

**PENDLETON**

# City looks at big hikes to catch up on infrastructure

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

Ahead of some tough decisions on utility rate hikes and implementing system development charges, the Pendleton City Council reviewed information from its utility master plan at a workshop Tuesday.

Simply put, the city has fallen behind on water, sewer and stormwater repairs, necessitating utility rate increases and charging fees to developers for their impact on utility systems.

Within the next 20 years, the city estimates it will have to pay nearly \$18 million to maintain the city's current water infrastructure.

To pay for that, consultants recommended raising water rates by about \$5 every year, from \$37.50 per month in 2015 to \$93.83 in 2025. Other costs would be paid for with a system development charge, which would cost \$3,420 for an average housing development.

Water rates in Pendleton have risen 194 percent from 1994 to 2014. Water rates rose 7 percent last year to pay for membrane replacements at the treatment plant.

The consultants estimated sewer rates will need to rise by 57 percent over the next decade to cover the \$14 million cost. The average sewer customer would see their bill rise from \$39.73 today to \$51.86 in a decade. A \$3,089 systems development charge would also be established under the firm's recommendation.

Sewer rates have increased 197 percent over the past 20 years. The last rate increase was in 2007, when the city raised it by 98 percent to help pay for the resource recovery facility.

A stormwater utility fee would be a completely new cost for Pendleton taxpayers, although it's blunted by a relatively low price tag.

Consultants recommended a \$7.25 flat rate per month, as

well as a \$125 system development charge.

With residents on fixed income always an obstacle for rate hikes, Councilor Al Plute recommended rate hikes be assessed as liens for the homes of the elderly, which will be paid for by whomever owns the house next.

City Manager Robb Corbett said the council's next challenge is deciding if they wanted to adopt the whole system development charge recommendation or just a fraction of them.

Resident Rex Morehouse argued against implementing all of the system development charges, saying it would put Pendleton at a competitive disadvantage to other cities.

City officials responded by saying many cities in Central Oregon were expanding rapidly while having high system development charges.

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

## Grass bed beef

A pair of cows sun themselves in a pasture as other members of their herd graze Wednesday south of Pendleton.

## Hansell plans tour to Eastern Oregon

East Oregonian

Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, is planning another road trip for five west-side Democrat colleagues to visit his rural northeastern Oregon district.

Hansell, elected to the state Senate in 2012, will bring four senators and one representative to visit Morrow and Wallowa counties on Oct. 26-27.

Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, Sen. Chris Edwards, D-Eugene, Sen. Lee Beyer, D-Springfield, Sen. Ginny Burdick, D-Portland, and Rep. Caddy McKeown, D-Coos Bay, will join Hansell and Rep. Greg Barreto, R-Cove, for the tour.

Hansell said the visit, similar to one he planned in May 2014 for Sen. Michael Dembrow, a Portland Democrat and the chair of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, is a way of showing urban lawmakers what's important in rural parts of the state.

"For too long we have been trying to tell members of the majority party about the issues that we face in Eastern Oregon," Hansell said in a news release. "I believe if we can show them firsthand the challenges we face, we will be able to work together to pass legislation that helps instead of hurts our region."

The Eastern Oregon Women's Coalition and the

Northeast Oregon Water Association are planning the Boardman stop, which will include discussions on the challenges of transferring family farms to the next generation, an overview of water and agricultural issues in the Umatilla basin and a meeting with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

In Wallowa County, which both Hansell and Barreto represent, the delegation will discuss wolves, forest collaboratives and the recent wildfire in Troy. Those activities are being arranged by the Cattleman's Association, local ranchers, and John Williams of OSU Extension Services in Enterprise.

**HERMISTON**

## U.F.O. Gaming Arena provides space to play

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

A new Main Street business is hoping to foster a more connected community of gamers in Hermiston.

Robert Rivera, owner of U.F.O. Gaming Arena at 256 E. Main St., said he knows people can play video games in their own homes, but U.F.O. Gaming offers the opportunity to get out of the house and meet other video game enthusiasts.

He said his shop — complete with six high-definition televisions and Xbox Ones, new games, two top-of-the-line gaming computers, an array of couches and a supply of snacks for sale — is similar to the one he and his friends hung out in when he was growing up in California. He hopes U.F.O. Gaming becomes a go-to hangout in Hermiston.

"There's not that much stuff for youth to do around here," he said.

In addition to regular pay-by-the-hour gaming, Rivera said he plans to host plenty of local tournaments with prizes and is happy to rent out the store to anyone who wants to throw a birthday party or other event inside.

He plans to put together a tournament to celebrate the release of Halo 5 at the end of the month. He said one benefit of coming down to



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Owner Robert Rivera stands by a Thermaltake gaming computer at U.F.O. Gaming Arena.

U.F.O. Gaming is getting to try out new games, and also to be able to play friends online even if gamers don't have their own Xbox Live account.

The concept of video games as sport is taking a long time to catch on in the United States, but in other countries the championships for various games fill stadiums and draw major sponsorships. The League of Legends World Championship held in London this weekend is offering a \$1 million prize to the winning team.

Rivera said he would love to see a minor league or major league gaming team come out of Hermiston eventually. He also plans to contact area schools to see if they are interested in hosting gaming clubs.

After being open about six weeks, Rivera said word is finally spreading and he is getting more regular customers. One group came in recently and spent the entire day at the store, not leaving until close to midnight.

"Their parents were fine with it," Rivera said. "They said, 'At least they're staying out of trouble.'"

U.F.O. Gaming Arena is open 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to midnight on Friday and 10 a.m. to midnight on Saturday and Sunday. On Monday through Thursday the cost is \$6 an hour, \$8 for three hours or \$12 for an all-day pass. On Friday through Sunday cost is \$8 an hour, \$12 for three hours or \$20 for an all-day pass.

## Investigation in Weston leads to three arrests

East Oregonian

Umatilla County sheriff's deputies arrested three local offenders Thursday night in Weston. Sheriff Terry Rowan said more charges could be in the pipeline.

Rowan said deputy Rachel Faber was patrolling Weston and spotted a van at a residence on the 53700 block of Kirk Road.

Faber knows who usually drives that van and who owns it, Rowan said. It was not supposed to be at that residence. Faber then contacted deputy Nathan Good for backup.

While Good was en route, she saw more indicators of suspicious behavior, Rowan said, including flashlight use. Good arrived, and Faber caught Thomas Lee Nelson,

23, of College Place, on the property. Rowan said she arrested him on a parole violation.

Good circled back and found the van was gone, Rowan said, but he knew where it belonged — 105 S. Franklin St., Weston. Sure enough, Good found Tyler Jonathan Hays, 18, and Clinton Stewart, 54. Both were wanted on warrants.

**BUSINESS BRIEFLY**

### Wildhorse hosts employment fair

MISSION — People seeking jobs are invited to the Employment & Training Career Fair.

The event is Thursday, Oct. 22 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Cayuse Hall at Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off Highway 331, Mission. It is free of charge.

About 30 vendors will be present and some may conduct on-the-spot interviews. People are encouraged to bring a résumé. Also, a workshop at 10 a.m. will present information about free business resources.

For more information, contact MaryAnn Rhoads at 541-429-7188 or [maryannrhoads@ctuir.org](mailto:maryannrhoads@ctuir.org).

### Subdivision set for grand opening

BOARDMAN — The city of Boardman is excited to announce the grand opening of the new Tuscany subdivision.

The public is invited to tour the houses constructed by Riverwood Homes of Boise. The open house is Friday, Oct. 23 from 3-6 p.m. The subdivision is located on Main Street south of Wilson Lane, Boardman.

Refreshments will be served and guests will be entered into a drawing for a raffle prize.

### Sun Terrace celebrates 15 years

HERMISTON — In recognition of its 15th anniversary, Sun Terrace Hermiston is hosting an open house.

The public is invited to celebrate the occasion Friday, Oct. 23 from 2-4 p.m. at 1550 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston. The event includes door prize drawings, refreshments, music and a tour of the model room. People are encouraged to stop by and share memories and make new friends.

For more information, call 541-564-2595.

### Business luncheon highlights morale

HERMISTON — Susan Bower will talk about how to boost morale and increase productivity in the workplace during the upcoming Hermiston Chamber of Commerce B2B Luncheon.

Bower is a professional development specialist and human resource consultant. The presentation is Tuesday, Oct. 27 with networking starting at 11:45 a.m. at the Hermiston Conference Center, 415 S. Highway 395. The lunch, which is catered by Country Gentleman, cost \$10 for members and \$13 for nonmembers.

In addition, the *Hermiston Herald* is interested in feedback about its recent enhancements. Bower will lead a focus group discussion following the main program.

For more information or to RSVP, contact 541-567-6151 or [kelly@hermistonchamber.com](mailto:kelly@hermistonchamber.com).


## Growing Pains or Sever's Disease

Growing pains are pain symptoms relatively common in children. They can be experienced in children and often attributed to rapid growth. Emotional distress during adolescence can also trigger some of these pains.

The most common cause of heel pain in athletic children has been reported to Sever's Disease. This entity is actually an inflammation of the growth area on the bottom of the heel; more than just growing pains. Sports that involve running and jumping are sure to aggravate the heel. The heel pain limits activity and may interfere with generalized comfort of the feet and their performance.

Supporting the feet properly through the use of custom arch supports and focused stretching programs eliminates the heel pain in ninety percent of the affected patients. Custom arch supports are far superior than heat molded or over the counter inserts.

If your child is suffering from heel pain, perhaps it is time to see Dr. Clarke or Dr. Hampton. Convenient, in-office x-rays may be taken in the office to validate the diagnosis.



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