

HERMISTON

Council approves agreements for new traffic signal

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

The Hermiston City Council approved two agreements Monday to install a traffic signal at the intersection of Highway 207 and Elm Avenue near Good Shepherd Medical Center.

Work on the project is scheduled to begin at the end of the year.

The redesign of the intersection will also add a lane that will allow drivers traveling south on Highway 207/11th Street to turn left into Good Shepherd Medical Center. A concrete island will make it easier for pedestrians to cross the road between the hospital and the Oxbow Trail, and the work will also help relieve flooding problems at the entrance to the hospital campus.

The total cost of the project will

be about \$1.6 million. Half of that will be paid by an Oregon Department of Transportation grant, one fourth by the city and one fourth by Good Shepherd Healthcare System.

Assistant city manager Mark Morgan said Good Shepherd expressed interest in the project back in 2014. Expanding the hospital that year resulted in about 300 more trips through the intersection each day.

On Monday the council approved an agreement with ODOT to accept the grant, and approved a second agreement with Good Shepherd.

Morgan said shortly before work begins on the Elm Avenue intersection at the end of the year, ODOT will also be installing a traffic signal at the intersection of 11th Street and Orchard Avenue a few blocks south of the hospital.

In other council news, on Monday the council gave approval to the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center to take out a loan of up to \$1.5 million. The city and Umatilla County have each pledged to back the loan with full faith and credit.

The loan will be used to allow donors to spread large donations over two to five years while giving EOTEC the upfront cash to finish construction in time for the 2017 Umatilla County Fair and Farm-City Pro Rodeo.

City manager Byron Smith said the city's finance department felt comfortable backing the loan because the only money borrowed would be the amount that donors had signed a legally binding agreement to pay back.

"We are very comfortable the

city will not ever have to act on that full faith and credit," he said.

The EOTEC fundraising committee has raised more than \$600,000 in the past couple months, toward a goal to raise \$2 million.

The final action the council took on Monday was to direct the city recorder to post notice about the upcoming filing deadline to run for mayor and municipal judge in the May primary election.

Smith said the city did not have to run a notice in the newspaper or post it in public locations but he felt it was important to make the public aware of the opportunity to run for both open city positions.

Drotzmann told the *East Oregonian* recently he was still undecided about running for re-election.

The mayor's term was changed from two years to four years

when Hermiston adopted a new city charter, but voters rejected an amendment to change the municipal judge position from elected to appointed. At-large city councilors will be up for re-election in November. If more than two candidates file for mayor, the May election will be considered a primary election, with the top two vote-getters advancing to the general election in November.

To run for mayor or municipal judge, candidates must turn in an application to the city recorder by 5 p.m. on March 8. Forms are available at city hall or online at sos.oregon.gov/elections/pages/manuals-tutorials.aspx.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

BRIEFLY

Gubernatorial candidate to visit Pendleton

PENDLETON — Oregon Republican gubernatorial candidate Bud Pierce will be in Pendleton Feb. 17.

Pierce will attend the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce 30th Annual Economic Outlook Luncheon and visit a local Republican women's group before traveling to Baker City for meetings with business leaders and a private fundraiser.

Pierce said in a news release that the governor's office and other Democrats have ignored rural Oregon for too long, and it was time for politicians to start listening to the concerns of people who own businesses and land in rural Oregon. He said revitalizing rural Oregon has been a key element of his agenda.

The economic outlook luncheon is 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Feb. 17 at the Pendleton Convention Center. Tickets are \$25 for chamber members who pay by Feb. 12 and \$30 for non-members or at the door. To purchase tickets call 541-276-7411.

HSD hosting college, career night

HERMISTON — The Hermiston School District is hosting its third annual K-8 College and Career Family Night on Feb. 18.

The event will run from 5-7 p.m. at Armand Larive Middle School, 1497 S.W. Ninth St.

Students will be able to explore their options after high school by talking to representatives from various colleges and career paths, while parents will be provided information about financial aid and other opportunities.

Students who attend will receive a free piggy bank, and drawings will be held for free books.

Electric co-op holds open house

BOARDMAN — Lunch and tours will be provided during an open house at the Boardman Operations Center of Umatilla Electric Cooperative.

The event is Thursday from noon to 1:30 p.m. at 400 N.E. Eldridge Drive, Boardman. Northeast Eldridge Drive, formerly known as Puskarich Avenue, is located off Northeast Columbia Avenue. The event is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact Maria Duron at 541-564-4362

or mariaduron@umatillaelectric.com.

Snowshoe hike provides winter fun

HERMISTON — A snowshoeing trek at Horseshoe Prairie near Tollgate is being coordinated by Hermiston Parks & Recreation.

The winter hike will cover about four miles with sweeping vistas of the North Fork of the Umatilla Canyon. The adult outing is Saturday, Feb. 20, with the group departing at 8 a.m. from Hermiston City Hall, 180 N.E. Second St. The anticipated return time is 5 p.m.

No experience is necessary. Although the terrain is relatively flat, it's considered an intermediate trail due to the distance and difficulty walking through snow.

The cost to participate is \$45 for Hermiston residents and \$56 for non-residents. The fee includes transportation and a picnic lunch. Snowshoe rentals are available for an additional \$10. Registration deadline is Friday.

For more information, visit www.hermistonrecreation.com. To register, call 541-667-5018 or stop by the recreation office, 180 N.E. Second St., Hermiston.

SAGE Saturday features feathered family fun

BOARDMAN — Families are invited to

participate in SAGE Saturday, which includes painting and decorating wooden bird houses.

The free event is Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman. SAGE Saturday offers family activities the second Saturday of each month.

For more information, contact 541-481-7243, sagecenter@portofmorrow.com or visit www.visitsage.com.

M-F chamber to dazzle community

MILTON-FREEWATER — A number of community members will be recognized during the Milton-Freewater Chamber of Commerce annual community awards banquet.

Dazzling Diamonds! An Evening Filled With Brilliance is Saturday, Feb. 20 at 5 p.m. at the Community Building, 109 N.E. Fifth St., Milton-Freewater. Tickets are \$35 each.

In addition to the awards and a prime rib dinner, the event includes an opportunity to go home with a dazzling diamond. A diamond will be placed in a glass of champagne — with 50 glasses to choose from, one person will go home with the diamond, while the other 49 glasses contain a cubic zirconia. The glasses are \$25 each.

Table sponsors are still needed. Anyone interested in promoting their business in this unique setting, call Julie Culjak at 541-938-3727.

PENDLETON

Chalmers seeks at-large council appointment

East Oregonian

for 20 years.

At-large Pendleton City Council candidate Paul Chalmers submitted a letter of interest to Mayor Phillip Houk Tuesday, officially expanding the field of people looking to finish out former councilor Jane Hill's term to five.

In his letter to Houk, Chalmers gave a short summary of why he should be appointed to the seat.

"I have filed for the at-large seat and feel that filling the seat would be a good opportunity to start the process towards potentially filling the four-year term," he said. "I believe my experience in county government and managing a less than popular office, can bring foundational benefit to city government."

The "less than popular office" is the Umatilla County Assessment and Taxation Department, a department he's directed

Chalmers joins fellow at-large candidates Jim Swearingen and Paul Rabitaille in seeking appointment to the seat.

Rick Rohde is also running for the seat, but has not submitted a letter of interest.

James Tibbets and Larry Anderson are seeking appointment, but neither men have filed to run for the seat in the municipal election.

People can apply for appointment to the remainder of Hill's term, which runs through the end of the year, until Feb. 15 at 4 p.m.

Interviews and a potential appointment will be made before the city council meeting Feb. 16.

Anybody who wants to serve on the council beyond 2016 will have to file for election by March 8.

Municipal elections will be held May 17.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call 541-938-5563 or stop by the chamber office at 157 S. Columbia St., Milton-Freewater.

Good Shepherd offers babysitting basics class

HERMISTON — Youths ages 10-15 can learn childcare techniques to prepare them for what to expect when taking care of other people's children.

Babysitting Basics 101 includes information about children's developmental stages, as well as basic first aid and child CPR.

Upcoming sessions are offered Saturday, Feb. 20 or Saturday, March 12. The class runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Conference Center 1 at Good Shepherd Medical Center, 610 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston. The cost is \$30, which includes lunch and all class materials.

Those who plan to attend must pay in advance. To register, or for more information, call 541-667-3509.

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STUDENT OF THE WEEK

Jennifer Shimer
RIVERSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

Jennifer Shimer is a senior at Riverside Junior / Senior High School. In her 4 years as a Riverside Pirate Jennifer has been involved in multiple sports and clubs. Jennifer has played volleyball, basketball, softball, and cheer. She has also been an active member and leader in clubs such as Technology Student Association (TSA), Outdoor club, Key Club, National Honor Society, Future Farmers of America (FFA), and an ASB class officer. She has also received numerous scholar athlete awards, all-league recognitions, and will be graduating with a honors diploma this spring and plans on attending BMCC in the fall. In her spare time Jennifer has put countless hours towards volunteer activities through her club and athletic involvement, she has frequently spoken to younger athletes about the need to follow dreams and not give up on themselves. This past year she started a formal dress exchange called "Wish Upon a Glitz" where girls can borrow dresses for prom and homecoming.

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