

MAYOR: Position will now carry a four-year term

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Municipal Judge Thomas Creasing has already filed for re-election. No one has filed to run against him or Drotzmann.

Drotzmann is currently serving a two-year term, but an update to the city charter approved by Hermiston voters has since changed the mayor’s seat to a four-year term starting in 2017.

If during the May 16 primary election two or fewer candidates file for a position, the election will be considered the general election. If more than two people run for a position, then the

top two candidates with the most votes will advance to run against each other in the November general election.

Filing forms and manuals to run for office are available at city hall, 180 N.E. Second St., or online at sos.oregon.gov/elections/Pages/manuals-tutorials.aspx. Forms must be filed with the city recorder.

Candidates for mayor or municipal judge must be a resident of the city and have lived there for at least one year.

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

ENERGY: Utilities project that doubling the mandate will only raise rates by one percent a year

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sions from coal power plants.

Democratic lawmakers this week negotiated the latest version of the bill in closed-door meetings with representatives of the two utilities and other interested parties. The lawmakers involved in the negotiations said the Oregon Public Utility Commission, which regulates the utilities and is supposed to watch out for their customers, was involved in the negotiations. No one from the commission was called to testify on the latest version of the bill Thursday. The only testimony was from the four lawmakers who negotiated the latest version of the bill, and they gave a quick overview of its contents.

“I can tell you this week the PUC has been in the room,” said Rep. Mark Johnson, R-Hood River, a supporter of the bill.

Sen. Lee Beyer, D-Springfield, was involved in the negotiations on the bill along with Rep. Jessica Vega Pederson, D-Portland.

Beyer said the latest version will ensure the Public Utility Commission has clear authority to require PacifiCorp and Portland General Electric to meet the renewable mandate in a cost-efficient manner, using competitive bidding to acquire new sources of electricity.

The latest version of the bill does add back some elements sought by the utilities. For example, an earlier version of the bill crafted by Beyer would have lowered the annual cost cap for the renewable energy mandate from 4 percent to 3 percent. The existing renewable energy mandate allows utilities to ask the Public Utility Commission to approve rate increases based on costs incurred to meet the law.

The utilities, who have projected that doubling the renewables mandate will only raise rates by about 1 percent a year, objected to Beyer’s lower cost cap, and bill voted out of committee Thursday night returned to the 4 percent cost cap.

U.S. calls proposed sanctions on N. Korea a ‘major upgrade’

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United States on Thursday introduced a draft U.N. Security Council resolution that it said will significantly increase pressure on North Korea in response to its latest nuclear test and rocket launch.

Ambassador Samantha Power said the draft, which for the first time would subject cargo ships leaving and entering North Korea to mandatory inspections, goes farther than previous sanctions and is meant to ensure North Korea will be held accountable for its actions.

“It is a major upgrade and there will be, provided it goes forward, pressure on more points, tougher, more comprehensive, more sectors. It’s breaking new ground in a whole host of ways,” Power said before heading into a closed-door meeting where the U.S. planned to circulate the draft to all 15 council members.

The draft is the result of an agreement between the United States and China, North Korea’s main ally and Beijing’s involvement signals a policy shift with regard to its often erratic neighbor. The council is expected to vote on it over the weekend.

“We are opposed to any nuclear testing and the launch testing of ballistic missile technology and we hope this resolution will help to prevent further occurrences of this nature,” China’s Ambassador Liu Jieyi said following the meeting.

Jieyi said China was working very closely with other members of the Security Council and that he hoped the resolution “would achieve the objective of denuclearization” and result in “peace and stability.”

In Washington, White House spokesman Josh Earnest said the resolution

praised China’s cooperation.

Power said the sanctions would also prohibit the sale of small arms and other conventional weapons to North Korea, closing a loophole in earlier resolutions.

Power said sanctions would also limit and in some cases ban exports of coal, iron gold titanium and rare earth minerals from North Korea and would prohibit countries from supplying aviation fuel, including rocket fuel to the country.

In addition, the resolution imposes financial sanctions targeting North Korean banks and assets and bans all dual use nuclear and missile related items.

POLICE: Zumwalt never documented a confiscated revolver

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Daniel Poffenberger accused Zumwalt and Toombs of official misconduct and unethical behavior on Nov. 9, 2015. Before that, according to the report, Poffenberger emailed Zumwalt on Sept. 11, but got no response. Poffenberger emailed a letter on Oct. 20 to Umatilla County District Attorney Dan Primus, who also did not respond.

Michael Bethers, special agent with the Oregon Department of Justice, led the investigation. He and fellow special agent Todd Gray met with Poffenberger and former Stanfield officer Ryan McBride on Nov. 10. Poffenberger and McBride went through the state’s police academy together and were friends and, according to the report, they also had “general animosity” toward Zumwalt and Toombs for firing McBride.

McBride was fired after he tried to help a Umatilla County sheriff’s deputy cover up a drunk driving crash in August 2015.

Bethers stated most of the complaints against Zumwalt and Toombs “were personal and likely unethical behavior, but not necessarily criminal in nature.”

But some allegations needed more scrutiny, including Toombs failing to document the seizure

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two marijuana plants from an Echo home; Zumwalt failing to follow through on a drunk driving arrest while taking the driver’s revolver without documenting it; and Toombs failing to conduct a background check on reserve officer Jesse Newton, his friend.

The DOJ agents questioned Toombs and Zumwalt on Nov. 16.

Toombs said he took the pot plants on June 24, but did not give their owner a receipt and stuck them into an evidence locker, where they rotted. He claimed he buried them in the city’s compost pit on Sept. 23. He never made any report about the case.

Zumwalt never pushed Toombs to complete that report and send it to the district attorney’s office.

“How’s that work?” Gray asked when questioning Zumwalt. “You’re the chief, he’s the lieutenant, you have expectations, you ask him questions and he doesn’t really respond. How is that acceptable? How do you accept that?”

Zumwalt said he and Toombs were trying to figure that out.

Bethers and Gray also questioned Zumwalt about arresting a man Sept. 15 for drunk driving. Zumwalt said he booked him into the county jail in Pendleton and took his revolver for “safe keeping.” Instead, he kept the gun under the seat in a city pickup. Zumwalt also said he never completed a police report of the arrest.

“Your desk drawer here would be safer than in the pickup under the back seat, wouldn’t it?” Gray said “I’m struggling with that one, chief.”

Bethers added: “There’s nothing to show that gun’s in the system or police custody, right?”

“Right,” Zumwalt replied.

And Toombs skimmed on digging into the background of reserve officer Newton. Oregon administrative rules require departments check into a candidate’s driving record, drug and alcohol use, education verification and criminal history. Toombs said he indicated on a form to the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training that he took those steps. However, according to the report, he only checked Newton’s driving record and “asked about Newton around town.”

Gray asked Toombs how he would know if Newton was a sex offender, for example, and “Lt. Toombs acknowledged he wouldn’t,”

the report states.

Zumwalt and Toombs were on paid leave during the investigation. Zumwalt returned to duty Jan. 20, the day after the justice department sent its letter describing the findings. Toombs came back to work Jan. 29. They did not respond to requests Thursday for comment.

Larsen said during a phone interview early Thursday evening he worked with the investigators and knew what was coming.

“Obviously I’m disappointed that mistakes were made,” he said. “But they were not criminal in nature.”

He said Zumwalt asked the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police to conduct a review of the department, and the city is waiting to hear back. Larsen said that report will dictate a lot of what the city should do to improve the police department, but already there are clear areas to address.

He and Zumwalt have talked about additional training, and that the department must follow clear policies about how to handle seized property. Keeping a gun in a city vehicle for several weeks was troubling, Larsen said, and officers cannot infringe on the people’s rights.

Contact Phil Wright at 541-966-0833 or pwright@eastoreognian.com.

WHEELCHAIR: Will host a series of wheelchair etiquette classes

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user a 20-mile travel radius, although that number starts to shrink as the battery ages.

He got his first look at the charging station Thursday morning and was pleased with the result.

Community Park is an ideal place to start the charging station program because of its close proximity to several retirement communities and the opportunity it gives wheelchair users to “get outside and do

stuff” with family and friends on the park’s walking path.

Umbarger plans to install 8-10 charging stations across city parks and businesses, with the next unit to be installed at Clearview’s headquarters at 307 SW 6th St. across from city hall.

Umbarger would especially like charging stations on the Pendleton River Parkway and Main Street.

He said people with disabilities outstrip teenagers in spending power, a fact he plans to use when pitching

downtown businesses on including a charging station as an amenity.

With increased mobility comes increased responsibility.

Besides paying for the charging stations, Umbarger said some of the money will be used to host a series of wheelchair etiquette classes.

When seniors and the disabled get their driver’s licenses taken away, Umbarger said the transition to relying on a wheelchair as the only source of transporta-

tion can be a difficult one.

The classes will teach attendees the “rules of the road” for wheelchair users, like the fact that a wheelchair user could still be convicted of driving drunk if they operate a wheelchair in public while intoxicated.

Umbarger said wheelchair charging stations aren’t just a new idea for Pendleton, but cities across the state — Hermiston has already expressed interest in installing some charging stations of its own.

FOREST: More than 17 mills have closed over the last 25 years

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production on the forests. At a House committee hearing on Thursday, Young referred primarily to southeast Alaska and the Tongass National Forest, but the bill does not exclude other states with national forests.

“The worst managed lands in the United States by our federal government is the Forest Service lands,” Young said. “It’s because they become park rangers instead of silviculturists. They don’t understand the harvesting. They don’t understand the impact on communities.”

In Eastern Oregon, more than 17 mills have closed over the last 25 years with 1,200 jobs lost, according to a forest policy analyst with Boise Cascade. Meanwhile, the Forest Service spent more than half its budget to fight wildfires in 2015.

Young’s bill would require the Forest Service conveys land back to the

state if its legislatures passes a bill to do so, along with all buildings used to manage that land.

The bill does not include wilderness or other protected areas to transfer, and caps the amount of land at 2 million acres per state. By comparison, the Umatilla National Forest covers 1.4 million acres.

Forest employees who are not retained by the state would have the option of being placed within an “equivalent position in the federal government,” according to the bill.

Rep. Greg Walden, R-Oregon, sat next to Young at Thursday’s hearing to testify on another bill. Walden did, however, speak generally about the impact of federal forest management on Eastern Oregon communities.

“We’re creating, through federal policies and litigation, impoverished communities and impover-

ished people, and that’s not what we should be doing,” Walden said.

A spokesman said Walden is supportive of more state and local control of federal lands to increase active management, improve forest health and restore jobs. He said Young’s bill is an excellent idea, and should be one of many options on the table to fix forest policy.

Not everyone agrees. Corey Fisher, senior public lands policy director for Trout Unlimited in Missoula, Montana, said such a bill would jeopardize multiple uses and recreation on millions of acres.

“Hunters and anglers will continue to reject these ill-conceived ideas, because we know these lands and we know just how much we have to lose,” Fisher said.

Fisher said the organization understands there are issues with land management, but argued the solution isn’t to change ownership.

He said it’s about working together to address problems from the ground up.

George Wuerthner, Oregon state director for the Western Watershed Project, agreed the public would lose out on public lands, and said the state might also take on costs it couldn’t handle.

In Utah, the legislature passed a bill in 2012 requiring the transfer of federal land to the state. A 784-page report estimates the cost to the state could be about \$245 million per year. Whether or not the state makes up that money would depend on a number of factors around the initial transition.

“Any individual state that takes over has to pay for the upkeep that might now be shared among 50 states,” said Wuerthner, a former botanist with the Bureau of Land Management in Idaho.

Young’s bill remains under consideration in the House Committee on Natural Resources.



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Bob Blanc
304 S Main St.
Pendleton, OR 97801
541-276-6257



Mac H Levy
244 SW Dorion Ave.
Pendleton, OR 97801
541-278-1600



Ben Buchert
352 SW First St.
Pendleton, OR 97801
541-278-1200



Pam Stocker
245 E Main Suite B
Hermiston, OR 97838
541-564-9734



Kacie Levy, CFP®
204 E Main St.
Hermiston, OR 97838
541-567-0390



Casey Hunt
304 S Main St.
Pendleton, OR 97801
541-276-6257

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