

County raises fees across the board

By Siege Schatz
IVN copy editor

With 2023/24 fiscal year starting this Saturday, the Board of Josephine County Commissioners held a public hearing pertaining to fee increases at their June 21 weekly business session, held at Anne G. Basker Auditorium in Grants Pass.

“During the budget process we were really conserving General Fund dollars as much as we could,” explained JoCo Finance Director Sandy Novak.

“So anything that benefits an individual citizen we looked at, ‘Are the fees that we’re charging covering the expenses?’ so we have multiple departments here who are looking to increase fees to cover those costs and those department heads are here if there’s any specific questions.”

Between inflation and the need to slash costs in order to parcel a large portion of the General Fund to the sheriff for patrol, virtually all county departments that have fees are seeing them raised to a certain degree.

These departments include: Clerk’s Office; Community Corrections; Sheriff’s Office; Public Health; Surveyor’s Office; and Community Development, AKA Planning.

First to present was Public Health Director Michael Weber.

“The primary focus for our fee increase is for environmental health. I don’t believe we’ve had an increase for environmental health since 2014,” Weber explained.

He added that some of the environmental health services his department offers include restaurant

inspections, water inspections and “ancillary services like air quality inspections and things like that.”

Deputy Community Corrections Director Scott Hyde said his department sought a \$5 increase for their electronic monitoring program, which outfits offenders with ankle bracelets to ensure they don’t violate the terms of their parole or probation.

“The cost of the program has gone up, just the technology associated with it,” said Hyde. He called the program an “enormous cost savings” to the county, with an estimated \$500,000 saved per year over the last few years due to jail beds being freed up.

Hyde advised that it’s difficult to nail down the exact cost of running the monitoring program, as the amount of offenders utilizing it varies from month to month, but the cost estimate they generated was \$93,500 to run the program. The fees previously yielded \$75,000 for the program, but will nearly meet the full cost with \$92,500 after the increase.

The cost of the program may continue to increase, as Hyde noted there has

been an uptick in utilization of electronic monitoring since Measure 112, related to prohibiting indentured servitude, was approved by voters last year.

For the Surveyor’s Office, map filing fees, plat checking and review fees are all going up for the first time in a while. It was noted that the Surveyor’s Office had also previously eliminated a part-time position and reduced the hours of a full-time employee to offset costs.

SEE FEE ON A-6

A big roar for Illinois Valley Lions Club ‘All Wheel Show’

The tradition returns! The Lions Club hosted a successful All Wheels Car Show June 24 at Jubilee Park in Cave Junction. It has been many years since Cave Junction hosted a car show, historically organized by the Cave Junction Lions Club. According to I.V. Lions Club member David Anderson, 100 cars were entered in this year’s show.

You could hear the roar of engines and flashy colors once again in the city park due to new car show Lions Club organizers Steve Parker and Dave Dyer.

“This is ‘American’ to the community and we’re looking forward to next year, due to the hiccups. But this being our first year,



Monique Allen (above) with her Sponsor of the Year Award Saturday, June 24 at Jubilee Park.

Best of Show (top) and Doug Brothers and Olivia Tuuri (above); Dan Windle (right) with the Best Barn Find.

(Photos by Shayla Marie for the Illinois Valley News)

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