

Kee Will Stay Through May

Story / photo by Gina Perkins

The Baker City Council voted to extend the current City Manager's contract through the end of May at which time a Department Head yet to be identified will assume interim City Management duties. Councilors Langrell and Thomas voted against extending Kee's contract, preferring a Department Head assume those interim responsibilities at the end of April.

The timeline to identify and hire a new City Manager has been extended. Kee believes there are 29 applicants and it's estimated that interviews with finalists will be in mid to late April. Conducting final background checks and providing time for the successful candidate to give appropriate notice to a current employer, suggests it will be well after May 31 before the new manager would be in place. Kee cannot stay longer than May 31 because of laws pertaining to PERS.

Citizen Expresses Concern about Rants in Letters to the Editor

During the citizen's comment portion, Mr. Terry McQuisten addressed the Council regarding his concerns about a Feb. 26 letter to the editor written by Clair Button. In the letter, Button stated, "If Mr. Justus chooses to support criminal activity and be an accessory to it, he does not have the judgment I ask of a county commissioner. Nor do I want my commissioners to encourage armed thugs to impose their version of fascist rule on any community, destroy property, or threaten others, whether they are elected officials or government employees and their families."

McQuisten asked Council members if they had ever been called a fascist or had it implied they were a fascist. McQuisten expressed concern about people writing letters in the paper without points of fact and suggested that he would like the Council to "use their power" to encourage people not to do so.

"We don't need all these rants," said McQuisten.

Specifically referring to the Rural Lives Matter Rally held in Halfway, McQuisten made several comments, "To imply people there were fascist...there were single moms there, families, and really old people. These are good folks trying to do good things. We weren't there to cause trouble. County Commissioners and people running for office spoke there. I think it is very important to respect how people feel....Maybe that person who was carrying a sign knew LaVoy Finicum....I went to Burns but I didn't take take supplies. I figured they could get their own."

McQuisten also asked the Council as they consider whether to address the "railroad curbing their whistles" to have them curb the graffiti and vulgarity on the train cars. He suggested having the trains put covers over the cars when they come through town.

Update from OTEC
In other business, Lara Peticlerc Stokes from OTEC presented the City with a franchise check for \$113,812.31. She also provided a project update and reminded Council of the open call for nominations for the Civic Leadership award. The deadline is April 1.

Introductions

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Shelly Cutler introduced herself to Council and said she has completed 60 days on the job. She said that membership is growing.

Kody Justus introduced himself to the Council as a candidate for County Commissioner and said he came to learn more than he came to share.

Water Rate Increase to be Discussed

Council unanimously passed the Water Master Plan. Fees and rates will be discussed at a future meeting. A recommendation exists for a minimum rate increase of 10 percent, but passing the Master Plan was not an approval of a 10 percent rate increase. Public Works Director, Michelle Owen, assured the Council.

Golf Course Irrigation System Replacement

"We're wasting millions of gallons of water at the Golf Course. That's why we need to replace the irrigation system," explained Jeff Stahman, Superintendent of the Golf Course. Council voted to award the design of the golf course irrigation system for 18 holes to Baer Design Group, LLC of Boise contingent on the granting entity's approval of the change from nine to 18 holes.



Mr. Terry McQuisten expressed concerns to the Baker City Council regarding letters to the editor written without points of fact.

News of Record

Feb. 22 - Unlawful Possession of a Furbearer: Bobcat, Prohibited Trapping Method to Wit, and Unbranded Traps: David Sanders, 56, of Elgin, Ore., at 6:07 p.m.; citations issued by Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife Officer.

Feb. 25 - Warrant Arrest for Theft II (Union County): Morgan Louise Davis, 27, of Baker City, at 5:32 p.m., 1540 Campbell St.; jailed.

Feb. 28 - Resisting Arrest, Assault on a Police Officer x2 and Harassment: Tessie Ann Smith, 28, of 1745 D St., at 9:30 a.m., 2525 Court Ave.; jailed.

Feb. 28 - Parole Violation (Out of County): Caleb Leon Elmer Pierce, 31, of 125 E Monroe St., Huntington, Ore., at 1:35 p.m. at his residence; jailed.

Feb. 28 - Assault IV and Assault IV (Baker County Warrant): Brendon Michael Smith, 21, of 1560 Indiana Ave., at 4:55 p.m., 1560 Indiana Ave. #211; jailed.

March 1 - Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants: Jeffrey Clifton Littig, 56, of Ft. Worth, Texas, at 6:18 p.m. on Interstate 84, milepost 306 eastbound; jailed.

March 1 - Probation Violation and Criminal Trespass II: Neil Sloan Lewis, 33, of 2430 5th Street at 2:58 p.m., 2505 Broadway Ave.; jailed.

March 1 - Contempt of Court (Baker County Circuit Court Warrant): Linda Diane Peterson, 48, of Baker City, at 4:15 p.m., 944 Elm; jailed.

March 1 - Driving Under Influence and Out of State Warrant for Failure to Appear: Tina Marie Carter-Bahmer, 46, of 1100 NW Warrenton Dr., Warrenton, Ore., at 9:12 p.m., between Third and Campbell Streets; jailed.

March 2 - Contempt of Court (Baker County Justice Court): Henry Earl Koos, 37, of 2650 17th St., at 12:18 p.m. at his residence; cited and released.

March 3 - False information to a police officer: Shelby Suzett Statham, 39, of 570 N Contour Ave., Idaho Falls, Idaho, at 2:59 p.m., between Resort St. and Washington Ave.; jailed.

March 4 - Warrant Arrest (Baker County Justice Court): Lonnie Mae Persicke, 37, of Baker City, at 1:01 a.m., 2425 Oak St.; cited and released.

March 4 - Criminal Trespass II and Disorderly Conduct II: Oral Tobias Holt, 57, of Baker City, at 8:00 p.m., 2005 Valley Ave.; jailed.

March 5 - Warrant Arrest (Umatilla County Warrant for Failure to Appear): Kevin Duwayne Amerson, 59, 9:52 a.m., 150 2nd St W.; cited and released.

Marriage

Feb. 29 - Trenton Austin Mitchell of Westwood, Cali. to Christine Nicole Brown of Baker City.

Judgments

Feb. 1 - Michael Andrew Scott vs. Renae M. Scott for Domestic Relations Dissolution.

Feb. 1 - Monica Thomas and State of Oregon vs. Shaon M. Spriet for Child Support. Oregon Department of Human Resources Administrative Order.

Feb. 3 - Breanna M Davis and State of Oregon vs. Patrick Walker for Child Support. Oregon Department of Human Resources Administrative Order.

Feb. 3 - Heather Matheny and State of Oregon vs. Judah G Leos for Child Support. Oregon Department of Human Resources Administrative Order.

Feb. 3 - Aleasha Watkins vs. Johathon Romine for petition for Restraining Order; Order allowed and signed.

Accidents

Feb. 25 - On Interstate 84, at 12:02 a.m., milepost 323.5 eastbound: A Freightliner driven by Joshua Edward Mathews, 30, of Lancaster, Cali. was involved in a single vehicle accident. Mathews fell asleep and drifted off the roadway, hitting the rumble strips. Mathews panicked and steered hard causing his truck and trailer to overturn. The passenger, Ricardo Agustin Martinez, 23, of Bakersfield, Cali., was transported with minor injuries.

March 1 - On Interstate 84, at 12:25 p.m., milepost 286 westbound: A gold Honda Civic driven by Tommy Jo Gentry, 40, of Parma, Idaho, drifted off the roadway. Gentry overcorrected and veered into the other lane causing his vehicle to roll multiple times. Gentry was cited for Failure to Drive within Lane and was later life-flighted due to injuries.

March 1 - On Interstate 84, at 4:15 p.m., milepost 284.5 eastbound: A Dodge pickup driven by Raymond Douglas Stevens, 27, of La Grande, was passing a semi driven by Shane Raymond Freese, 32, of Salem, Ore. Stevens drifted into the rear trailer of the semi, disabling his vehicle. No injuries were reported and the semi was driven from the scene.

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Kick-Off Spring Break with Free Concert

Baker City welcomes back Ryan Stevenson in concert Thursday, March 17 at the Baker City Nazarene Church. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the concert begins at 7 p.m. Limited seating is available on a first come, first served basis.

Immediately following the concert will be a teen game night with games, refreshments and fun.

Advanced Notary Class Offered

This March 24 class is appropriate for experienced, commissioned notaries and will be held from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton. The class is free and will cover such areas as employee notary issues, comparing signatures with identification, notario and elder abuse fraud, and journaling witnesses. The classes are two hours long and will include time for questions and answers.

Register for the class labeled "Current Notaries Only" at: <http://notsem.sos.state.or.us/> Or call us (503) 986-2200.

Spring into Nature at the Interpretive Center

"Spring into Nature" March 21-24
Monday through Thursday of Spring Break, the Interpretive Center will offer one-hour classes aimed at younger visitors. We will explore what happens in springtime in the natural world - the life cycles of plants and animals, bats and bees pollinating, bird nesting and migration, hibernation and baby animals. Workshops will be offered at 10 am and 1 p.m. each day.

Monday, March 21: Nesting & Migration
Tuesday, March 22: Pollination & Interconnections
Wednesday, March 23: Hibernation & Spring Growth
Thursday, March 24: Life Cycles & Habitats
Class size is limited, pre-registration is suggested by calling 541-523-1855. A small fee of \$5 covers all supply costs.

FBI Releases Statement on La Voy Finicum Shooting

On Tuesday, March 8, 2016 at 10:43 a.m. the FBI stated:

On Jan. 26, 2016, along Highway 395 in Harney County, Oregon State Police (OSP) troopers and FBI agents put themselves in harm's way as part of the effort to bring the situation at the refuge to an end peacefully. I can assure that no one, from the Director of the FBI down to each and every employee who was working in Harney County, wanted this situation to end in violence or death.

However, Mr. Finicum chose to break the law, put other people's lives in danger, and, as the investigation shows, provoke a confrontation with law enforcement. As the sheriff and DA have shown, the threat Mr. Finicum posed to OSP troopers and agents along Highway 395 on that day was real and imminent, and certainly justified the use of deadly force by law enforcement.

As you have heard today, the investigation conducted by the Tri-County Major Incident Team determined that OSP troopers fired three shots at Mr. Finicum's vehicle as it approached the law enforcement barricade at a high rate of speed, the vehicle nearly hitting a law enforcement officer. The team also determined OSP troopers fired three additional shots that struck and killed Mr. Finicum as he reached for his weapon after exiting his vehicle.

The county's investigation also indicated that, in between the two series of shots fired by OSP

troopers, one, and possibly two, additional shots were fired by law enforcement as Mr. Finicum was exiting the vehicle after hitting the snow bank. As autopsy results confirm, neither of these shots struck Mr. Finicum. The question of who fired these shots has not been resolved. Upon learning this, and given the FBI presence on scene, I immediately contacted our Inspection Division which notified the United States Department of Justice's Office of Inspector General which is currently investigating this matter.

Because this is an ongoing matter, it would be inappropriate for me or anyone to speculate or comment further, but I can tell you that the FBI is fully cooperating with the Office of Inspector General.

Since Jan. 2 the FBI has worked in partnership with Harney County and our law enforcement partners throughout the state to resolve the situation at the refuge. Since that time, hundreds upon hundreds of FBI employees traveled to Burns with the sole purpose of bringing this situation to a peaceful conclusion.

Working together with our partners, we have been able to do just that. The refuge is clear and will be re-opening soon. People who once feared for their safety are back in their homes. Those who chose to break the law will have their day in court. Life is not yet completely normal, but we are on the path to reconciliation and recovery.

TO ALL VETERANS
The Baker County Veteran Services Office provides access to a wide range of benefits and services to veterans and their families.
Health Care, Education, Compensation and Pension, Burial Benefits and much more
Rick Gloria, Veterans Services Coordinator
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BLOOD DRAW
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Thursday Friday Saturday
March 17 18 19
Join us!
7:00 a.m.—9:30 a.m.
Saint Alphonsus Medical Center—Baker City
Powder River Conference Room
Use Administration entrance (old care center entrance) located in the back of the hospital near the ER entrance.
Basic Package: Lipid panel—\$0 (no charge)
Comprehensive Package: Lipid panel, CBC, Comprehensive Metabolic Panel—\$20
TSH: \$10
No Appointment Needed.
IMPORTANT: Please abstain from all food and drink at least 12 hours before your blood screening. Drinking plain water is encouraged.
Your results will be mailed to you.
*Insurance will not be billed. You will receive a receipt and description of the tests. Individuals are responsible for checking with their insurance carriers for possible reimbursement.
If you have questions, call Laura Huggins at 541-523-8102.
because it's all about you.
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