

Illinois Valley News

Wednesday, January 21, 2015, 1 Section, 10 Pages, Volume 77 No. 46 Published Weekly Cave Junction, Oregon 97523

illinois-valley-news.com

Council meeting gets heated over weed lawsuit

By
Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

Over 30 people tore themselves away from the Oregon Ducks game to attend the first Cave Junction City Council meeting of the new year on January 12.

The agenda included newly elected Councilor Dan Bosch taking his oath of office along with returning officials Mayor Carl Jacobson and Councilor Daniel Dalegowski.

Once again, medical marijuana dispensaries (MMDs) were the big topic of conversation. Cheryl Keil and Tony Smith, the owners of PAPA (Providing All Patients Access), made an agenda request regarding the declaratory judgment lawsuit rendered in September. Unsatisfied with the extent of Judge Pat Wolke's decision, the city has opted to appeal in order to get a more complete answer. The League of Oregon Cities also continues to participate in the interest of protecting Home Rule status.

Keil is suing the City of Cave Junction in order to keep her business open. She contends that since the city did not place a moratorium on MMDs prior to the state mandated deadline, they can't prevent her from operating one within city limits. PAPA is currently the only dispensary in the city. It opened about six months ago and already has 790 patients according to Keil.

"This city needs this service," she said.

See Lawsuit on A-5

Flight for life



(Photo by IVFD Media Dept)

An April 2014, single vehicle incident brought Mercy Flights to the I.V. Airport. Mercy was scheduled to make practice runs to the new landing pad at Siskiyou Community Health Center after deadline Jan. 20.

Commissioners at odds with first responders

By
Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

The quarterly Josephine County Emergency Medical Services Board meeting Jan. 14 was dominated by discussion of Oregon Lifeguard (OLG) air transport, their parent company, Classic Air Medical (CAM) and how the new service would be integrated into the current 911 response system.

Those present included County Commissioner Cheryl Walker; IVFD Chief Dennis Hoke; Grants Pass Department of Public Safety Deputy Chief Lang Johnson; Dave Matthews, AMR Josephine County operations manager and EMS board chair Gary Heigel, head of Emergency Services at Rogue Community College as well as other department and organization representatives.

Commissioner Walker stated, "This issue has never been a question of which service is better, it has always been about who has the quickest time of arrival at the side of the patient needing transport."

But while OLG has been licensed and certified by the FAA and the State of Oregon, the same as Mercy Flights; emergency service personnel at the meeting still expressed concern regarding CAM / OLG's safety standards and lack of experience.

Heigel stated, "This is an inherently dangerous business. Statistics are alarming with private, for-profit as opposed to nonprofit service. A corporation either has safety as a paramount concern or they don't. At the minimum, we need to know safety protocols are in place." He then asked what OLG was doing to overcome their parent corporation safety issues.

Hoke said, "I share Gary's concerns 100 percent." He asked about liability issues and

dismissed the idea that the shortest flight time would be more important to patients than safety records.

Hoke also questioned OLG's stated response times. "Mercy's reports are based on historical data and breaks out the time it takes to get up to speed and also powering down. You don't start out doing 110 knots," he said, and added that Mercy Flights will soon be getting a new helicopter as fast as OLG's.

OLG, a new company, has been operating in Josephine County since October. In that time, their calls have been restricted to second choice and they've only flown to Roseburg and Portland, according to Hoke.

Johnson said, "As it stands now, Mercy Flights is first out for all of us."

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has cited pilot error in three CAM helicopter crashes which took place in other states between 2000 and 2012. In comparison, Mercy

Flights had one accident 30 years ago with an airplane. Walker contends Mercy had a second crash in 1989, 24 years ago.

Another point of discussion was a letter sent to Mercy Flights by the BCC in December stating they had violated the Josephine County EMS ordinance and rules. Walker responded that Mercy had used their own ambulance for an internal transport between hospitals, and that all ambulance transport in the county must be provided by AMR.

There was also some discussion around how a response time could be quickly calculated. A map displaying response time radius probabilities was rejected as being too complicated for 911 operators to be able to quickly interpret in an emergency. A simple map with different colored territories was preferable.

Walker assured the gathering that the BCC wants to set up a system that works.

IV Students offered enriched opportunities

By
Cilicia Philemon
IVN Contributing Writer

An exciting new program is taking place at our local schools! It is "The 21st Century Community Learn Center". This program supports the formation of a community learning center that offers educational enhancement opportunities during non-school hours for children, primarily for students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. It also helps students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math. Additionally, it offers students an extensive assortment of enrichment activities that can supplement their regular academic programs. Literacy and other educational services for the families of participating children are also offered as well.

This program was developed through "The 21st Century Community Learn Centers" grant. The purpose of the 21st CCLC is to provide students with academic and enrichment opportunities, including tutorial services to increase student achievements.

Illinois Valley High School Principal Jamie Ongman says, "We're in the second of a five consecutive year grant. Each year we are gaining momentum and are evaluating and implementing new activities and supports student interest."

Ongman continues, "The program was developed and is overseen by our new co-coordinators Sara Creek and Scott Thornhill. They have brought a fresh perspective to the program. We're seeing an increase in student participation. Creek and Thornhill are also dedicated in growing the program not only for Illinois Valley students, but also for Lorna Byrne and Evergreen students. Moreover, they want to increase the program so that parents and other community members can also partake in activities."

Creek and Thornhill develop both academic and enrichment opportunities for the students of all three schools, as well as for parents. There is an array of enrichment classes available, such as Cooking, All About Music, Art Stars Performing Dance Troupe, Pottery, Board Games, Yoga, P90X exercise, Hunter Safety Courses, Ski/Snowboarding, and much more. Students also have the opportunity to receive extra academic support provided by four teachers in the core subject areas. This additional academic time gives four more hours a week for student support.

This 21st CCLC grant is administered by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and provides funding for the establishment of community learning centers. These provide students with academic enrichment opportunities to meet state and local student academic achievement standards in core academic subjects. Along with academics, the 21st CCLC grant may also offer participants a broad array of other services and programs, such as counseling, character education, entrepreneurial education, drug and violence prevention programming, art, music, recreation activities and technology education. Additional services that promote parental engagement and family literacy instruction are also provided.

Ongman says, "The students are able to attend enrichment opportunities that they would not have otherwise been able to. We are continually having conversations with students around their interest and how the program can best serve. Those that are utilizing it are having fun and broadening their experiences. The availability of this program could potentially impact our student achievement in a large way. We are hoping that parents will encourage students to get involved in an enrichment program or seek additional academic support through our Homework Help House, Tuesdays and Thursdays."

Oregon ready to make rules for recreational marijuana

Steven Dubois
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Oregon voters have spoken on marijuana legalization and now it's time for legislators to have their say.

Though the legislative session starts in February, lawmakers submitted more than a dozen bills this week dealing with marijuana. Many more are anticipated in the coming weeks as the state tries to design a retail market and regulatory system that avoids problems seen in Washington and Colorado, the first states to allow recreational pot use.

Under Measure 91, Oregonians starting in July can possess up to eight ounces of marijuana at home. Retail sales start sometime in 2016 and will be regulated by the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.

In Washington, where retailers began selling the drug in July, high tax rates and an initial supply shortage sent prices to more than three times what people pay on the black market. In Colorado, there have been several cases of people overdosing on high-concentration edibles that look the same as candy and cookies.

The Oregon Legislature has established a joint committee on marijuana (yes, they've heard the jokes) to help put Measure 91 into practice. Hot topics figure to include zoning rules for retailers, whether to allow local taxes on top of state taxes and how to keep

pot candy away from kids.

"It's a big job because there are so elements to it," said state Sen. Ginny Burdick, D-Portland, committee co-chair. "There's the regulation, the taxation, the issue of doing of everything we can to shut down the illegal market; then there's medical marijuana. All these issues are converging and we'll just have to deal with all of them."

The tax issue might be the thorniest and could end up in the court system.

The measure approved by voters in November gives the state sole authority to tax marijuana, charging growers at a rate of \$35 per ounce of bud, \$10 an ounce of leaves and \$5 for each immature plant. Many cities, however, preemptively approved sales taxes on pot — either to make money or discourage retailers from doing business there.

Because the measure is not a constitutional amendment, the Legislature has the power to make changes and OK local taxes. But if those taxes boost prices too much, Oregon risks losing sales to street dealers and a commercial advantage over neighboring Washington state.

"I don't think anybody thinks that we want to follow Washington's course and have taxation so high that the black market becomes more attractive," Burdick said.

Another way Oregon wants to differentiate itself from Washington is adequate supply.