

News of Record

Arrests

June 8 - Ryan Scott Kellogg for Probation Violation on original charge of Unlawful Delivery of Methamphetamine.

Baker County Circuit Court
May 21 - Krischele Whitnah v. Ricki L. Edzards regarding Civil Transcriptive Jgm.

June 2 - Cypress Financial Group, LLC v. Michael B. Cota regarding Civil Money Action.
June 2 - Michael R. Dunn v. Heather N. Gately regarding Pet Custody.

June 2 - State of Ore. v. Steven Alfred Sculthorpe regarding Cut/Trans. Special Forest Material, misdemeanor.

June 2 - State of Ore. v. Mathew Eli Williams regarding Cut/Trans. Special Forest Material, misdemeanor.

June 3 - State of Ore. v. Caleb Flint regarding Burglary I, felony.

June 3 - Herminio Sanchez v. Nicole Morris regarding Pet Custody.

June 3 - State of Ore. v. Alex Griffin regarding Domestic Relations Fin. Resp.

June 3 - State of Ore. v. Robert Nichols regarding Domestic Relations Fin. Resp.

June 3 - State of Ore. v. Tiffany Ann Steele regarding Unauthorized Use of Vehicle, felony.

June 3 - State of Ore. v. Melissa Dawn Stevens regarding Assault IV, misdemeanor.

June 3 - State of Ore. v. Alan Michell Torres regarding Offense Violation: Speed Limit 100.

June 4 - State of Ore. v. Mary Lynn Roberts regarding Interfering with Peace/Parole/Probation, misdemeanor.

June 8 - State of Ore. v. Racheal E. Watkins regarding Possession of Methamphetamine, felony.

Chastain Returns from National Guard Duty to City Police Department

According to City Manager, Mike Kee, The Baker City Police Department handled over 180 incidents last week, opening 43 new cases to include 10 theft cases. In another incident, a Baker City woman was arrested for Interfering with a Police Officer after she hindered an officer who was trying to apprehend the woman's husband.

Officer Wayne Chastain Returns to Duty
After a 16 month absence serving our country as a National Guard Soldier, Officer Wayne Chastain returned to duty as a Baker City Police Officer. Thank you for your service!

Newman Replaces McCormick
BCPD swore in Sergeant Dustin Newman as the City's new Lieutenant. Lieutenant Newman replaced Kirk McCormick who left Baker City to pursue a Police Chief role in South Dakota.

Sinkhole Forms on Anthony Lakes Highway

On Sunday afternoon, June 7, a sinkhole was reported in the middle Anthony Lakes Highway near Antone Creek. Deputy Rilee responded and located approximately a six foot by eight foot hole in the roadway, closing the downhill lane of travel. Baker County Road Department responded and filled the hole until a permanent fix can be made. There is now gravel in the area of Antone Creek on the roadway. This appeared to have been caused by water undermining a culvert. The attached photo was taken by Deputy Craig Rilee.



OTEC General Manager Sets Retirement Date

During their regular monthly board meeting held on June 2, Oregon Trail Electric's Board of Directors nominated and elected a new slate of officers.

George Galloway (Union County) has been elected chair, George "Austin" Bingaman (Union County) vice-chair with Charlene Chase (Baker County) elected as secretary/treasurer.

The OTEC board also held their strategic planning session June 1. Items on the agenda included financial goals of the cooperative, conservation, distributed generation (DG), renewables, rate redesign and succession planning.

As part of the succession planning discussion, Werner Buehler, general manager at OTEC, announced his plans for retirement in February 2017. Buehler, 61, has been involved with the electric utility business for over 44 years and has been general manager of OTEC for the past eight years.

"I want to give the board enough time so they can adequately search and go through the long vetting process. I'm honored to help them with that," he said, promising the transition would be as seamless as possible. Buehler's final day with OTEC will be February 28, 2017.

Letters

Activate Lights on Campbell Crossing

To the editor:

Please remind your readers, as pedestrians, when crossing Campbell Street at the river bridge in Baker City, to activate the flashing light. Saturday, June 6, at 1:30 p.m., I was driving west on Campbell Street, when I noticed two adults on bicycles approaching the Leo Adler crossing, at the Powder River. I stopped, of course. Without engaging the "alert" button, they crossed through both lanes of traffic. This is a dangerous situation.

I shudder to think there could have been two fatalities, possibly a third, as the male cyclist carried across his chest, a tiny baby in a sling. The transportation department placed the blinking lights there as a safety measure, but in order to be effective, they require pedestrians to press the button!

Phyllis Badgley
Baker City

Creating Controversy From Thin Air

To the Editor:

I would like to put to rest the silly accusations stated about the Baker County Republicans in the last two issues of The Record-Courier. They are born of ignorance. That paper's editor raises questions about the local Republicans holding "closed" rather than "open" meetings. She expresses anger that only the 46 existing Republican PCPs are allowed to attend when the meetings are closed. "That's a whole lot of Baker County citizens ... who aren't allowed to attend," she complains.

Well, yes! Because these are meetings for Republican PCPs—the same PCPs who donate money as well as hundreds of hours of volunteer time in this community. If you're on the Board of Directors for Pepsi, are you offended when you're not allowed to sit in on a Board meeting for Coke? If you're a Boy Scout are you angry when you're not notified about Girl Scout meetings?

In the past three years, only a handful of monthly meetings have been closed. The remainder, including the one last week, were open to the public. The Democrats and Republicans in most counties across most states hold closed meetings. By comparison, we're extremely open. Our closed meetings were specifically to hold the nominating convention for the replacement County Commissioner, which required ballot security, as most would imagine. Other closed meetings have been to handle internal business such as the welcoming of new PCPs, election of new officers, resolution debate, etc. Holding a closed meeting to deal with internal business is just good common sense. Apparently to some it is suddenly fodder for a conspiracy theory.

That paper's editor, who signs off only as "GDP," also questions whether our group may be violating public meeting law.

The answer is no! A little legal research would have shown that fact prior to print. Political central committees aren't governed under public meeting law the way City Council members or County Commissioners are. ORS 248.015 Sec. 3 (7) states we shall not be considered a public officer. We're treated, by law, more as a private political action committee. We realize the complaints about the legality of closed meetings are coming primarily from a handful of people who signed on to support non-partisan initiative 1-63, along with GDP and her family. We saw this complaint pop up online in various venues, in some odd effort to detract from the local party we suppose – to detract and distract from the actual issue at hand. Now that 1-63 has failed, it seems the proponents' axe still needs grinding.

GDP refers to our monthly meetings as "secret." The meeting schedule is announced at the beginning of the calendar year, and then again two weeks in advance to all 46 members, and when they're open, announced in press releases to most local newspapers in advance. I guess we need to look up the definition of "secret." Somebody has it wrong.

This same editorial then skips on to accuse the County Commissioners of having a hidden agenda regarding a Public Lands Resolution presented to them by our group. She accuses them of suppressing information from the agenda, when this just isn't so. The editorial also reads: "One of the important items which was absent from the May 20th agenda was a representative from the Baker County Republican Central Committee ..."

Chuck Chase, who presented our draft of the resolution is a duly elected precinct committeeman and Chair of the committee's Natural Resource Committee, which drafted this resolution. Who better to present this resolution? He chose to attend the Commissioners' session and present the resolution during the Citizens Participation section of the meeting. This section of the meeting is open to all, and items within it are never specified in advance in an agenda. When Mr. Chase tried to respond with a Letter to the Editor to The Record-Courier, GDP refused to print it, and sent a letter to him calling him rude, accused him of "spewing hate" and said that his opinion was "nonsense."

GDP goes on to question why Montana Rep. Kerry White attended the same meeting as Chase, and why his visit also wasn't on the agenda. Well, because it was a public meeting and people can show up without notice – which is exactly what White did while here on vacation with family. It's ironic that in one breath, the editorial complains about local Republicans not being open enough with meetings, and in the next, has a problem with us legally attending them. It's enough to make your head spin.

Sincerely,
Suzan Ellis Jones, Chair
Baker County Republicans

Editor's note: Words in my quote referenced in the first paragraph of the author's letter above were omitted and it was taken out of context. It should read: "That's a whole lot of Baker County citizens, including fellow Republicans who elected them, who aren't allowed to attend."

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