

COUNCIL: Also approved a noise ordinance waiver for repaving Highway 395 at night

Continued from 1A

Oregon legislature the city has until the end of 2015 to pass an ordinance banning commercial marijuana activity or refer the question to the voters. If the council can't get the votes to pass an ordinance before then, it still has a provision in its code banning land uses not allowed under federal law. But if federal laws ever changed, marijuana dispensaries would

become legal in the city.

Kirwan said other city councils in the area are deciding the issue on their own, but he supported turning the issue over to the voters in Nov. 2016.

"People have a whole year to educate themselves," he said.

On Monday the city council also approved a noise ordinance waiver allowing the Oregon Department of

Transportation's contractors to work at night to complete a repaving of Highway 395 planned for 2016.

The project will run from Southeast Fourth Street near Safeway to Highway 730. ODOT project leader Tim Rynearson said work will begin sometime in March 2016 and end Aug. 31, 2016. At least one lane of travel will remain open in each direction during the duration of the

project.

During the repaving project ODOT will also replace the flexible yellow poles recently installed at the intersection of Highway 395 and Elm Avenue with a low cement barrier.

"We're already seeing some good results there," Rynearson said.

He said he understood it was inconvenient for drivers to not be able to turn left in

and out of businesses there, but between 2011 and 2013 there were 34 wrecks at the intersection, which is the busiest in all of northeast Oregon.

"We feel it's our responsibility to do what we can to try and mitigate those accidents," he said.

Rynearson said ODOT is working with McDonald's and Wal-Mart to eventually move the McDonald's

entrance on Elm Street further east so it doesn't interfere as much with traffic waiting to cross the highway. The rest of the plan would close the current entrance to McDonald's on Highway 395 and direct traffic through a shared entrance with Wal-Mart farther north.

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EDDIE: Hodgen plans to visit the grave of his World War II veteran father in Athena

Continued from 1A

inscribed, Hodgen learned.

The conversation with news of the memorial was opportune because Hodgen's wife, Sinta, grew up in the Philippines and the couple was headed to the island country only a few days later. Upon arrival, they headed to the cemetery established by the American Battle Monuments Commission in 1960.

A cemetery representative led the couple to the "W" section of the Tablets of the Missing. A nearby inscription said, "Here are recorded the names of Americans who gave their lives in the service of their country and who sleep in unknown graves. 1941-1945." High on the wall was the name of Edward Williams, staff sergeant in the 82nd Bomb Squad, of Oregon. Hodgen, who served as a member of the Oregon Army National Guard, gazed at the name and felt a lump growing in his throat. It had been 70 years since William's death, but all of the family stories about Uncle Eddie swirled in his head.

"Sinta and I found the moment satisfying and very emotional," he said.

He and his wife were invited to return a few weeks later for Veterans Day ceremonies at the cemetery. On that day, they stood amid a crowd that included the American ambassador to the Philippines, U.S. and Filipino military brass bands, Filipino dignitaries and several hundred veterans and family members. Sinta, whose father had served



Contributed photo

Sinta and Phil Hodgen stand with an American World War II veteran they met last year on Veterans Day at the Manila American Cemetery in the Philippines. The veteran was part of the unit that secured the piece of ground where the cemetery was established in 1960.

in the Philippines military, was mesmerized. One American veteran, sitting in a wheelchair, had fought the Japanese for control of the land where they stood. Hodgen asked the veteran if he could pose for a photo with him.

"He was part of the unit that secured the ground where they later put the cemetery. It was incredibly humbling to meet him," Hodgen said. "You're just shaken when you're around someone like that."

This year, back in Pendleton, Hodgen plans to visit the grave of his World War II veteran father at the Athena

Cemetery and stop by the Pioneer Chapel, where his uncle's name is engraved in another memorial wall honoring local service members who gave their lives. He'll attend the Tribute to the Veterans of World War II at the Pendleton Convention Center.

Some other year, though, Hodgen will return to the Manila cemetery to gaze at the name of the uncle he never actually met in person, but will never forget.

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WOLVES: 106 people signed up to testify at the hearing

Continued from 1A

expected to file a lawsuit over the commission's decision.

"I think that's very likely," said Amaroq Weiss of the Center for Biological Diversity. "I think they're in violation of the law. They didn't pay attention to the science."

Conservation groups believe Oregon's wolf population is too small and too fragile to delist, and is present in only 12 percent of its potential territory.

"There's no other species we would delist when it's absent from almost 90 percent of its habitat," Weiss said.

Oregon's ranchers, who had urged the ODFW commission to follow the guidelines of the wolf plan and the recommendations of the department's biologists, cheered the decision.

"I'm relieved," said Todd Nash, wolf committee chairman for the Oregon Cattlemen's Association. "This sends a message to cattle producers that the ODFW Commission will stand by its commitment." Nash said ranchers would not have supported a partial delisting.

"When we were paying the price (of livestock attacks) in Eastern Oregon, we fully believed we were doing it for the whole state," Nash said. "And we were proud to do it."

More than 150 people packed the ODFW hearing room and 106 signed up to

"I am very pleased with the decision of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commissioners ... Now we can continue to move forward managing wolves under the Oregon Wolf Plan."

— Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena

testify. Activists opposed to delisting wolves, many of them wearing matching orange T-shirts, made up a majority of the audience. A sprinkling of men in cowboy hats — Eastern Oregon cattle ranchers who have borne the stress and cost of wolf attacks on livestock — clustered on one side of the hearing room.

First to speak was Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, who testified in favor of delisting the wolf. He was the only legislative official to attend the hearing in person, according to a press release from his office. Chris Barreto testified in favor of delisting on behalf of her husband, Rep. Greg Barreto, R-Cove, who was away on business.

"I am very pleased with the decision of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commissioners to agree with the findings of their staff in following the Wolf Plan and delisting the Canadian Grey Wolf," Hansell said. "Now we can continue to move forward managing wolves under the Oregon Wolf Plan."

The testimony echoed the arguments that have been made since Oregon's

wolf population reached the number of breeding pairs that trigger consideration of delisting under the management plan.

Conservation groups and their allied argue that the state's biological status report on wolves was flawed and should have been peer-reviewed by other scientists. ODFW staff belatedly circulated the report to biologists they knew, but conservationists said that was insufficient.

"If this commission chooses to delist it will make a very sad and powerful statement about who and what it serves," said Jonathan Jelen, development director for the conservation group Oregon Wild.

Livestock producers, however, argued they'd followed the wolf plan in good faith and expected the ODFW Commission to do the same.

"Oregon ranchers honored their obligation to follow the plan," said Jerome Rosa, executive director of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association. "This is one of the reasons wolves multiplied in our state."

EXHIBIT: 1 in 5 Oregonians faces food insecurity

Continued from 1A

Hermiston, founded the nonprofit Farmers Ending Hunger in 2004 after learning Oregon was, at the time, the nation's hungriest state.

Today, one in five Oregonians faces food insecurity. Ziari said he hopes the museum display will continue to galvanize Eastern Oregon farmers to help feed their neighbors.

"Just knowing this was happening in our own state was a shock to me," Ziari said. "This display will educate permanently for hundreds of thousands of people coming through here."

Farmers Ending Hunger represents a collaborative effort between more than 100 farmers, food processors and the Oregon Food Bank to deliver much-needed meals to families. On average, about 284,000 residents rely on emergency food boxes for meals. Of those, 34 percent are children.

Ziari said the organization was born not out of charity, but a labor of love. He recognized Amstad Produce for contributing 30 tons of potatoes per month; Hale Farms for contributing 25 tons of onions per month; and Threemile Canyon Farms for contributing 25-30 beef cows per month.

Enough wheat has also been donated for roughly 5 million pancakes, Ziari said. Much of that food ends up on the west side of the state, and Portland Mayor Hales said he wanted to thank those growers in person for their generosity.

Seventeen percent of Multnomah County's population is food insecure, Hales said, or about 116,000 people.

"You are right on the forefront of an issue that profoundly affects the people I work for," Hales said. "I so value the substance and the spirit of what you're doing."

Morgan, who has served as CEO of the Oregon Food



Staff photo by George Plaven

John Burt, left, and Fred Ziari unveiled the new Farmers Ending Hunger exhibit Saturday at the SAGE Center.

"As farmers, we have a responsibility to be stewards of the land. As humans, we have a responsibility to take care of one another."

— Kenzie Hansell, fourth-generation farmer with Hansell Farms

Bank since 2012, emphasized hunger remains a big challenge in the state. However, the problem isn't that there's not enough food, she said, but a matter of gathering and distributing donations to the hungry.

The Oregon Food Bank stands ready to partner with Farmers Ending Hunger into the future, Morgan said.

"We will not rest until we've eliminated hunger," she said.

Saturday's event ended with a \$10,000 donation to Farmers Ending Hunger from Northwest Farm Credit

Services. Non-farmers can also donate the organization's "Adopt an Acre" program.

Kenzie Hansell, a fourth-generation farmer with Hansell Farms, said that with everybody doing their part, they can continue to build on their success.

"As farmers, we have a responsibility to be stewards of the land," Hansell said. "As humans, we have a responsibility to take care of one another."

To learn more about Farmers Ending Hunger or to make a donation, visit www.farmersendinghunger.com.

HEALTH: Will not provide services related to contraceptives, STDs and mental health

Continued from 1A

and Providence Medical, toured the facility, but Family Health Associates submitted the only bid to provide services. He said the wellness center is scheduled to open Jan. 1 but will only operate half-time until the demand for services necessitates full-time staffing.

The center will provide students, staff and their dependents certain services, such as well visits, physicals, screenings, diagnosing and treating acute illnesses, vaccinations and referrals for more advanced care, Maiocco said. Services relating to contraceptives, sexually transmitted diseases and mental health

will not be provided on school district property, he said.

Executive Director of Special Programs Jon Mishra said the district first had discussions about creating a wellness center in 2013. He said the district was methodical in developing the program and involved all of the stakeholders in the process.

"We're going to be able to provide a service to our children," he said, adding staff members would also benefit from reduced waiting times for simple ailments.

Board member Don Rankin, however, said the district would only further undermine parental authority by establishing

the wellness center. He said the schools now feed many students and take care of them during the week.

"It seems like it keeps snowballing," he said. Rankin requested the item be removed from the consent agenda to be voted on separately.

Board member Maria Duron said parents would still be responsible for the students because they would have to pay for, or have insurance to cover, the cost of the medical services.

"I see this as a great benefit, not another thing we are taking on," she said.

Rankin voted against authorizing the district to finalize the contracts, but the action item passed 6-1.

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DAILY SPECIALS

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