



# CITY COMPUTERS HACKED

## Data held hostage, ransom paid

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
*Of the Keizertimes*

The city of Keizer's computer system was hacked on Wednesday, June 10, and officials were only able to regain access to the data by paying the perpetrators a \$48,000 ransom.

At this point, no sensitive data appears to have been accessed or misused.

About 11:45 a.m., Wednesday, June 17, city employees finally regained access to all emails and files. Those concerned that previous attempts to contact city employees did not reach the intended recipient should call 503-390-3700 or attempt to resend the communication.

"We are taking this seriously, and are working to resolve the situation as quickly as possible," said city officials in a hand-delivered statement.

The digital strike was discovered when city employees could not access some data and programs the morning of Wednesday, June 10.

The city "engaged appropriate authorities" to

assist in data recovery, but it soon became clear that the only way to regain access to information stored on the city's computers was to pay a ransom to the hacker or hackers responsible.

The particular method used to infiltrate the city's computers is known as ransomware that encrypts data.

"We were presented with a request for a ransom payment needed to obtain the needed decryption keys," the city's statement read.

Rather than destroying or deleting data, ransomware puts the information behind a door that can only be unlocked with a numeric key that remains in the

hands of the hackers.

"We believe that the forensic investigation could provide critical information to defend against attacks in the future," the statement read.

## Keizer hack part of a growing trend of data hostage-taking

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
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When the City of Keizer's computers were hacked last week by an unknown individual or group, it became the latest victim of such attacks nationwide.

By August of 2019, according to a *New York Times* report, at least 40 cities had their data held hostage by hackers in the first eight months of the year. At one point, 22 cities in Texas alone had been crippled by hacks that involve infecting servers with malware that puts all the data behind an en-

cryptured wall. The hackers then request ransom to release the data back to the cities.

In some cases the ransom cost was nearly \$500,000 in taxpayer money. In January of this year, Tillamook County paid \$300,000 to regain access to its data. As companies and towns showed more willingness to pay the ransoms demanded, the attacks ramped up, according to the *Times* report.

Hacking attacks on cities and companies are now so commonplace that insurance Please see TREND, Page A5

**HOW RANSOMWARE WORKS**  
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## City weighs in on Salem casino plan

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
*Of the Keizertimes*

The Confederated Tribes of the Siletz has submitted a proposal to build a 180,000 square foot casino just southeast of Keizer in Salem. The effort moves the project, originally announced in 2017, a step closer to realization provided all the appropriate regulating bodies sign off on the project.

The site would be just east of Interstate 5, north of Portland Road near Harbor Freight Tools on Off-Reservation Trust Land owned

by the Confederated Tribes. The proposal sent to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), part of the U.S. Department of Interior, is slightly more detailed this time around.

In addition to a hotel with up to 500 rooms, the casino — which could have up to 2,000 gaming devices and 45 gaming tables — could include three restaurants, a food court, a night club, a sports bar, a multi-purpose event center and all the associated parking.

The original 2017 proposal predicted the creation of 1,500 jobs and potential annual revenues of up to \$184.5

million.

As a result of moving into the next phase, the BIA is requesting comments from interested parties near the site, which includes the City of Keizer. The Keizer City Council approved a letter asking officials to consider impacts to the Chemawa-Interstate 5 intersection and the effects on housing.

Mayor Cathy Clark was the main proponent behind pushing transportation impacts to the forefront. Councilor Kim Freeman championed consideration of housing im-

pacts. On transportation, the letter states, "The Interstate 5 corridor has limited capacity and the significant additional traffic to a facility like this will bring has the potential to overwhelm the system."

On housing, the letter asks the tribe to consider constructing workforce housing as a component of the overall plan. "We believe this is a critical element to make certain that the employees of the casino can obtain housing with rents that are commensurate with wages," the letter states.

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Keizer businessman Kyle Juran (left) has announced his intention to run to replace outgoing Keizer City Councilor Marlene Parsons.

KEIZERTIMES/  
Eric A. Howald

## Parsons stepping aside, backs Juran for council

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
*Of the Keizertimes*

Keizer City Councilor Marlene Parsons is opting not to run for a third term on Keizer's governing body but she's already endorsing a replacement, Keizer businessman Kyle Juran.

"Kyle has been a great volunteer in this community and he has a passion for Keizer," said Parsons. "I think that he would be a great champion on city council and continue some of the work that I've done with others."

Juran, owner of Remodeling by Classic Homes on River Road, said he wants to be a voice for Keizer's hometown businesses and connective tissue for conversations he took part in as a Keizer planning commissioner.

"The biggest thing for me is helping regular citizens understand how much the busi-

ness community does for other aspects of the community and how we need their support," Juran said.

In addition to volunteering for the city's planning commission, Juran is a member of the Keizer Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the Oregon Home Builders Association Board of Directors. At the Keizer Chamber, Juran helped lead the move to a new office on River Road among other tasks. In recent years, the playhouses he and employees construct as floats for the annual KeizerFEST Parade have been raffled off to benefit local charitable efforts.

The last float, styled after the home from Pixar's *Up*, was donated by the winner, Bob Shackleford, to Simonka Place, a woman's shelter, for use in the children's Please see COUNCIL, Page A7

"I think that he would be a great champion on city council."

— Marlene Parsons  
Keizer city councilor

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Sopes \$3.50  
Picaditas \$3.00  
Mullitas \$3.50  
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Que La Paz Prevalzca En La Tierra

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