

## POT: Sales would give city competitive advantage over other Eastern Oregon cities

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only “ballpark estimates” and that he rounded up some of the figures used in his calculations. But his point to the rest of the council and the public is that marijuana could be a viable source of revenue for the city.

Despite his arguments, members of the council that have opposed marijuana sales seemed unconvinced.

Councilor Tom Young brought up the fact that the state was going to change its revenue sharing formula in 2017 and would disperse funds based on how many recreational marijuana retailers were in a community. He added that there were going to be more “pothead stores” on the west side of the state, which means they would get the lion’s share of the revenue.

Plute countered by saying that even having as few as two marijuana stores in Pendleton would offset most of the loss in revenue that would come with the change in funding formula.

Plute said an outright ban of marijuana from the council could negatively affect the city in other ways.

During a recent door-to-door campaign to convince voters to pass a 5-cent per gallon gas tax on the North Hill, Plute said prospective voters told him they wouldn’t vote for the gas tax because the council was “stupid” to pass on marijuana tax revenue

while requesting taxes on fuel. Mayor Phillip Houk said he’s gotten the opposite feedback.

“I get lots of emails, lots of conversations, from people that are pleased about not wanting us to become the ‘drug mecca of Eastern Oregon,’” he said.

On Thursday, Plute said legalizing marijuana sales in Pendleton would give the city a competitive advantage over other Eastern Oregon cities, none of which have allowed recreational pot sales.

Walla Walla has two recreational marijuana stores, but transporting the drug across state lines would be a federal crime.

“Why would anybody do that when they can get it here?” Plute said.

The council is scheduled to vote on an ordinance banning medical and recreational marijuana sales Nov. 3, the same evening votes from the populace will be tallied for the gas tax.

It will be an uphill battle to prevent the ordinance from being passed — Plute was joined only by councilors Jane Hill and McKennon McDonald in forming a minority that opposed the drafting of the ordinance.

All three said they preferred to let voters decide on marijuana sales ban on the November 2016 ballot.

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## SHERIFF: Beverlin claims Palmer has declined to contact him

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asked each to submit questions. No questions were submitted by the sheriff.

Steve Beverlin, forest supervisor on the Malheur National Forest, had four questions:

- Did the county court authorize the sheriff to send a letter Oct. 9 to Beverlin and other forest officials stating the county is asserting the coordination process with the Forest Service?

- Does the sheriff have the statutory authority to represent or commit the county in such matters without the county court’s approval?

- Did county counsel review and approve the Oct. 9 letter?

- Was the sheriff’s plan approved per public notification and other requirements set forth in state or federal statute?

The answer to each question by the county court was “No.”

At the work session, Beverlin

expressed how he has tried to contact Palmer through email, phone calls and letters encouraging to him to meet and discuss coordination. Beverlin claims Palmer has declined to do so.

“I don’t know how to coordinate with somebody if they are not going to talk with me,” Beverlin said.

Palmer said he is willing to talk with Beverlin anytime, and insists the two have no personal disputes. “My door is open to the man,” Palmer said.

Without the sheriff in attendance at Wednesday’s work session, the county court decided to end it early because any further discussion would be unfair to Palmer.

Before adjourning, the county court said it hoped the work session and legal opinion would give the sheriff incentive to reach out to Beverlin.

“I just want them to talk,” Labhart said.

## MCKAY: ‘Safety comes first in our district’

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Some of the powder escaped from the bag, which alarmed a school district employee who called 9-1-1.

The district said students and staff followed proper evacuation procedures and were loaded onto buses. They planned to travel to the Pendleton Convention Center, but once the scene was declared safe, students returned to McKay Creek Elementary by 1:50 p.m.

“Safety comes first in our district, so we evacuated as a precaution since we were unsure as to what the substance was at first,” said Assistant Superintendent Tricia Mooney. “These types of incidents can be scary, especially for younger students, so their ability to remain calm and follow directions this afternoon is outstanding.”

Roads near the school were blocked and the Pendleton Fire Department staged at the Free Methodist Church across the street. Pendleton and Oregon State police were also on scene.

Police Chief Stuart Roberts said the state police’s explosive unit was called to the scene and was prepared to deploy a robot to investigate the backpack if it had proven necessary.

## STOCK: Will also receive a side-by-side utility vehicle

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Before 2014, the Round-Up relied on a primary stock contractor to choose rough stock for the rodeo. Bracher and O’Neill that year with the idea that they could push up the quality of the stock another notch. The men are like scouts for equine and bovine athletes. They gather intelligence from cowboys and stock contractors and study stats and videos. They arrange for the standouts to buck in Pendleton.

Good bucking horses (and bulls) are just this side of unrideable, they say. The best buckers take cowboys on crazy rides, but also give the grittiest competitors an opportunity to stick on and earn high scores.

Whatever Bracher and O’Neill are doing seems to be working. In 2014, 19 saddle broncs and 12 bareback horses bucked at both the Round-Up and the NFR. Six stock contractors — Calgary Stapede, Burch Rodeos, Korkow Rodeos, Sankey Rodeo, Outlaw Buckers and Four Star Rodeo — provided the animals.

“The Remuda Award is all about providing the strongest and most even pen of horses possible so that the championship is decided more by the skill of the rider than the luck of the stock draw,” said Jim Bainbridge, senior PRCA public relations coordinator.

This is all music to the ears of O’Neill and Bracher, but

they deflected the praise back onto the Round-Up Association Board of Directors.

“I sincerely commend our board for having faith and confidence enough to step out of the comfort zone and give us this opportunity,” O’Neill said.

O’Neill also praised three PRCA national event representatives (Heath Ford, Rusty Allen and Cody Whitney) who helped the men decide which animals would buck during the final rounds. The men also relied on feedback from cowboys and the seven contractors that supplied bucking stock for the Round-Up this year.

“It’s a team effort,” Bracher said.

Bracher said winning the Remuda Award was one of their long-term goals, but even though they’ve check it off the list, they don’t plan to slow down. “We’ll keep the foot on the throttle.”

Along with the trophy, the Round-Up will receive a Polaris Ranger, a side-by-side utility vehicle. He laughed when asked how the vehicle will be used.

“Feeding stock, of course,” O’Neill said.

The PRCA also honored Three Hills Rodeo, in Bernard, Iowa. The company had six horses selected for the 2014 NFR.

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