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City renews deputy contract, raises rates for business

Caroline Griffith
IVN Contributing Writer

The Cave Junction City Council voted Monday, May 9 to renew the contract deputy agreement with the Josephine County Sheriff’s Department. The contract, which covers the fiscal year of 2016 - 2017, stipulates that the sheriff’s department must provide forty hours per week of patrol service within the Cave Junction area in exchange for \$156,512. Mayor Carl Jacobson and councilors Margaret Miller and Daniel Dalegowski voted in support of renewing the contract; City Councilors Dan Bosch and John Gardiner were absent due to illness.

In another public safety related vote, the council approved one resolution to raise the business license tax and another resolution specifying that the funds raised from this new business license tax would be split evenly between the law enforcement fund and the street maintenance fund. By approving the first resolution, the council raised the yearly business license fee from a base of \$50 to a base of \$150. Though no members of the business community were in attendance at the meeting, city recorder Ryan Nolan mentioned that the subject had been broached at a recent Chamber of Commerce meeting, and that the idea seems to be well accepted by the business community. The funds from the new business license fee that go to the street maintenance fund will go specifically toward updating and maintaining street lights, which are believed to help reduce crime and improve safety.

The council also discussed other concepts for raising revenue, including the prospect of a fuel tax and a tax on cannabis sales. Councilor Dalegowski presented information on these taxes, both of which would need to be approved by the council and then referred to the voters of Cave Junction before being enacted. Fuel taxes are common among Oregon cities and average 2.6975 cents per gallon. According to Dalegowski, some of the cities with fuel taxes raise them in the summer months to take advantage of increased tourist traffic.

Under Oregon House Bill 3400, cities may impose up to a 3 percent tax on sales of marijuana items (made by those with recreational retail licenses) by referring an ordinance to the voters during a statewide general election. Currently, the City of Cave Junction has banned marijuana related businesses pending the outcome of a lawsuit. If the outcome of this lawsuit clears the way for recreational marijuana sales in Cave Junction, the city council would like to be ready to tax those sales, with voter approval. The attending councilors, and the mayor, expressed interest in researching these options for raising revenue, but stated that serious consideration must be given to the prospective tax rates.

SEE CITY ON A-14

Not horsing around



(Courtesy photo for the Illinois Valley News)

Taylor Taylor looks to her next barrel while her horse Imperial Millie navigates the turn. The IVHS equestrian team travels to Jackson County Fairgrounds Thursday, May 12, for the 2016 Oregon High School State Tournament.

Some confused by election rules

Annette McGee Rasch
IVN Senior Contributing Writer

The wild and crazy nature of 2016 American presidential politics is prompting record numbers of voters to participate in the primary election process - with higher numbers than usual forgoing traditional party allegiances and voting across the aisle.

However many Oregonians are frustrated after receiving primary ballots that offer a choice of only one party from which to select a presidential candidate. Still others have received “Non-Partisan” ballots, which means they cannot vote for a presidential candidate in Oregon’s May 17 primary election at all.

“This is a nominating election for the three major political parties, so if you’re not registered as a Democrat, Republican or Independent, then you won’t be able to vote in the primary for a presidential candidate,” said Josephine County Clerk Trisha Myers. “It’s in presidential primaries that this tends to occur. Many people don’t pay much attention to primary elections, but this year, they are.”

Myers explained that years after filling out voter registration cards - which determine how the system identifies voters and selects primary ballots - people may have forgotten

which party they chose, or may have switched loyalties. “However at this point in the process people cannot declare a new party affiliation,” she said. “The deadline for that was April 26. The deadline for new voters to register - or to change parties - is always 21 days prior to an election.”

Party affiliation does not come into play in the general election - thus everyone will have the same voting options on their Nov. 8 ballots. To vote in that election, people need to be registered before Oct. 18.

“We want people to call our office, or stop by, if they’re questioning whether they received the correct ballot. There’s always a possibility for human error,” Myers said. “People can view the voter registration card we have on record. If they received the wrong ballot, we’ll get them the correct ballot right away.”

54,157 eligible registered voters are currently on the rolls in JoCo.

“In the last presidential primary election, we had a 53 percent turnout, which represented a little over 26,000 ballots returned,” Myers said. “Then in the November 2012 election, there was a 61 percent turnout, with a little over 31,000 ballots. We always get a higher turnout in the general election than in the primaries, even in a presidential election year.”

When people move to Oregon, as

soon as they become a resident they can register to vote. “To determine residency, we look at where the person resides, or where family members live, where people receive personal mail, where they’re licensed to drive or where they registered motor vehicles for personal use.”

Myers said people can also show utility bills that show their address, paycheck stubs or bank statements. She added that, “At the time they come to register, if they don’t have these documents, they can provide the last four digits of their social security numbers and still register to vote. It’s an assessable system. But they won’t be able to vote in federal races until they can produce something that shows their residency.” She also said homeless individuals can register to vote in the area they stay in. “We just need to be able to determine the prescient they’re in.”

If people have not received their ballots by now, Myers said “they should call our office and we can look into the reason why they have not received it and take care of the issue. If people are registered to vote, they can request a ballot up until 8 p.m. on election day.”

Call 541-474 5243 to reach the county clerk’s office. To see how they are currently registered, people can go to <https://secure.sos.state.or.us/orestar/vr/showVoterSearch.do>.

Monument expansion moves into next phase

Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

The National Park Service (NPS) hosted two open houses last week, seeking public comments on a management plan for the newly designed National Preserve which surrounds the Oregon Caves National Monument (ORCA). The plan will be evaluated through an Environmental Assessment (EA).

The Open Houses took place in Cave Junction May 3 and in Grants Pass May 5. Project manager Brad Phillips journeyed from San Francisco to join NPS staff at the events. A 12 page booklet describing the process and offering detailed topological maps were distributed at the events and will be available at the I.V. Visitor Center between now and June, along with a three question survey.

An official ribbon cutting ceremony took place mid-April 2015 which included both Oregon Senators Ron Wyden (D) and Jeff

Merkley (D) and Congressman Peter DeFazio (D).

The new preserve includes Cave Creek Campground and expanded hiking opportunities. Hunting will continue to be allowed, although restrictions will be explored for areas surrounding Cave Creek Campground, Big Tree Trail and No Name Trail in the interest of visitor safety and security.

The initial “scoping” phase of the preserve management plan and wild and scenic river study involves learning what local residents feel are the most important issues facing the preserve, and which elements of the proposed plan are favored.

A third major interest is learning whether the public supports “wild and scenic river” designation of Lake Creek and Upper Cave Creek.

The River Styx inside the Oregon Caves is the only underground “wild and scenic river” in the nation.

At the Cave Junction Open House, ORCA Superintendent Vicki Snitzler said, “We will look at five creek segments on the monument and preserve and we also study a quarter mile on either side of each stream.”

The public is invited to provide comments between now and June 10, which is the end of the 30 day scoping period. A second opportunity to comment will follow the release of the draft plan in 2017. People can also sign up to be on the mailing list to receive updates on the planning process.

Issues and opportunities to be considered include natural resources, climate change and sustainability, fire and fuels management, cultural resources, visitor uses, commercial services, education and interpretation including classroom outreach and partner provided education such as is currently offered through the Siskiyou Field Institute.

Current and potential future facilities and roads and the campground and trails will also be evaluated.

Proposed actions include managing both native and nonnative species, including invasive weeds, and preserving cultural resources through an archeological inventory.

Possible commercial services in the future could include guided hiking, biking, horseback riding, skiing, snowshoeing, educational programs, filming, photography, bird watching and catered picnicking. Shuttle services, campground firewood sales and organized runs and walks will also be evaluated.

It is anticipated that the public water system for the monument will be improved to enhance safety and reliability while increasing conservation measures to assure sustainability. NPS will also work to decrease operational costs.

Public comments will also be accepted online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/preserveplan>, emailed to orca_superintendent@nps.gov or by phoning Snitzler at 541-592-2100.