

POLICE: Pilot Rock’s police budget is \$360,635

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Hermiston, the city with the most people in Eastern Oregon, paid the second most. Chief Jason Edmiston made \$110,894, including a \$4,151 payout for vacation. Without that, he would have been behind Milton-Freewater police Chief Doug Boedigheimer, who made \$107,430.

No other local police administrators made six figures in 2015.

The *East Oregonian* made public records requests for payroll information, including for overtime, from every city police department in Umatilla and Morrow counties. Not every city provided all the information, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation declined to participate.

Hermiston has a population of 17,520 and Pendleton has 16,845, according to the Population Research Center at Portland State University, which provides data to the United States Census Bureau. Hermiston police has 26 state-certified and sworn officers and Pendleton has 24, a new high for the department (see accompanying story on 1A).

Milton-Freewater has 7,070

Top 10 highest paid city police officers

Umatilla and Morrow counties in 2015 (according to payroll information from each city):

1. Pendleton police Chief Stuart Roberts \$112,812

2. Hermiston police Chief Jason Edmiston \$106,743 (\$110,894, including vacation payout)

3. Milton-Freewater Chief Doug Boedigheimer \$107,430

4. Hermiston police Capt. Darryl Johnson \$95,742

5. Hermiston police Capt. Travis Enyon \$94,089

6. Pendleton police Lt. Bill Caldera \$91,093

7. Hermiston police officer Jeremy Clark \$90,560 (including \$5,932 in payouts for vacation and other days off)

8. Boardman police Chief Rick Stokoe \$85,660

9. Hermiston police Sgt. Billy Osbourne \$85,233 (including \$2,191 in overtime)

10. Hermiston police Sgt. Kelly Parsons \$84,804 (including \$186 in overtime)

people and an 11-officer department. Boedigheimer, though, also has an emergency dispatch center under his agency’s roof, while other cities in Umatilla County contract with the sheriff’s office for 9-1-1 and other dispatch services.

Milton-Freewater offers the chief high-end pay while keeping the police department budget to about \$1.23 million, not counting code enforcement or dispatch. That works out to about 22 percent of the city’s \$5.6 million general fund.

Pendleton’s general fund is \$15.3 million. More than \$4.3 million of that, or about 28 percent, pays for the police

department. Hermiston’s police budget is \$4.2 million, about 33 percent of the city’s \$12.7 million general fund.

Several local police administrators have salaries starting near \$70,000.

Boardman has 10 officers for the city of 3,504. The city paid \$85,660 to police Chief Rick Stokoe, including more than \$1,600 for vacation. Lt. Loren Dieter made \$67,880 in all.

Umatilla has almost 7,100 people and an 11-officer department. The city paid Chief Darla Huxel \$83,818 in 2015 and Lt. Keith Kennedy made \$72,920. But they will get big raises this year. The Umatilla City Council

voted in early February to increase pay for administrators effective Jan. 1, including in the police department. Kennedy is looking at a salary approaching \$87,000, and Huxel will make \$102,924.

Overtime pay also gave some police big bumps.

Boardman detective Jeremy Fye made \$75,849, including \$9,702 in overtime. Pendleton Sgt. Howard Bowen, though, made more than \$10,700 in overtime, while his cohort, Sgt. Rick Jackson, worked overtime to the tune of \$22,397.

Stanfield Chief Bryon Zumwalt made \$57,696 in 2015. The city also has a \$56,710 contract to provide police services to nearby Echo, so the four-officer department serves a total population of 2,830.

Smaller towns also have to feed a greater percentage of their general fund into police departments compared to their bigger cousins.

Pilot Rock’s police budget is \$360,635, almost 49 percent of the city’s general fund. And Stanfield uses nearly 52 percent of its \$734,410 general fund for the police department. That percentage would be greater if the city did not have a public safety fee that brought in \$64,010 to boost police pay.

SCHOOL: 75 percent graduation rate a popular talking point

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the seven years he has served as the associate principal and principal at Ontario High School, he helped reduce gang violence and focused the school toward serving its growing Latino population.

Kovach said his goal as the new superintendent would be to maintain the district’s current structure, listen to staff and the community and start building on what was already there.

If selected, Kovach said he wouldn’t treat the position as a stepping stone.

“I’d be proud to be here for the rest of my career,” he said.

The last candidate to talk to the public was the one most familiar with the district — Pendleton School District Assistant Superintendent Tricia Mooney.

Mooney based her argument for the position around the stability she would bring to the job.

“I didn’t apply to the position because I think the district needed a big change, but because I’m committed to the work,” she said.

She said her familiarity with school board policies, staff and other district information is an advantage for her.

A native of Iowa, Mooney arrived in Pendleton in 2008 after a long teaching and administrative career in Hermiston.

Mooney said she has been assigned and dealt with tough tasks, like personally reporting the layoffs of 22 district employees in her first year on the job.

Although she doesn’t plan any drastic changes, Mooney said there are areas the district could improve. She said its 75 percent graduation rate, another popular talking point for the candidates, needs to get better.

Mooney said she has not applied for any other superintendent positions and would prefer to stay on assistant superintendent if she’s not selected, in order to ensure a smooth transition.

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PENDLETON: Only allows one officer per crew to take leave at a time

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Roberts explained the intent of the police association was to add an officer to each of the four patrol crews, which would free up sergeants from having to answer calls for service in addi-

tion to a long list of other duties.

“Right now, if someone is on leave, sick, injured, in court or we have vacancies, the sergeants fill the void because there are only four personnel assigned to each crew/shift,” Roberts said. “In some instances, we

are paying overtime to on-call personnel just to maintain our minimum staffing of three per shift.”

New officers, though, will not make it easier for personnel to take time off work. The department allows only one

officer per crew to take leave at a time, and policy dictates a minimum staffing of three officers with at least one supervisor.

“The bottom line,” Roberts said, “is that our call volume dictates the need for additional officers.”

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