

REDMOND MAYOR'S RACE

Candidates discuss issues in local forum

BY NICK ROSENBERGER
Redmond Spokesman

Mayoral candidates faced off Sept. 27 in a forum hosted by the Redmond Rotary, Kiwanis and Executive Association at the Senior Center.

The event saw candidates discuss a variety of topics and their stances on the role of the mayor, homelessness, school safety and more. *Redmond Spokesman* editor Tim Trainor moderated the discussion.

The four candidates — Charles Baer, Ed Fitch, Jay Patrick and Ben Schimmoller — each touted their experience as a selling point for why they should be picked for the job. Fitch and Patrick both highlighted their decades of involvement in Redmond city government, while Schimmoller focused on his experience in the Oregon State Legislature working for Senator Tim Knopp (R-27).

The composition of Redmond city council will change in November with five city council candidates running for three open seats. None of the council candidates going for the job have been elected to public office before. Current city councilor and candidate Cat Zwicker was appointed to her position after councilor Jon Bullock resigned in November 2021.

The mayor, in turn, will help steer the ship now populated by many newcomers.

Fitch, who is an attorney, spoke about the legal learning curve required of city councilors and the need to get out of the chute once the new council takes their seats.

"We have to have a better process for setting our goals," Fitch said. "Because we have not involved the community before in setting our city goals."

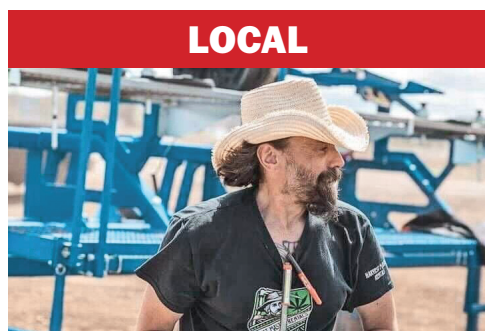
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SPORTS

Rivalry football

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LOCAL

Kind, generous

Friends remember crime victim, **A3**

HOMELESSNESS | SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS

Safe Parking Program proposes new location

BY NICK ROSENBERGER AND NICOLE ROGERS • Redmond Spokesman

Mountain View Community Development has found a new location for the expansion of the Redmond Safe Parking Program: SE 7th Street and SE Evergreen Avenue, in the east side of the city.

The new site, which is currently owned by the county, would set aside a place for people struggling with homelessness to sleep overnight in their vehicles. The plan is to use the site for a three-month trial period, then evaluate its progress.

Rick Russell, pastor of Mountain View Fellowship Church, said the 90 days would be a trial period to make sure the program works well for participants, the county and the surrounding area.

Mountain View Fellowship Church hosted an open house Oct. 3 to discuss the plan with nearby residents and businesses.

"This seemed like an ideal piece of property," said Russell, organizer of the safe parking program.

Unlike the previously proposed Pershall location, which the city council scrapped after neighbors complained at an Aug.

23 city council meeting, the new site is located on county land rather than land owned by the city.

Additionally, city funds were mistakenly used to prepare the Pershall location. Russell said there will be no city or county funds used at the new site as there's no improvements needed to host the program.

"It's a relatively flat piece of

property, nothing fancy about it," Russell said. "It's a pretty wide open area so it's not hidden by trees or anything like that."

Russell added that they're committed to the safety and cleanliness of the site. He said organizers would provide portable toilets, solar panels, garbage service and generators to recharge batteries, if needed. They will also work with participants to

“This seemed like an ideal piece of property. It's a relatively flat piece of property, nothing fancy about it. It's a pretty wide open area so it's not hidden by trees or anything like that.”

— **Rick Russell, pastor of Mountain View Fellowship Church and organizer of the safe parking program**

bring in potable water.

The property is limited to six vehicles, but Russell said overall capacity will depend on how many people are living in each vehicle. Most families taking part in the program are less than three, he said, and he's never seen more than four people in one RV. Russell and Sierra Hopper, the program director, said only three to four vehicles will be allowed at the new site while it gets off the ground.

If all goes well, they aim to have participants sleeping at the site by early November.

According to Russell, the new site was on a list of properties the county had been thinking of selling at auction. The 1.7 acres have a real market value of \$101,440, according to Deschutes County.

Much of the blowback from the prior Pershall location was due to

See **Location / A6**



REDMOND AREA PARKS AND RECREATION BOND

Bond backers rally supporters

Organizers hopeful but not confident in November vote

BY NICK ROSENBERGER
Redmond Spokesman

Supporters of the \$49 million Redmond Area Parks and Recreation bond gathered Saturday, Oct. 1, at the proposed site of the new recreation center at SW 35th

and Lava in Redmond.

Donuts, a bouncy castle and dozens of pamphlets and yard signs lined the tables as supporters tried to drum up support for the uncertain measure.

Matt Gilman, the chairman of the RAPRD board of directors, says there has been growing support across the political aisle — gaining endorsements from every

Redmond mayoral candidate, city council candidate and Deschutes County Commissioner Tony DeBone.

"There has been a lot of support, a lot of positive attitudes," Gilman said. "There's a lot of bipartisan support for this."

But, despite the impassioned supporters, there's no guarantee the measure will pass. Gilman said he

feels more confident than in 2019, the last time RAPRD tried to pass a bond, but he's still not confident the nearly \$50 million bond and 5-year levy will pass.

"It's going to be very close," he said. "Six weeks before the election still and things can change really quickly. It's keeping us on our toes."

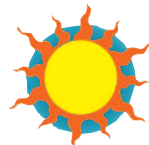
While many support the new

See **Bond / A6**

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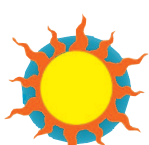
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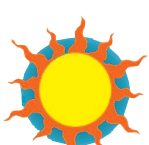
TUESDAY
Sunny
85/45



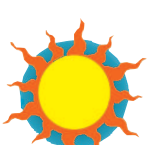
WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy
83/47



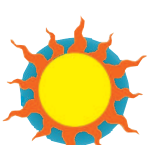
THURSDAY
Sunny
82/46



FRIDAY
Sunny
82/46



SATURDAY
Sunny
80/45



SUNDAY
Sunny
79/44



MONDAY
Partly cloudy
76/44

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