

HOMES: Owners want to decide for themselves if they want their homes on the list

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formed at all.”

His house was built in 1890 with cedar, he said, and under the historic designation he tried to find out if that meant he would have to use cedar if he rebuilt or replaced part of the house. But city staff was vague about how the local law affected what he could or could not do to the house, he said, and city council also could not give him the answers he sought.

“It was just really convoluted,” he said. “I just wasn’t really happy with it.”

He said he would like the city to revise the ordinance so he and others can decide for themselves if they want their homes on the list.

Pendleton city attorney

Nancy Kerns said Wednesday morning she did not think the appeals court ruling would invalidate or require a change to the city’s law, but the city was going to research what the ruling means relative to O’Hanlon’s property. She said the facts in his case could differ from the facts in the Lake Oswego case.

But within the hour she called back and said the city was going to back off because Kearns learned Wednesday morning that the Lake Oswego case was going to the Oregon Supreme Court. Until that ruling comes down, she said, the city is not taking any action.

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HOMICIDE: Haven’t been able to determine who the firearm belongs to

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that could shed light on what happened. Edmiston said there is no one he could all a suspect, but there are people detectives want to talk to. Providing more information on who they are could harm the investigation, he said.

Edmiston said police do not know if the two groups of gunshots that night were part of a firefight or separate events. He also said nothing connects the killing to other recent crimes or gang violence. Police also seized one firearm at the scene.

“We still have not been able to determine who the firearm belongs to,” he said.

In the immediate aftermath of the crime, dispatchers relayed a description of a possible suspect as a Hispanic male that included specific details about clothing as well as a white sport utility vehicle could be involved. Edmiston said detectives are trying to piece that information together as well.

AUDIT: City will refund \$74K back to the Umatilla County Tax Assessor’s Office

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would have me in handcuffs.”

Despite the city’s arguments, Tremper stood by his opinions.

For the audit of the city’s finances, he issued a “qualified audit” which means findings were mostly good with a few reservations. For the urban renewal agency, he submitted an “adverse opinion,” meaning he disagreed with the financial statements and felt they were incompatible with accounting standards.

Even though an adverse opinion is considered the worst evaluation of an audit, Hall said it was strictly a disagreement over the debt definition and not evidence of malfeasance or impropriety.

Upon Hall’s recommendation, the council rejected both of Tremper’s findings, a rarity in government audits.

Tremper did not attend the meeting and did not respond to *East Oregonian* requests for comment.

Still, the city admitted it exceeded its debt limit by a smaller amount than the audit estimated and will refund \$74,628 back to the Umatilla County Tax Assessor’s Office.

Unless a government entity is breaking financial laws, Oregon Department of Revenue spokesman Bob Estabrook said the state lets local government agencies sort out disagreements.

Hall wrote the county will accept whatever solution the city arrives at.

As the city slowly phases out its urban renewal agency, Hall said the poor audits will end it on a bittersweet note, having come in the wake of raising Milton-Freewater property values by \$16 million over the agency’s lifespan.

“They say that ‘Cowgirls don’t cry,’ but I’ll tell you I did cry over that (audit),” she said. “It absolutely devastated me.”

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GOVERNMENT: Only 1 in 10 Americans have a lot of confidence in organized labor

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government and other institutions:

Drop in support for presidency driven by Republicans

The 11 percent who say they’re confident in the presidency approaches a record low measured by the same survey in 1996, when just 10 percent said they had a great deal of confidence in the executive branch. The 44 percent who now say they have hardly any confidence at all is at a record high.

Historically, and not surprisingly, the survey has found that Democrats have more confidence in the executive branch when the sitting president is a Democrat, and Republicans have more confidence when the president is a Republican. In the 2014 survey, just 3 percent of Republicans say they have a lot of confidence in the presidency, down from a record high 45 percent who said so in 2002, when overall confidence in the presidency was also at the highest point the survey has measured, at 27 percent. Then, President George W. Bush was still riding a crest of support in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

But confidence among Democrats has dropped some in recent years, too, from 25 percent in 2010 to 18 percent in 2014.

Just 1 in 10 independents expressed a lot of confidence in the presidency in 2014.

Supreme Court falls across party lines

The 2014 survey finds that confidence in the Supreme

Court has fallen among Democrats, Republicans and independents since 2012, driving confidence in the court to a 40-year low overall. The 26 percent of Democrats with a lot of confidence in the court is a record low in the history of the survey, while Republican confidence in the high court, at 22 percent, is also near an all-time low.

Independents are the least likely to have a great deal of confidence in the court, at 20 percent.

Overall, 2 in 10 say they have hardly any confidence in the court, a record high, while more than half have only some confidence.

Nobody likes Congress

If there’s one issue than unites Americans, it’s that hardly anyone has much confidence in Congress, the survey shows. Over half of Americans express hardly any confidence at all, while only 7 percent of Democrats, 5 percent of independents and 3 percent of Republicans have a great deal of confidence in Congress.

Younger Americans — those under 35 — are a bit more likely than older ones to express confidence in Congress, but even among that group only 10 percent say they have a lot of confidence in the legislative branch.

Poor marks for media, too

Confidence has decreased since the 1970s, when about a quarter of Americans expressed a great deal of confidence in the press. Now, a record low of 7 percent have a lot of confidence, while 44 percent have hardly any con-

fidence at all.

Republicans are the least likely to express a lot of confidence in the press, at only 3 percent, but Democrats aren’t far behind at 10 percent.

Only 1 in 10 has a lot of confidence in television, which is also near a record low.

Financial institutions rebound, still low

Americans’ confidence in banks and financial institutions reached an all-time low of 11 percent in 2010, but has rebounded slightly since then, with 15 percent now expressing a great deal of confidence. That’s still far from the survey’s all-time high of 42 percent in 1977.

Just 18 percent have a great deal of confidence in major companies, up a bit from 13 percent who said so in 2010 but down from 31 percent who said so in 1984.

Only 1 in 10 Americans has a lot of confidence in organized labor.

The General Social Survey is administered by NORC at the University of Chicago, with financing from the National Science Foundation, primarily using in-person interviewing. The GSS started in 1972 and completed its 30th round in 2014.

The typical sample size was 1,500 prior to 1994, but increased to 2,700-3,000 until 2008, and decreased to 2,000 for the most recent surveys. Resulting margins of error are between plus or minus 3.1 percentage points for the smaller sample sizes and plus or minus 2.2 percentage points for the larger sample sizes at the 95 percent confidence level.

2 Russians, 1 American return from 6 months on space station

MOSCOW (AP) — A Soyuz capsule carrying two Russians and an American landed in Kazakhstan on Thursday, ending the astronauts’ nearly six months aboard the International Space Station.

The capsule carried Russians Alexander Samokutayev and Elena Serova and NASA’s Barry Wilmore. They blasted off for the space station on Sept. 26.

The capsule landed upright in heavy fog southeast of the town of Dzhezkazgan on the Kazakh steppes. Despite the poor visibility, recovery workers arrived within several minutes and all three astronauts were extracted within a half-hour.

They were taken to recliner-style chairs set up near the capsule, to begin their readjustment to gravity and undergo brief medical tests. All three appeared in good condition. And Serova smiled broadly as she sat in the chair bundled up against temperatures a few degrees below freezing.

Three other astronauts remain aboard the space station. They will be joined by three others on March 27; two of those — Scott Kelly and Mikhail Kornienko — are to spend a full year on the ISS.

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