Clearly Nilsson believes he is exempt from the laws which apply to others and that he is above the requirement of accountability that is his not just because he is a citizen but particularly because he is an elected official. The alleged criminal behavior aside, are his social media postings and comments following his arrest consistent with the Oath of Office he took when sworn in as a City Council member? More important, are those postings and comments consistent with the expectations which the citizens he represents have every right to hold? In both cases I think not.

Do the right and honorable thing Mr. Nilsson and resign from the City Council immediately. If not, expect to be recalled.

Jerry Boyd
Baker City

B2H line needs stopped

To the Editor:
I attended the meeting held by Baker County Commissioners last week. I appreciated the way our county commissioners are standing up for the citizens regarding

the proposed Boardman to Hemingway transmission line.

They have made it clear that they do not support the building of the transmission line and have passed a resolution stating that if Idaho Power uses the power of eminent domain to force landowners to allow the line, the county will sign on as "Friends of the Court" in support of landowners who take legal action against Idaho Power. They have also stated that they will help any landowner who wants them to help with negotiating with Idaho Power to get fair payment if the line goes through their land.

It was encouraging to find that the transmission line is not a "Done Deal" and there are people working to stop the line from being built. I was surprised to hear that Bonneville Power has not agreed to pay part of the costs of building the line. They only committed to contribute to the assessment.

I am concerned to hear that Idaho Power is already trying to get landowners to agree to payments for the line going through their land. There are laws regarding the amount that owners of farm and forest lands should be paid that make it wise for people to either hire an attorney or work with the county if a decision is made to allow the transmission line to be built. There are attorneys who are specializing in helping people get reasonable compensation.

Please be aware that if you do not comment once the Oregon Department of Energy publishes their "Draft Proposed Order" you will give up your rights to fight against the line. I encourage citizens to become informed and involved in fighting the Boardman to Hemingway transmission line. Our citizens, wildlife, and resources will be negatively impacted if this for profit company is allowed to build this transmission line at our expense.

Jo Marlette
Baker City

Grant awarded for dog park

PetSafe® announced today that 25 cities across the country will receive funds for new off-leash dog park construction and existing park maintenance and upgrades as grant recipients of its 2017 PetSafe® Bark for Your Park™ campaign. Since the launch of its nationwide Bark for Your Park program in 2011, PetSafe has been working to create more off-leash dog parks around the country that bring like-minded members of the community together and provide a place for dogs to receive exercise and socialization.

"The goal of Bark for Your Park has always been to help communities become better places to live for people and their pets," said Willie Wallace, CEO of Radio Systems® Corporation, parent company of PetSafe. "Finding a pet-friendly community is more important than ever. Dog parks are the second must-have amenity people search for when looking for a new city to call home. Plus, proper exercise and socialization reduces behavior issues, which keeps dogs out of local shelters and rescues."

To be considered for a

grant, communities were asked to provide documentation about the park and authorization from civic leaders. PetSafe received a total of 215 applications in 2017, surpassing all other years of the program.

After a review of all applications by an internal committee, PetSafe has selected 25 communities across the country as 2017 grant recipients. The following cities will receive funding for dog park projects or commercial-grade dog park equipment from UltraSite™, a PlayCore Company:

New Park Awards

- Honolulu, HI
- Kansas City, KS
- Allentown, PA
- Baker City, OR
- Big Stone Gap, VA

Park Maintenance Awards

- Birmingham, AL
- Normal, OK
- Paducah, KY
- Bowie, MD
- Moab, UT
- Florence, AZ
- Colorado Springs, CO
- Truth & Consequences, NM
- Brookhaven, NY
- University Place, WA

Park Upgrade Awards

- Columbia, MO
- Beatrice, NE

- Eastlake, OH
- Orange, CA
- Encinitas, CA
- Jacksonville, FL
- Shorewood, IL
- Bayonne, NJ
- Huntington, WV
- Columbus, IN

With the addition of 14 states added to the program with this year's grant recipients, PetSafe has helped fund 64 off-leash dog parks in 40 states since 2011.

The application period for the 2018 Bark for Your Park grant-giving program will open again in the spring of 2018. Communities can learn more about the program and sign up to receive email notifications with important program announcements and deadline reminders at www.petsafe.com/barkforyourpark.

PetSafe® is an industry leader in the development of innovative pet behavioral, containment and lifestyle product solutions. PetSafe is owned by Radio Systems® Corporation and headquartered in Knoxville, Tenn. For more information, please visit www.petsafe.com or connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.

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5J awards summer staff

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Mosier explained that they are independent from the School District and raise funds locally to support projects in the 5J School District classrooms.

They raised funds through a fundraiser last spring and now have funds to give to teachers through grants to be used within their classrooms.

For their updates, they have had a lot of changes. Irvine will be leaving the BVEF as the treasurer, and that is a position they need to fill.

They have another vacancy on the Board they will need to fill.

They had voted on three members to join them and their bylaws explain that the foundation will appoint members and they will bring them to the School Board.

Mosier explained that applications for their grants are due on September 1st and the Board will decide on the applications September 14th and hope to announce their decisions by October 1st.

They will send out emails to principals who will send it to teachers to fill out.

Superintendent Mark Witty was attending the OASE Executive Board Retreat August 17th and 18th. In his written board report, he explained that they were determining the priorities for the Confederation of School Administrators for the 2017-18 school year.

He gave an update on

the Long Range Facility Planning Committee's objectives in the next few months, stating. He explained that their "staff Site Team, two to five members from each educational facility, will meet August 29 to review data gathered from all staff as to the areas of concern within their location. We will review the compilation of data and discuss the key aspects that will be presented to the LRFPC on September 5."

Witty also explained in his written report that they anticipate three to five more meetings with the LRFPC prior to reporting recommendations from the LRFPC to the Board of Directors.

Witty discussed "Our Human Resource department is processing multiple new hires for Baker Technical Institute, Baker Charter Schools and Baker K-12 School District to assure that all State, Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) and board policies regulations are followed and implemented correctly."

Witty attended a meeting with Salam Noor in Malheur County on August 10. He reported, "SBAC will be shortened for the 2017-18 school year in grades 3-8.

"This current year ODE will be determining which standardized test will be utilized in the 2018-19 school year for 11th graders. It is likely that either the ACT or SAT will be chosen. Measure 98 dollars will be available this year without a detailed plan

submitted to the Oregon Department of Education. This spring we will be required to produce a four-year plan that focuses on establishing or expanding college-level coursework, establishing or expanding Career and Technical offerings, and developing programs that increase graduation rates for all students."

Witty also explained that they are currently planning for Friday Academy for students K-12 and they have hired Angela Lattin as the Academy Facilitator, who will work with district staff in organizing programming for 100 to 140 K-6 students.

Palmer explained that there are 19 to 20 first and second year teachers in the district now.

She has asked retired teachers to return to work with and support the first and second year teachers.

She also had her annual substitute teacher training that week and will have four more in the next three weeks.

She explained that bus drivers also receive annual training.

Palmer announced that Dr. Julie Esparza-Brown, an Associate Professor in the Special Education Department at Portland State University, will be coming to Baker to give a presentation on September 6th and 7th.

Her presentation will be about applying equitable identification processes and program considerations for English Language Development (ELD) students



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Published weekly every Friday.
Subscription rates per year are \$29.95 all areas, e-mail delivery. \$39.95 print issue, home delivery, Baker City city limits only. \$49.95 print issue, mail delivery, outside Baker City city limits only.
Payment in advance.

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