

City, county elected officials start new year with oath of office

Mayor announces next council meeting postponed in light of UO football game

By **KIRBY NEUMANN-REA**
News editor

The business of transition involved hugs and handshakes, cake, and checks to sign as city and county elected officials formally took office on Monday.

The County Board of Commissioners and Hood River City Council held 4:30 and 5 p.m. special meetings Monday for the sole business of swearing in new and returning electees.

The City Council's first regular meeting of the year has been postponed to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13, to avoid a conflict with the Oregon-Oregon State National Championship football game on Jan. 12, announced new Mayor Paul Blackburn, whose wife, Dr. Kristen Dillon, and daughters Althea and Rosalie also attended. Immediately after the meeting, he sequestered with city staff to sign checks.

Said Peter Cornelison, one of three new City Councilors: "I feel a little more weight on my shoulders and I'm standing a little taller to compensate."

Municipal Judge Will Carey administered the oath of office to City Councilors Susan Johnson, Becky Brun and Peter Cornelison after swearing in Blackburn.

A half-hour earlier, Carey did the same honors with county elected officials, Chairman Ron Rivers and Commissioners Bob Benton and Karen Joplin. All three were re-elected in November without opposition.

Present were Commissioner Les Perkins, Health Department officials Ellen



Photos by Kirby Neumann-Rea

TAKING THE OATH: At top, Hood River County counsel Will Carey administers the oath of office to re-elected Commissioners Bob Benton, standing at left, and Karen Joplin, watched by County Chair Ron Rivers, center, and Commissioner Les Perkins. Not present was Commissioner Maui Meyer. At right, Rivers takes his turn. Above, City Council Members Susan Johnson, left, Peter Cornelison and Becky Brun take the oath of office at a separate ceremony at City Hall.

Larson and Mike Matthews, emergency services coordinator Barb Ayers, and Cascade Locks City Administrator Gordon Zimmerman and his wife, Coral, along with City Administrator David Meriwether, legal counsel Lisa Davies, and administrative assistant Sandi Lain.

At City Hall, supporters including Susan Johnson's father, Tom, visiting from Tucson, Ariz., and returning councilors Kate McBride and Mark Zammiller watched as the new council members and mayor took the oath. (Councilor

Laurent Picard was not present.)

"We had good energy on the last council, but I think we'll have different energy," Zammiller said. "I'm really looking forward to the discussions."

Asked about what's next in terms of challenges or chief tasks for City Council, the new officials answered this way:

Becky Brun

"The budget is the biggest thing looming. It's going to be our biggest challenge in this next quarter," Brun said.

"It feels good. I feel like I've been mentally preparing the last months, and clearing my plate of a few other things," she said.

Susan Johnson

"We're going to find out, we'll be working on a few things. Well see, it'll be a surprise," Johnson said.

"I'm really excited. You can tell by the look on my face," she said.

Peter Cornelison

Cornelison said he enjoyed the council/staff goal-setting session in late 2014, attended

by then-council and the electees, pointing to cooperation with the Port, community building, and additional help for the planning staff among the prime goals of the city.

"Eighty percent of the city is stuff that can't be changed, the ongoing work of the city, but it's that 20 percent we can influence," Cornelison said.

Paul Blackburn

"I'm excited to get going. It was such a long process of campaigning but this is what it's all about. I'm excited to get going and do the work," he said.

"It's going to take us all a little while to get our feet wet and figure out how the process works," said Blackburn, who alone among the new officials had served on council, 2004-08.

"I hope we can move forward expeditiously on doing the work of the city," Blackburn said. "I know many of the incoming folks have agenda items they're hot to talk about and we'll begin getting a sense of each other and where we want to go together, because of course the staff runs the city, we give the guidance."

SHOTS

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Hood River County Fairgrounds.

One bullet entered the home of Cord Adams on Kusisto Road and lodged in the microwave oven. Four people were in the room at the time, according to English.

"Based on the investigation, the deputies were able to determine that the shots were allegedly fired from Mr. Hazlett's home," in the 3000 block of Kusisto, English said.

English said alcohol was involved, but both men complied with officers. They were arrested and taken to NORCOR in The Dalles. Both are scheduled to appear in Hood River Circuit Court on Jan. 12.

English said New Year's Eve was "uneventful overall. I think the fact that it was on a weeknight and it was pretty darned cold were mitigating factors," English said.

Extra deputies were out on DUII patrol but made no arrests nor issued citations.

The same was the case in the City of Hood River, ac-

ording to Sgt. Don Cheli. A 31-year-old Hood River man was cited for DUII on the evening of Jan. 1, but that was the sole citation, Cheli said.

"It was a little slow, which was good," he said. The Jan. 1 arrest stemmed from a citizen reporting seeing an apparently impaired man getting into his vehicle downtown on Columbia. Officer Sal Rivera stopped and arrested the man in the 1300 block of Cascade.

"We had extra cars out for

'It was a little slow which was good ... we had extra cars out for DUII saturation and we made a lot of car stops but no arrests.'

— SGT. DON CHELI

DUII saturation, and we made a lot of car stops but no arrests," Cheli said.

The New Year's Day acci-

dent happened at about 7 p.m. at Oak and Second streets.

According to witnesses, Maureen Vargas, 56, and her husband, Orlando, were crossing the street and were reported to be inside the crosswalk when a 76-year-old Mosier man allegedly struck Maureen Vargas and continued without stopping, after turning right from Oak onto Second.

Orlando Vargas was able to move out of the way without being hit, but his wife fell to the ground and suffered a broken wrist and strained back, according to Cheli. Orlando Vargas chased the vehicle on foot and threw a soda bottle, striking it. The driver then stopped and Vargas confronted the man, who was later cited for Failure to Perform the Duties of a Driver.

Maureen Vargas was treated and released at Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital, and the case got somewhat confusing when officers contacted her there, according to Cheli.

"Upon being released Vargas was unsure if the truck had actually made contact with her or if she had sustained the injuries from jump-

ing out of the way," Cheli said. "She said the whole incident happened very quickly."

Cheli said, "at this point, all we have to go by is the statements of several witnesses, who were certain that the vehicle had struck her; but the victim said she is unsure if that was what happened." The case is under review by the Hood River County District Attorney's office.

On Dec. 29, at 9:47 p.m., Hood River Police stopped a vehicle on Interstate 84 near milepost 66, for improper lane change violation.

Officers contacted the driver, Kenneth Sitz, 54, from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and detected an odor of marijuana from inside the vehicle. According to Cheli, Sitz admitted to having a small amount of marijuana inside his vehicle. He consented to a search, and more than eight pounds of marijuana and just under a quarter-pound of hashish were allegedly recovered, according to Cheli. Sitz was lodged at NORCOR on charges of Possession and Delivery of Marijuana and Possession, Delivery and Manufacturing of Hashish.

LOLLEY

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fending Lolley for his "grandfatherly" influence in their lives.

But Deputy District Attorney Carrie Rasmussen presented a far different picture of Lolley. Rasmussen read statements by three parents of the girls abused, and one mother, whose first name is Tabitha, spoke to Lolley and the judge. Tabitha was accompanied by victims' advocate Gloria Needham.

"My daughter cries every time she hears your name," Tabitha said. "I pray there are not children out there who even worse things happened. I knew you for years and I gave you the benefit of the doubt, but I know now I was in denial about you. And I feel guilty for that. I thought that some old people just go about things differently, they can be touchy-feely. But a trust that is broken can't be fixed. I just hope this helps protect other children."

Lolley initially faced 14

counts of first-degree sexual abuse after allegedly touching the private parts of three girls, ages 8, 10, and 11, on multiple occasions in 2013. He is the former owner of KV Pottery on Tucker Road in Hood River, where he taught pottery classes to children and adults before the business closed after his arrest.

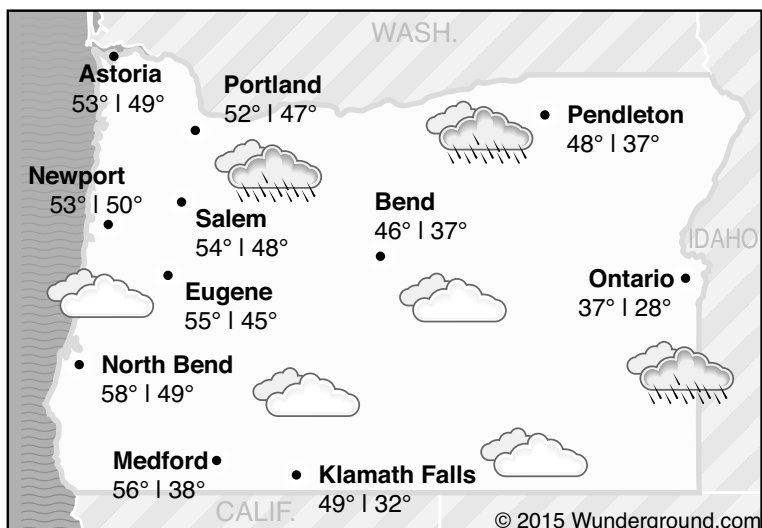
Lolley was originally scheduled to enter a plea in April, but his attorney last spring asked the court to push back the plea date to June 30, and it was pushed back again to August. When Lolley was arrested back in December 2013, he was originally held in NORCOR on \$300,000 bail, but Starns was able to get the bail reduced to \$40,000 in February 2014, despite the objections of Rasmussen. She noted at the time that Lolley had a 1989 conviction for public indecency after exposing his genitals to two young girls as they walked to school in front of his home in Hood River.

Families of the alleged new victims also made impassioned requests to the court to keep Lolley in jail.

Hood River Weather Forecast

| Date | Forecast | Daytime / Overnight High / Low (°F) |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Today Jan 7 | Partly Cloudy | 48° / 35° |
| Thurs. Jan 8 | Partly Cloudy | 47° / 35° |
| Fri. Jan 9 | Partly Cloudy | 48° / 36° |
| Sat. Jan 10 | Partly Cloudy | 49° / 37° |
| Sun. Jan 11 | AM Clouds PM Sun | 45° / 38° |
| Mon. Jan 12 | Mostly Cloudy | 48° / 40° |
| Tues. Jan 13 | Partly Cloudy | 44° / 36° |

Oregon Weather Map



Today's Forecast

Partly sunny, with a high near 44. East wind around 6 mph.

Humidity 85%
Wind Speed WNW 8 G 22 MPH
Barometer NA
Dewpoint 47°F (8°C)
Visibility NA

Last Update on 05 Jan 7:00 am PST

Actual High / Low

AGRIMET HOOD RIVER OR
Lat: 45.6842 Long: -121.5181 Elev: 510
http://uspest.org

| | | |
|--------|---|-------|
| Dec 29 | - | 38/28 |
| Dec 30 | - | 28/20 |
| Dec 31 | - | 40/29 |
| Jan 1 | - | 30/14 |
| Jan 2 | - | 43/16 |
| Jan 3 | - | 40/33 |
| Jan 4 | - | 36/32 |

Updated Monday, Jan 5
at 9:00 a.m. PST
Data from www.weather.com

WINTER CHECKLIST
Tires LES SCHWARZ

- ✓ TRACTION TIRES
- ✓ CHAINS
- ✓ TIRE STUDS
- ✓ BATTERIES
- ✓ SNOW WHEELS
- ✓ SIPING

HOOD RIVER
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