

PENDLETON

Pot regulations to be decided in April

Open house will allow input on Thursday

East Oregonian

Ahead of a planned city council vote April 7, the city of Pendleton will hold an open house Thursday to discuss marijuana regulations.

According to a press release, city staff will discuss potential regulations and gather community input at the open house, followed by a vote by the planning commission April 2 and a final vote by the city council April 7.

Pendleton staff intends to recommend regulating medical mari-

juana dispensaries and recreational marijuana retailers under the same rules.

The city council passed a year-long moratorium on medical marijuana dispensaries last year, which is set to expire April 30.

During that moratorium, Oregon voters passed Measure 91, which legalized the possession and sale of marijuana.

Although possession of marijuana will be legal starting July 1, the Oregon Liquor Control Commission is still formulating state-wide regulations for the drug's sale.

Conversely, the OLCC already has regulations for dispensaries in place, which include prohibition



of dispensaries within 1,000 feet of schools or other dispensaries, a clean criminal background check for the person responsible for the dispensary and extensive security measures to the dispensary's facility.

The release states members of

the city council and planning commission may attend the open house, but will not deliberate the issues.

The open house is scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday at Pendleton City Hall, 500 S.W. Dorion Ave.

In comparison to the heavy issues facing the city in the coming weeks, the agenda for Tuesday's city council meeting is fairly sparse.

The council will discuss and consider ongoing topics like creating a tree commission, applying for a community block development grant for the city's Restore Pendleton program, and other minor upkeep and maintenance issues.

BRIEFLY

Pilot Rock scrutinizes dispatch costs

PILOT ROCK — The Pilot Rock City Council plans to dig into what it pays Umatilla County to handle dispatch duties. The council will meet Tuesday at 7 p.m. at city hall, 144 N. Alder Place, Pilot Rock.

The council at its March 3 meeting discussed the sheriff's office's \$6,000 bill for handling emergency dispatch for the city. That is in addition to the \$7,300 the county receives annually from 9-1-1 funds for Pilot Rock, and councilors questioned if the sheriff's office is shifting the cost of dispatch to the cities.

Rather than take action, the city council asked staff to return with more information about services what Pilot Rock pays for and what other cities are paying.

Pilot Rock police Sgt. Greg Stallings will present that information at Tuesday's meeting, and then the council could vote on the matter. A key reason the city council could OK the bill is that it would cost a lot more for the city to operate its own 24-hour emergency dispatch center.

Among other business, the council will consider transferring \$7,000 from the city contingency fund to the general fund's capital improvements budget to help cover the cost of the broken "Welcome to Pilot Rock" sign. The city budgeted \$1,000 for capital improvements for 2014-15 fiscal year, but replacing the sign costs \$8,000.

Maiocco makes Rocky Heights principal recommendation

HERMISTON — After completing the interview process for a new principal at Rocky Heights Elementary, Hermiston School District superintendent Fred Maiocco is recommending Jerad Farley to the school board.

Farley currently serves as a district instructional coach at Wahitis Elementary School in the Othello School District in Othello, Washington, where he also completed his administrative internship and serves as head track coach. He has previous experience teaching fifth and sixth grade and coaching varsity football.

Farley said in a statement that he will miss the staff and families in Othello but looks forward to working with "the amazing team at Rocky Heights and the Hermiston School District in their quest for excellence."

The school board will consider the recommendation at its April 13 meeting. Farley would replace BJ Wilson, who accepted a job as Hermiston's special education director, starting July 1.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to news@eastoregonian.com

IRRIGON

Library officially reopens to the public

Occupancy permit restored Monday, doors closed since last June

By **GEORGE P LAVEN**

East Oregonian

Since last year, Amber Gomez and her three children have peered in the windows of the vacant Irrigon Public Library wondering when the building would finally reopen to the community.

At long last, the wait is over.

The Oregon Trail Library District welcomed patrons back for the first time Friday after complications with the adjacent city hall forced Irrigon's \$1.2 million library to close for nine months.

The library was initially opened for about three weeks between May 19 and June 11, 2014, before its occupancy permit was pulled over a fire-resistant wall that was not built to code. Meanwhile, Gomez said she's had to take her kids — 8-year-old Maya, 6-year-old Cooper and 3-year-old Ayden — to nearby Umatilla to check out their favorite books.

"It was a little frustrating, but we're glad it's open now," she said. "They love reading. We're going to be here every day."

Though the building's doors are once again unlocked, the main library area remains empty save for a few shelves still packaged in green plastic wrap. It will take some time still before all the new furniture is ordered, and volunteers can unpack the thousands of books still in boxes, said OTLD Director Marsha Richmond.

Until then, a smaller selection of materials including new fiction, non-fiction and children's books are available for check-out in the meeting room just next door.

"Our whole priority was opening the doors and serving the public right off the bat," Richmond said.

For years, Irrigon's library was located in a retrofitted school bus located just behind the city's only gas station. Fundraising began for



Marsha Richmond, director of the Oregon Trail Library District, says books will fill Irrigon's new library in the coming days. The town hasn't had library services since last June.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney



Maya Schwabrow, 8, gets lost in a book Friday at Irrigon's temporary library at Irrigon City Hall. The town hasn't had library services since last June.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

"Our whole priority was opening the doors and serving the public right off the bat."

— **Marsha Richmond**, OTLD Director

The two properties are, however, located on separately owned lots which legally requires a two-hour firewall between them. The wall was built below standard, and therefore deemed a fire hazard.

A local building official yanked the occupancy permit, leaving the library to operate from its front patio until late October when the weather began turning cold. Irrigon residents have been without any library since then.

In order to obtain a waiver for the firewall, the library district and city

had to agree how they would manage common spaces in the building including the meeting room, lobby and restrooms. Emotions ran high as attorneys for both sides swapped proposals, ultimately reaching an agreement in late February. The occupancy permit was restored on Monday.

With the matter resolved, district board member Barb Huwe said it feels like a weight has been lifted off their shoulders.

"It's going to be beautiful," Huwe said. "The dust will settle, and this will be the nicest thing to happen to the Oregon Trail Library District and city of Irrigon in forever."

Hours for the Irrigon library are posted on the Oregon Trail Library District's website at www.oregon-trail.plinkit.org.

Contact **George Plaven** at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4547.

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