

## New councilors sworn in

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
Of the Keizertimes

Tearful goodbyes and hearty welcomes were the order of the night at the Keizer City Council meeting Monday, Jan. 4.

The council said goodbye to Kim Freeman and Marlene Parsons while Kyle Juran and Ross Day were sworn into their first terms on the council.

Freeman and Parsons delivered prepared speeches before exiting the dais to standing ovations.

"Thanks for electing me to two terms on the council," said Parsons. "It's not easy, but it can be rewarding. We've been told we're not doing enough, but it's been a rough year [referring to 2020]. I think we've come out of it Keizer strong because that's what we do," Parsons said.

Freeman thanked the people who gathered around her as a city councilor in private and public ways.

"I appreciate the pride, spirit and volunteerism of all the residents. The residents step up in droves," Freeman said. "When you first start out on the council, you have so many questions. Everyone

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— Kim Freeman, exiting Keizer City Councilor



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald  
Kyle Juran (above) and Ross Day (right) take their oath of office as they begin their terms as new city councilors on Monday, Jan. 4.



was so patient and they gave me the tools and the resources to make my own decisions."

Mayor Cathy Clark was sworn into a fourth term as mayor during the meeting

and Councilor Laura Reid was sworn into a second term on the council.

The council sidestepped tradition, and adopted

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## Packed agendas are likely for school board this month

BY MATT RAWLINGS  
Of the Keizertimes

The process of attempting to reopen schools is expected to be a hot topic of discussion during Salem-Keizer School Board meetings this month. The board is scheduled to meet three times in January, with the next discussion taking place on Tuesday, Jan. 12, at 6 p.m.

On Dec. 23, Gov. Kate Brown announced that she was directing the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to implement new policy initiatives, with the goal of putting more school districts on track to return students to in-person instruction, especially elementary students, by February 15.

As of Friday, Jan. 1,

"This does not mean schools can resume in-person instruction without regard for COVID-19 spread..."

— Gov. Kate Brown

decisions on if and when schools can reopen fell to the discretion of local school districts as state metrics made the shift from mandatory to advisory.

"This does not mean schools can resume in-person

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Higher numbers, shifting mission, better funding

## STILL A HOMELESSNESS CRISIS

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
Of the Keizertimes

Among all the praise for heroism of first responders during the COVID-19, it can be easy to lose sight of all who are worthy of such honors.

Ashley Hamilton, program director of the ARCHES, knows that the organization's veteran and new employees deserve a share of that acclaim. "We've had to do a fair share of modifying programs

to make sure employees and clients are safe, but we've been very lucky. Everyone kept showing up for work and then we were able to add more people in most of our programs," Hamilton said.

While ARCHES is tasked primarily with supporting homeless residents by its parent organization, the Community Action Agency, its mission shifted to homelessness prevention in the past

year when it was tapped to distribute money for state and federal programs. Hamilton has to establish and staff an entire call center for the effort.

"I'm proud to say that we've been able to distribute more than \$5.6 million to people struggling to make their rents and mortgages, and now we're expecting a third influx of funding," Hamilton said.

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Submitted

A staff member at Avamere Court at Keizer receives a COVID-19 vaccination.

## Avamere vaccinates 85% of residents in single day

More than 200 residents and staff members at Avamere Court at Keizer's assisted living, independent living and rehabilitation residents began their vaccinations for COVID-19 Monday, Jan. 4.

Clinics were set up in each of the buildings on the campus to keep residents and staff safe, said Sue Horn, director of sales and outreach at the River Road Facility.

"The vaccination clinic provided 218 doses yesterday to campus residents, staff, and care partners, and at this time 85% of our residents have had their first vaccine [dose]," said Blake Epp, the executive director of the campus.

COVID-19 vaccinations are most effective after two doses are administered. Avamere Court at Keizer has

additional clinics scheduled later this month and in mid-February. By that time, nearly all residents are expected to have received the full course of vaccination. Avamere at Keizer partnered with Walgreens in administering the Pfizer-BioNTech-developed COVID-19 vaccine.

Horn said the only thing stopping a few of the residents from taking part in the first round was recent flu vaccinations.

"We at Avamere continue to be on the forefront of fighting COVID 19 and keeping residents, staff and loved ones safe. Everyday our frontline staff roll up their sleeves and do whatever it takes. You have to have a passion for what you do to do this every day," Horn said.

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