

Firehouse: Opponents say new site is too far from downtown

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In 2018, after considering nine locations, the fire station committee recommended three concepts and locations to guide the decision-making process. When a public survey eliminated the committee's first choice at Gearhart Park, the city pursued High Point, a location on N. Marion Avenue near the Palisades.

That site was dropped after potential right-of-way conflicts with neighboring homeowners and the high cost of the land purchase.

With the possibility of the land swap and negotiations with The Cottages at Gearhart LLC, the City Council approved bringing the Highlands Lane site to voters.

The bond measure was headed to ballot last November, but was postponed after a legal challenge that was later rejected by a Circuit Court judge.

Jack Zimmerman, a resident who was involved with the unsuccessful legal challenge, said the Highlands Lane site is too far from downtown to meet city needs. He said facilities at Camp Rilea already meet fire department training needs.

"Gearhart will build a new fire station when they know their money will be well spent, and not wasted on something that they do not want, need or understand," he said. "The taxpayers who will have to tighten their belts to fund this project in this shaky economy deserve consideration, transparency and respect."

Mayor Paulina Cockrum said the bond measure is an important way of showing respect for firefighters and volunteers while protecting the community.

"As a caregiver for the past 45 years, I can attest that people who work to



Photos by Lydia Ely/The Astorian

The new firehouse would be off Highlands Lane. Opponents have questioned the cost of the project.

serve others, like our police, firefighters, nurses, doctors, waitstaff are subject to harassment and bullying," the mayor said. "No matter which side of the fire/police station bond you are on, while a protected right, this type of discourse is still bullying, downright uncivil behavior and I cannot condone it."

"This is so unfortunate for our community."



Timber baron: Johnson is seeking to become the first non-Democrat elected governor since Atiyeh in 1982

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The magazine's winter issue reported Emmerson topped the list of the largest landowners in the United States. He moved up from third place following the October purchase of Eugene-based Seneca Sawmill Co. The deal included 175,000 acres of timberlands in southwestern Oregon, the magazine reported.

The magazine's cover featured a picture of Emmerson with the headline "America's Largest Landowner." The article said Emmerson's company also owns 18 sawmills and eight renewable biomass energy cogeneration facilities.

Born in Grand Ronde, Emmerson went to high school in Omak in eastern Washington before moving to California and working in the timber and sawmill industry, eventually joining his late father, Curly Emmerson, to found Sierra Pacific in 1949.

State campaign finance records show that Sierra Pacific began making contributions in February with a donation to the Bring Balance to Salem PAC. Johnson's campaign for governor received the second-largest amount — \$200,000 — on April 4.

Both campaigns aim at

BOTH CAMPAIGNS AIM AT CURTAILING DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL DOMINANCE IN OREGON STATE GOVERNMENT.

curtailing Democratic political dominance in Oregon state government.

Democrats control the governorship, both chambers of the Legislature, secretary of state, treasurer, attorney general, both U.S. senators and four of five seats in Oregon's delegation to the U.S. House.

Johnson is seeking to become the first non-Democrat elected governor since Vic Atiyeh in 1982.

Bring Balance to Salem has only spent just over \$15,000 so far — with \$10,000 going to Hood River-based Walden Consulting. The firm is listed in December as being run by Walden and his wife, Mylene Simons-Walden, according to business records filed with the Oregon Secretary of State's Office.

The former congressman's sister-in-law, Marta Simons, also of Hood River, is listed as the group's treasurer. She earlier served as treasurer for Walden's Victory Fund PAC during his time in Congress.

The PAC lists its address

in Portland. The address is for Postal Annex+, an outlet of the commercial mail drop chain.

Sierra Pacific is moving into its third generation of family ownership. According to Federal Election Commission records, Red Emmerson is now the chairman emeritus. His sons, George and Mark, serve as company president and chairman/chief financial officer.

Emmerson's daughter, Carolyn Dietz, is president of the company's philanthropic Sierra Pacific Foundation, according to the foundation's website.

Red, George and Mark Emmerson have all given frequently to Republican, timber industry and other political action committees, according to the FEC. Red Emmerson gave to the successful presidential campaigns of George W. Bush in 2000 and 2004. He also gave to John McCain and Mitt Romney, the Republican nominees in 2008 and 2012, who both lost to President Barack Obama.

All three contributed to

Donald Trump, the Republican who won the presidency in 2016 and lost to President Joe Biden in 2020.

Mark and George Emmerson have contributed to campaigns of U.S. Rep. Kurt Schrader, D-Canby. Both have contributed to Schrader's reelection, where he is facing a primary challenge from Jaime McLeod-Skinner, of Terrebonne. Schrader has also received contributions from Andrea Howell, Sierra Pacific's corporate affairs director.

U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, has received \$4,000 in the past two elections.

The company's PAC has also contributed \$15,000 to Eugene-based Community Action Network PAC, which backs conservative candidates. Its treasurer is former Oregon Republican Party Treasurer Dennis Morgan.

Sierra Pacific also gave \$2,500 each to the campaigns of Tim Freeman and Tom Kress, who are running for different seats on the nonpartisan Douglas County Board of Commissioners. Eugene City Council candidate Jennifer Solomon received \$1,500.

The Oregon Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

Johnson: You can become a member on their website

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The nonprofit selected will have to wait three years before it can be nominated again. The organization will also be asked to come back and present how the money was used.

The first meeting will

be held over lunch at the Astoria Golf & Country Club on May 2, where Johnson said members will have the opportunity to suggest local arts and culture nonprofits.

People can visit 100 Women Who Care Clatsop County's website to become a member.

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WEV

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District 3



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