

PENDLETON

Housing committee takes hard look at commuter data

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The fact that many workers commute from elsewhere has been a compelling force for city officials to create more housing in Pendleton.

But while 57.2 percent of Pendleton's workforce are out-of-towners, Pendleton city intern Haley Meisenholder took a deeper look at commuting data from the U.S. Census Bureau Center for Economic Studies in a report she presented to the

Pendleton Housing Study Committee on Friday.

One of Meisenholder's big takeaways was that Pendleton commuters were coming from unincorporated properties outside city limits, rather than other municipalities like Hermiston or La Grande.

According to the census bureau data, 41 percent of Pendleton commuters come from the surrounding area while less than 20 percent are based in other towns in Umatilla County.

Another conclusion from

Meisenholder's analysis is that Pendleton's worker retention rate is better than its neighbors — Pendleton keeps 43 percent of its workers in town while Hermiston retains 32 percent.

If most of Pendleton's commuters are coming from the area surrounding the city, the city could try to make more room for housing by expanding its conservatively drawn urban growth boundary.

But despite a newly passed bill from the Oregon

Legislature that establishes a pilot program for communities looking establish their boundaries, interim city planner George Clough said the rules for expansion remain stringent.

Under the pilot program established under House Bill 4079, cities can make a one-time expansion to their urban growth boundaries up to 50 acres, provided the expansion is made with a state-approved affordable housing project in mind.

Clough said the program is worth looking into, but

also noted that an affordable housing development could pull low-income residents away from public transportation and other important services.

Umatilla County Planning Director Tamra Mabbott said unincorporated Pendleton might not be a fruitful target for affordable and workforce housing.

Mabbott said the county's planning department averages about three housing permits per year for the land surrounding

Pendleton.

Although there's room for roughly 76 new dwellings in that area, Mabbott said the cost of buying and developing the land means executive level homes tend to be the most feasible developments.

Committee chair John Turner scheduled the committee's next meeting for April 29 at 1:30 p.m. at Pendleton City Hall.

Contact Antonio Sierra at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.

BRIEFLY

Good Shepherd grant purchases vacuum splints

HERMISTON — A Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation grant of \$3,353 has purchased seven vacuum splinting kits for Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services.

The splints work for "every conceivable" splinting situation, from dislocated shoulders to angulated fractures, according to a release from Hermiston Fire. The splints mold to the patient, preventing circumferential pressure, which reduces nerve, tissue and blood vessel damage. The kits have a variety of sizes and a pump, which evacuates the air and makes them rigid — less painful to apply than traditional splints.

The grant was awarded in mid-March, and the vacuum splinting kits have been received and placed on each of Hermiston's five ambulances, as well as first response vehicles in Stanfield and Umatilla.

Tourism workshops slated for Mission, John Day

MISSION — The Oregon Heritage Commission is sponsoring two half-day workshops to help businesses and organizations promote heritage tourism in their communities.

Both workshops will run from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The first will be held Wednesday, April 20 at Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute in Mission. The second will be Thursday, April 21 at the Blue Mountain Ranger District Office in John Day.

Kyle Jansson, coordinator for the heritage commission, said heritage tourists tend to

take longer trips and spent more money when they travel. Heritage tourism includes visits to local historic, cultural and natural resources.

The workshops will provide information, contacts, networking opportunities and ideas for collaboration that can build upon the tourism experience. Preregistration is requested by emailing your name, email address and workshop location to heritage.info@oregon.gov.

For more information, contact Jansson at 503-986-0673.

City adds evening times to budget meetings

PENDLETON — The city of Pendleton taking a different approach to its budget meetings this year.

Instead of its usual slate of early morning meetings, the city is scheduling two evening meetings this year.

City Manager Robb Corbett said the evening meetings are a part of an effort by the city to give the public greater access to the budget process.

Corbett said the council will also discuss a mock budget that city staffers made to show the difference between the ideal level funding for the city budget and their fiscal realities.

The budget committee is composed of the mayor, the city council and nine citizen appointees.

Joining the committee this year is John Turner, the former president of Blue Mountain Community College and the only mayoral candidate.

He will take the spot of Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation spokesman Chuck Sams,

who resigned.

All meetings will be held at the Vert Little Theater, 345 S.W. Fourth Street.

The schedule is listed below.

- April 26, 7 a.m.-8 a.m.
- April 28, 6 p.m.-7 p.m.
- May 3, 7 a.m.-8 a.m.
- May 5, 6 p.m.-7 p.m.
- May 6, 7 a.m.-8 a.m.

Arts festival seeks participants

HERMISTON — Cash prizes are available in the Eastern Oregon Arts Festival.

The event, which is May 6-7, is seeking professional artists to exhibit and sell their work for the juried show. In addition, people can rent an exhibitor booth to show and sell their work.

Artwork may include any media, including paintings, sculpture, jewelry, wood carving, airbrush, mixed media, drawings, photography, printmaking, metal sculpture and ceramics.

For the juried group show, artists may submit up to two works. The entry fee is \$5 each. For art vendor space, the cost is \$25, which includes the fee for up to two pieces into the group show. Artwork must be deemed appropriate for a family audience. Those new to the festival must submit images of several pieces of work for acceptance.

The registration deadline for both is Friday, April 15. For detailed information, visit www.desertartscouncil.com or contact Heather LaBeau 541-667-5010 or hlabeau@hermiston.or.us.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to news@eastoregonian.com

Truck stolen in Hermiston leads to chase

by PATRICK MULVIHILL
The Dalles Chronicle

A 15-year-old male in a stolen truck led law enforcement officials on a wild chase from Arlington to Hood River on Saturday.

The pursuit ended when a police cruiser pinned the vehicle against the center median of Interstate 84 and the driver, a Plymouth, Wash., teen, was arrested at gunpoint.

The chase, which spanned four Oregon counties, began when police discovered a stolen vehicle.

At about 11:40 a.m. Saturday, Oregon State Police Trooper Mark Jubitz spotted a maroon Ford F-350, which had reportedly been nabbed from a gas station in Hermiston.

Just east of Arlington, Jubitz flipped on his emergency lights and siren. The suspect increased his speed while heading westbound on I-84, accelerating to almost 100 miles per hour, according to a written report

by Jubitz.

Near milepost 114, by Lepage Park, OSP Senior trooper Michael Holloran punctured the front right tire with a spike trap, but the vehicle pressed on.

At milepost 101, west of Biggs Junction, a deputy with Wasco County Sheriff's Office managed to spike the left rear tire.

The vehicle continued into a construction zone, while officers followed in a slower "slack pursuit." The fleeing driver hit several traffic barrels and smashed into three barricades. One barrel got wedged underneath the truck.

Hood River police set up a final fortification of spikes, but neither hit the truck.

At about milepost 63, the suspect driver tried to pass a commercial semi-trailer by sliding into the center grassy median. Instead, the truck lost control on its deflated tires and spun with a screech to face the wrong direction in the median.

A group of OSP cars,

joined by Hood River County Sheriff's deputies and Hood River police officers, caught up.

Jubitz rammed into the truck head-on with his cruiser. He hit the truck again, pinning it to the median. Police officers got out of their vehicles, guns raised, and surrounded the vehicle.

"The suspect threw up his hands and came out of the vehicle," Jubitz said in his report.

"It went smoothly," Holste said of the arrest.

The driver, whose name was not released due to his age, was charged with nine offenses: unauthorized use of vehicle, unauthorized entry into motor vehicle, possession of stolen vehicle, reckless driving, reckless endangering person, reckless endangering of highway workers, criminal mischief, theft, and failure to perform duties of a driver in an accident with property damage.

He was lodged in the NORCOR juvenile facility.

SUBMIT COMMUNITY NEWS

Submit information to: community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

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UMATILLA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ANNUAL MEETING & MEMBERSHIP DINNER

Saturday, April 16, 2016 Hermiston Conference Center 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Celebrating 79 Years 1937-2016 UMATILLA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Our Annual Meeting theme "Building For The Future" is a recognition of the milestone projects underway or completed in 2015, and what we expect in 2016. As always, attendance is free to UEC members. We hope you will join us!



Featured Speaker Mark Speckman, celebrated football coach and inspirational speaker, will highlight Umatilla Electric's 2016 Annual Meeting!