



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

WARM THANKS

Larry, a guest at Hood River Warming shelter, shakes hands with volunteer Matt Rankin, right, as the shelter closes March 8 for the season. Throughout February until the final day, the non-profit program used the north wing of the Port of Hood River Expo Center for overnight shelter for the homeless. The shelter will return for a sixth season in November at a location to be announced. At left are volunteers Bev Carpenter and Rev. Anna Carmichael, and at right is volunteer Tom Penchoen.

SCHOOLS

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the number of instructional days," Goldman said.

A third formula, for \$7.85 billion, seems so unlikely of Legislative approval that "we kind of laugh at it," Goldman said, "and it is still woefully low."

Parent volunteers set up letter writing tables Thursday at May Street Elementary during its annual art auction and lasagna feed. Residents were provided with lists of key legislators, and sample letters to sign, and "talking points" to use to draft their own.

One of those legislators, Rep. Mark Johnson, also serves on the school board.

"I have seen some really well-written letters. It can be very effective, and so much better than a form letter," Johnson said Wednesday.

Goldman described what he called a "gloomy" prospect for HRCSD funding in the next two years.

With anything short of the \$7.85 billion option, cuts are inevitable, Goldman said. "I have informed my administrative team that everything is on the table. We are looking at everything."

"When cutting we will be cutting bone. There are no good choices," Goldman said.

The board adopted one resolution on school funding Wednesday, and asked Goldman to craft another, more specific one, for its next meeting, April 8.

The adopted resolution supports the Oregon School Boards Association's "Promise of Oregon" campaign. It states, in part, "we believe funding a strong system of public education is the best investment Oregonians can make to strengthen

our economy, create thriving communities and improve the quality of life for every Oregonian." It states that "Oregon public schools have experienced a prolonged period of unstable and inadequate" state funding, and "the case must be made that the Legislature needs to prioritize investments" in education including full-day kindergarten (already done in HRCSD).

Board member Bob Danko said that the resolution is "the easy way out," and suggested adding a "whereas" to the OSBA resolution stating that "we need to raise revenue."

"The (OSBA) resolution is a political tool that we hope makes a difference," Goldman said, recommending against modifying it. After some discussion, the board asked Goldman to return with another resolution that "specifically addresses raising revenue."

Goldman's focus in recent weeks has been on machinations in Salem. He told the board that last week in Salem he heard testimony on all kinds of service budgets, ranging from early education to human services.

"I heard some very compelling things around why people can't make ends meet. There are a lot of important needs and not enough money

to go around," Goldman said.

He said the K-12 system is one of those underfunded clients and "If we don't advocate for it, we won't get any of it."

He described the prospects for David Douglas School District, which without more funding will face furlough days and 30-40 student class sizes. (Hood River class sizes currently average 25-26 at the elementary level, and could increase depending on the budget outcome, according to Goldman.)

In his message on Tuesday, Goldman said, "As I've shared with you all before, Oregon schools have the second highest class sizes, some of the lowest number of instructional minutes for students, resulting in some of the lowest statewide graduation and literacy rates in the nation (of course Hood River County gets markedly different and better results as a result of our community's support of our local option levy and capital bonds and our fabulous teachers and staff). However, after nine years in a row of program reductions due to state funding shortfalls, a \$7.235 billion state education budget will cause the Hood River County Schools to once again make unfortunate choices that will directly impact students."

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Full Sail employees okay brewery sale

By KIRBY NEUMANN-REA
News editor

At Full Sail, the next rounds are on Encore.

Hood River's largest and oldest brewery is now owned by Oregon Craft Brewers Co., the temporary name of a group of investors whose primary partner is Encore Investments of San Francisco.

The 78 vested employees and past employees of Full Sail voted nearly unanimously March 6 to sell to OCBC, who own no breweries.

(See hoodrivernews.com for a full version of this story.)

"The fact we were able to do this and honor the fact that our employees helped us grow and value the company feels really good," said Irene Firmat, Full Sail CEO. "It allows us to fulfil the promise of what we did in 1999, which we felt pretty strongly at the time," Firmat said of the decision to change to an employee-owned company.

"The thing that really appealed is it's not a brewery, and they need each of our employees, in production, sales, marketing, and administrative," Firmat said, "and they understand the brand."

OCBC made an unsolicited offer, according to Firmat. The yes vote was 98 percent; ballots were cast by current employees and former employees who own stock.

"People had a whole lot of information, about 150 pages of documents," Firmat said of the prospectus. Based on questions she answered before the vote, "I was impressed with how thoroughly people read it."

"The next step to take the company and continue to grow. (The vote) was the best outcome to honor the shares," she said.

Full Sail will be adding six new sales staff immediately, and likely more will be hired.

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