



I.V. Fire's Community Connect program discussed at city

Gwen Barringer
IVN contributing writer

The Cave Junction City Council held their monthly meeting at City Hall Dec. 12. Although many familiar faces were missing due to illness-related absences, the meeting ran smoothly and was very productive.

Mayor Martell and council members Ethan Lane, Tina Casey Jones and Jean Ann Miles were in attendance, as was city recorder Rebecca Patton, with council member Jesse Dugas being excused due to illness. There was no public works update, because Public Works

Director Alex Ponder was also out sick. The same could be said for Teresa Stover, whose library renovation update was missed.

Council liaison updates were brief but informative. Ethan Lane attended the Illinois Valley Fire District board meeting, and in the process learned about the new Community Connect program, an app designed to give first responders pertinent information about a residence or business before they've even arrived. This information includes but is not limited to, gate codes, how many people are inside, if there are any animals present, and where entry points are located. The IVFD is encouraging residents to download the Community Connect

app so that they can be better served by first responders in the event of an emergency.

Jean Ann Miles attended a Zoom meeting focused on the mental and behavioral health needs of Josephine and Jackson counties, and once again cited a distinct need for more ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) training within the community to increase empathy and understanding toward residents of the Valley who may be struggling with their mental health.

On the public comment side of things, Monique Allen spoke on behalf of IV Yea! to discuss the program's mission to give Christmas gifts to local youths. When the Chamber of Commerce realized that

their toy drive Dec. 7 wouldn't meet the needs of the community, IV Yea! generously donated the toys that they had spent time collecting for their own event. This left the organization depleted of what had once been an abundant supply of gifts, and now they are working on gathering more new and unwrapped toys for the over 130 children on their list.

Council member Jean Ann Miles was given approval to join the Parks and Recreation Commission, a move made mostly because the low attendance rate has led to the commission being unable to hold a proper quorum for quite a while. The first of two readings was also held regarding an amendment to the commission requirements that

would, along with removing term limits, add the city recorder as a voting member to the commission.

The council also discussed Resolution 964, officially declaring 539 Schumacher Street a nuisance as the property owners have failed to comply with city fencing codes. Although the council clearly did not enjoy doing this, with Jean Ann Miles even pointing out that she loved the look of the fence but hated that it was against city code, the resolution passed unanimously.

The meeting wrapped up within the hour, and Ethan Lane's final comment, "Stay well, eat soup," seemed to resonate with all in attendance.

Oregon's research forest will be North America's largest

David Steves & Cassandra Profita
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Oregon is on its way to creating North America's largest research forest, following this week's decision by top state officials to separate the Elliott State Forest in southwest Oregon from its obligation to fund schools and designate the land as a place for scientific discovery.

The State Land Board voted unanimously to create the 80,000-acre Elliott State Research Forest, signaling an end to a years-long debate over how to manage the forest that was failing to generate revenue for public education.

The board advanced the transition of the Elliott from a traditional state forest to a research site by decoupling the forest from the Common School Fund, which relies on revenue from the sale of timber on state forests, among other resources, to help pay for public education in Oregon.

The Elliott forest will remain in public ownership in collaboration with Oregon State University.

The Elliott provides habitat to dwindling wildlife populations, including salmon, the northern spotted owl and the marbled murrelet. Oregon political leaders have been struggling for decades to find a way for the forest to comply with wildlife protection requirements while continuing to meet a legal obligation to generate revenue for public schools.

State officials said the Elliott will continue to contribute to conservation, recreation, education, local economies and more as a publicly owned, working research forest.

"The Elliott will provide a better approach for working forest management, improve conservation protections and, significantly, keep the forest in public hands," Treasurer Tobias Read said in a statement. "We can be

proud that current and future generations of Oregonians will benefit from this valuable natural resource."

Read was joined by Gov. Kate Brown and Secretary of State Shemia Fagan in approving the final plan.

The use of natural resources to pay for education in Oregon dates back to statehood in 1859. Revenues from logging on certain state lands have historically gone to the Common School Fund. After the land board's vote to remove the Elliott State Forest acreage, there are about 41,500 acres of land left in the fund. While state income tax and local property tax now serve as major funding sources for education, the requirement to make up for the loss in revenue from timber harvest on the Elliott is significant.

Before the plan to turn the Elliott into a research forest, the land was no longer generating enough revenue to cover the costs of managing it. The state considered selling much of it, but the sale never went through.

The vote was enabled by legislative action that transferred \$221 million into the Common School Fund to replace revenue that logging on the Elliott might otherwise have generated.

Bob Sallinger, conservation director for the Portland Audubon Society, was a member of an advisory committee that helped pave the way to converting the Elliott into a research forest. He is also on a new board of directors created by the land board Tuesday to oversee the research forest going forward.

"From a conservation perspective, it's exciting because much more of the forest will be protected than was historically," he told Oregon Public Broadcasting. "The Elliott State Forest was used to fund schools, and it was intensively logged for decades in violation of the Endangered Species Act."

SEE ACT ON A-9

Win with a pin



(Photo by Lindsay Martinho for the Illinois Valley News)

Varsity wrestler Talen Schaffer pins his way to victory during the Wednesday, Dec 14, home wrestling match. IVHS' heartfelt tribute to long-time coach Jay Miller included a slideshow and poem before the match.

Pawsitive K9 Solutions animal abuse back in the courthouse

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A hearing was held at the Josephine County Courthouse Dec. 14 regarding Pawsitive K9 Solutions co-owner Danielle R. Brown-LaRue and her forfeiture of the abused and neglected animals found at the LaRue business and residence in September. While Brown-LaRue has not reappeared in Josephine County and an active warrant for her arrest has been issued by the authorities, her appearance wasn't necessary in order for this hearing to continue.

Although it was a simple proceeding in the scheme of things, there was a brief instance of confusion surrounding the active warrant. While an initial warrant had been active and subsequently rescinded in order to add more charges to the list, the re-issued warrant appeared nowhere in the court's documentation. Judge Matthew Galli was assured by the state that the warrant still existed, and he firmly chided the state, demanding that the warrant be documented accordingly before the next proceeding.

Laura Jansen, a

supervisor for the Josephine County Animal Shelter who also handles finances, went on record to explain to the court that the cost of keeping the animals in the shelter's care was approximately \$840 a day, \$25,000 a month, and was \$72,059 in total at the time of the proceedings.

Because probable cause that Brown-LaRue had committed the offenses had been found in the indictment via her failure to appear before the court, the state ordered that the bond for the animals' release be set at \$122,059. It was also ordered that the

animals be immediately forfeited into the care of the state unless the defendant posted the bond amount within the next 72 hours.

Although Danielle Brown-LaRue has remained on the run from the law, her partner Joseph LaRue, who is also facing a laundry list of animal abuse, neglect, and marijuana-related charges, has another hearing set for Jan. 5, 2023. This will not be the final legal proceeding regarding this case, as the case is set to go to trial in approximately two months.