

# Opinion / Local

## Sumpter City Council

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This is an emergency vehicle and is not set up to water streets.

Clarke thanked Young for continuing work on the BFA grant, thanked all volunteers and donors for the Labor Day hotdog stand, and thanked John Helgesen for his donation of \$500 toward purchase of the water tender.

### Utility Manager Report

Bookkeeper LeAnne Woolf read Utility Manager Jeff McKinney's report. Water continues to flow at about a rate of 100 gallons per minute, which is sufficient to meet the City's needs. Most citizens have followed use schedules. This contributes to maintaining reserve levels in case of fire.

There were four new service installations this month with several more scheduled. The backhoe was repaired and seems to be working well enough.

McKinney expressed thanks to all citizens who volunteer, especially the mayor, city councilors, fire department, and first responders.

### Planning Report

John Young reported the last meeting started with a public hearing on Bob Hunt's request to vacate New Street. The Commission heard testimony and reviewed received letters. At 6:30, they opened the regular meeting and discussed the vacation. The Commission is recommending against it due to questions on whether or not it could cut off services to people. In addition, Leland Myers stated it's required there be a fire truck turn-around there. That would take almost enough room that the street may as well be put completely through.

One person applied for a permit for a KIT home. The application was approved. Woolf commented that the application was conditionally approved, but on closer inspection, it was found that the house was drawn on the property line.

Young also commented that the Sumpter Volunteers Labor Day hot dog stand received about \$830 in donations toward the purchase of the water tender.

### New Street Vacation Determination

Mayor Cary Clarke stated that vacations need to be carefully considered because at some point in the future, the City may need them for accesses for utilities and such. Woolf stated that if this vacation is done, two pieces of property will have no access because the alley behind those pieces was previously vacated. Council voted unanimously to deny the vacation.

### Water Rate Increase

Clarke asked the last time business water rates were raised. The last raise took effect August 1, 2013. Woolf reported that she went from 1995 when rates were first established. If the rate had been raised at 3% per year, restaurants at \$36.50 are paying at what would be the 2004 rate, other businesses at \$28.50 are paying the 2006 rate, and residences at \$27 are at the 2014 rate. She said catching the businesses up all at once would be

a terrible shock. She recommended a raise of \$6, which will bring them to the 2009 rate. She is working out where the City will need to be for paying off the loan DEQ required they get from IFA and is looking at how sewer rates will affect the overall picture.

Woolf said the water ordinance desperately needs to be updated. It already requires that there be a deposit for every water service request. This has never been collected. Clarke clarified that everyone signs a water-user's agreement and pays \$300. Woolf stated that payment is for a turn-on fee and inspections. The deposit of \$150 would be credited to the user's account after a year of no delinquencies. In the case of delinquency, the City could use it while negotiating with the user or arranging to turn off the water. An application-processing fee would go to pay staff for doing searches and processing paperwork. Baker City charges \$30 for this.

Clarke motioned to table the issue, but meet soon to review it and make a decision. Motion passed unanimously. Council set up a Special Meeting for September 18th at 8:30 PM to discuss and vote on this issue.

### USDA Questionnaire

Woolf reported meeting with LaDonn McElligott today because Sumpter doesn't have mandatory water hookup. McElligott suggested addressing this in the ordinance review. Because Sumpter doesn't have this, the federal government asks for a review on whether or not they are violating anyone's civil rights, like denying service based on race. McElligott requested Council members response to a short survey.

### Wright House

The quit claim deed has been turned in to the county. Sumpter should be hearing them from them soon.

### Flea Markets

Clarke asked Woolf if they will have paperwork on the Flea Markets by the workshop on 9/18. She said she can have this year's done by then. Baker Sanitary's bill for the Labor Day Flea Market has not been received, but that is the only information lacking. Councilman Robert Armbruster expressed his concern that "we continue to have a pity party about losing money on the flea markets" but that they have never had something to look at to see where money is being lost.

### Transient Lodging Tax

Commissioner Bill Harvey requested permission to address Council regarding their decision to pull out of the County TLT pool. The County currently does the work of collecting the funds and maintaining records. Seventy percent of funds go to marketing, including publications and Facebook advertising. Harvey stated if Sumpter pulls out, the County will not be able to provide future advertising for them as they would be using someone else's funds to do so.

In addition, there have been grants made in the past to Music in the Meadow and other events. He asked that Council

reconsider their decision.

Councilwoman Samantha Rowan asked about Sumpter's share of transient lodging taxes, how it's allotted, and where the advertising appears. Harvey responded that the information is available from Timothy Bishop who does a great job spreading out marketing funds countywide.

Armbruster asked why Sumpter decided to pull out in the first place.

Woolf said that the grants from the Transient Lodging Tax committee seem to be focusing more and more on Baker City. Also, Sumpter could use the funds for upkeep of the park and make their own choices on how and where to advertise. Ads for county events are becoming less community-specific.

Young commented that Council should look at if Sumpter is getting back out through advertising whatever they contribute in lodging taxes, or would it be better to take the money as a City, come up with a marketing campaign, and do their own advertising. He said there have been complaints that the County is centralized on the whole area, not targeting specific cities.

Clarke commented that he hadn't thought about the County's doing the billing and collecting of money. Council agreed to add this issue to the agenda for the Special Meeting on 9/18 and make a decision.

### Council Input

Armbruster voiced his concern about a paper labeled as an attachment to minutes of a July meeting, stating it is full of opinions and not a record of what happened. Rowan stated it is not part of the minutes or the record.

### Public Input

Kurt Clarke announced the Fire Department will hold an open house on Saturday, 9/23 from 4-6 PM. They'll serve something simple like brats, soda, and chips, and give everyone an opportunity to look at their equipment and what they've done in the QRU building.

He stated his wish to put the funds from ODF toward the purchase of the water tender. He said he'd put his wages as operator toward the purchase as well. Young stated his intention to do the same. Council expressed thanks to both. This will be discussed at the next Council meeting.

Clarke also stated that he knows the City can't afford to lose money, but Sumpter would hardly exist without the Flea Market.

Timothy Peters expressed concern about a Flea Market vendor who always comes early.

He stated the vendor was in as much as a week early for the last Market and immediately hooked up to water and power without being charged for it.

Myrna Clarke pointed out that if the City allows one vendor to come in early if they pay for the extra days, that opens up the problem of others wanting to come in early and use the area for camping, which it is not intended for.

This will be further discussed at the Flea Market workshop to be held September 18 at City Hall at 7 p.m.

— GUEST OPINION —

## Never forget 9/11

By Rep. Greg Barreto

In the aftermath of hurricane Harvey, the current destruction of hurricane Irma, and the wildfires ravaging the west, we recognize that these were caused by forces in nature.

9-11 and other terrorist acts were caused by deviant human sources. We remember 9-11, the loss of human life and the destruction caused was a result of hate filled radical Islamic extremists and realize that the threat is ongoing.

We also remember the bravery and selflessness that unified this nation in the way Americans responded to that baseless attack. We are at war with an enemy that is difficult to identify with a mindset most of us find hard to understand. We must remain vigilant and wise in this battle, continuing to take measures to protect America. As technology becomes more advanced and available to the enemy, we give thanks to our military, our Commander in Chief and our steadfast leader-



Submitted Photo

Representative Barreto's committee assignments for 2017: Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, Business and Labor Committee, Rules Committee, Transportation Policy Committee.

ship in this ongoing war and we pray for these people fighting this war and keeping us safe.

Our prayers are with those who lost so much on 9-11 and with those who face the dangers of natural disasters now. Unity strengthens us and we are blessed by so many who join in helping those in need.

God bless America!

## Public use restrictions lowered this week

Public use restrictions on the Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests dropped to PHASE B as of 12:01 a.m. on Thursday, Sept. 14, 2017.

Phase B allows the use of campfires in designated recreation sites only. Restrictions pertaining to the use of chainsaws, internal combustion engines, generators and smoking remain in effect. Beginning Thursday, campfires will ONLY be allowed in designated campgrounds and identified recreation sites.

A list of designated recreation sites is available on each forest's websites. Liquefied or bottled gas stoves and heaters are allowed for cooking and heating.

Operating an internal combustion engine, such as a chainsaw, is prohibited. This restriction applies to all internal combustion engines except motor vehicles.

Firewood cutting is not allowed, unless the operator has a valid personal use firewood permit. The public is reminded that

personal-use firewood cutting with a valid permit is governed under current Industrial Fire Precaution Level (IFPL) restrictions. Current IFPL Levels are posted on the John Day Interagency website at <http://bicc-jdidec.org/jdidec/intel-report.shtml> and on the Blue Mountain Interagency website at <http://bmidc.org/ifpls.shtml>.

Generators will only be allowed in the center of an area at least 10 feet in diameter that is cleared of all flammable material, or; when fully contained within a pickup truck bed that is devoid of all flammable material, or; when factory installed in a recreational vehicle and the generator exhaust discharge is located in the center of an area at least 10 feet in diameter that is cleared of all flammable material.

Smoking is only allowed within enclosed vehicles, buildings, and developed recreation sites or when stopped in an area cleared of all flammable material. As a reminder, travel restrictions prohibit motor

vehicles traveling off of designated Forest roads and trails, except for the purposes of going to or from campsites located within 300 feet of an open road.

Motorized travel on segments of road where access is blocked by gate, barricade, log, boulder or earthen berm is also prohibited.

Vehicles must still abide by all laws and regulations pertaining to the area of travel.

For more information regarding Phase B Public Use Restrictions, please contact:

Umatilla National Forest:

Information Hotline: Toll-Free (877) 958-9663  
[www.facebook.com/UmatillaNF](http://www.facebook.com/UmatillaNF)  
Twitter: @UmatillaNF

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest:

Information Hotlines: Baker City (541) 523-1234; La Grande (541) 962-8679; Joseph (541) 426-5552  
[www.facebook.com/WallowaWhitmanNF](http://www.facebook.com/WallowaWhitmanNF)  
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