

PENDLETON

City council to look at bids for streets, hangars

First round of major repairs paid for with street utility fee

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

With construction season in full swing, the city of Pendleton is preparing to begin street repairs.

The Pendleton City Council will consider accepting a \$588,373 bid from Pioneer Asphalt at a meeting Tuesday.

The bid covers overlay projects on Southwest 16th Street, Southwest 19th Street, Southeast Third Street, Southwest Olsen Avenue, Southwest Perkins Avenue, Southeast Goodwin Avenue and Southeast 17th Street.

This is the first round of major street repairs paid for with the \$5 street utility fee.

In a report to the city council, Public Works Director Bob Patterson wrote the city has \$300,000 from the state surface transportation program and \$480,000 from the street utility fee. Funds not used for the overlays will pay for street crack and slurry seals.

The council will also be asked to approve another bid long in the making.

In March 2015, Gov. Kate Brown traveled to the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport and announced a \$1.1 million financial package of grants and loans from the state's Infrastructural Finance Authority to be used for new hangars.

Well over a year after Brown's announcement, city staff members now say that McCormack Construction's \$892,500 base bid to build two hangars gives them room to consider additional possibilities.

The first possibility is to build office space inside one hangar, and the other is to put some of the additional money toward a third new hangar.

Airport Manager Steve Chrisman wrote that he would prefer having three

hangars, but the city would have to find additional resources to foot the extra \$200,000 cost.

According to Chrisman, two hangars would bring in \$54,774 to \$109,548 per year in revenue while three hangars would generate between \$82,416 and \$164,832.

Council considers marijuana ballot issues

The Pendleton City Council will consider adding three marijuana-related questions to the November ballot at a meeting Tuesday.

The council agreed to refer the issues to voters after temporarily banning marijuana sales in December. But there has recently been some confusion over whether the council should pose two or three questions to voters.

The council settled on three questions — one question on legalizing recreational marijuana sales, a second question on medical marijuana sales and a third question on assessing a local 3 percent tax on recreational sales.

Upholding the ban on either recreational or medical marijuana would prevent the city from collecting the 3 percent tax or its share of the state tax.

Council could declare properties as surplus

The Pendleton City Council will consider declaring 13 city-owned properties across the city as surplus, which would allow the city to sell them.

City Attorney Nancy Kerns wrote that the city-owned Blue Mountain Recovery Center and Eastern Oregon Training Center are not included.

The council meeting will be held Tuesday at the council chambers in city hall, 500 S.W. Dorion Ave.

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

Heat hurries wheat harvest

By **GEORGE PAVEN**
East Oregonian

Wheat harvest is starting uncharacteristically early across parts of Eastern Oregon.

Don Wysocki, a soil scientist with Oregon State University Extension Service in Umatilla County, said farmers are already cutting wheat in fields west of Pendleton, which is about two weeks earlier than normal.

In years past, Wysocki said it was unusual to see anyone harvest winter wheat before the Fourth of July. But following a particularly mild winter, he said this year's crop matured well ahead of schedule. Three straight years of drought haven't helped, either.

"It's really the heat that

drives maturity," Wysocki said. "Things are just early because of the winter we've had."

Temperatures around Pendleton averaged about 5 degrees higher than usual in February and 3 degrees higher than usual in March, according to the National Weather Service. Another major heat wave arrived at the beginning in June, with temperatures in the high 80s to 100 degrees that turned wheat from green to gold.

Wysocki said it's too early to predict what yields will look like, and it will depend on where exactly the field is located. Areas west of Pendleton — with less annual rainfall and shallower soils — might come in below average, while farms farther north and east appear to be

doing much better.

"I think some people will cut an above-average crop this year," Wysocki said.

Larry Lutcher, who works with OSU Extension Service in Morrow County, said harvest is running about 10 days ahead of schedule near Ione and north of Lexington. He figures more farmers will fire up their combines after Monday.

"It was the heat earlier in the growing season," he said. "That, and four years of less-than-average rainfall."

The county did, however, receive an inch and a half of rain in May, which Lutcher said has gone a long way toward saving this year's wheat. Without it, he said yields could have been as low as they were a year ago, when some farms struggled

to cut even half their usual crop.

As it is, Lutcher said it appears they'll have anywhere between 28 and 35 bushels per acre, which is close to average for local growers.

"I think it will be better than last year," Lutcher said.

The concern now is that there's little moisture left stored in the soil for next year, Lutcher said. In order to buck the trend, they need ample winter precipitation and timely May and June rains.

"That just hasn't happened in recent years," he said. "That's why we're struggling."

Contact George Plaven at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0825.

Board members for new fire district inaugurated

By **ALEXA LOUGEE**
East Oregonian

The newly-formed Umatilla County Fire District 1 fire board met Friday.

After Umatilla County Commissioner Bill Elfering swore in the new board, they went right to work nominating officers. Ric Sherman was voted in as board president, Eldon Marcum as vice president, Mike Hawman as secretary/treasurer and Reta Larson as the board clerk. Directors Bruce Naugher and Spike Piersol were also in attendance.

The fire board discussed a new meeting schedule, choosing the second Wednesday of every month, with the budget committee meeting at 6:30 p.m. and the general board meeting beginning at 7 p.m.

Chief Scott Stanton was appointed by the board as the Umatilla County Fire District Fire Chief.

Members of the board then created a budget committee comprised of Rick Rankin, Monte Ellis, Luanne Wolfe, Cindy Meyers and Bob Schroth. Tom Martin was selected as an alternate.

Another matter discussed during the meeting was whether to allow new board member Eldon Marcum to continue as a paid on-call firefighter. Marcum said that he'd rather just remain a non-compensated volunteer in order to avoid any conflicts of interest or the appearance of one. The board voted in support of Marcum's preference, with Marcum abstaining from the vote.

Other administrative business was handled by the board, including reviewing the current



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

New decals adorn the door of a Umatilla County Fire District 1 engine at the main station downtown Thursday in Hermiston.



Staff photo by Alexa Lougee

New Umatilla Fire District 1 board director, Spike Piersol (left) is sworn in by Umatilla County Commissioner Bill Elfering (right).

budget. As of June 30, the former Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services had a budget balance of \$729,068, while the former Stanfield Fire District had a budget of \$424,416. The process of combining budgets and accounts will take a few years in order to follow all relevant laws. The board

stated it could take up to four years before the two district budgets are fully

incorporated.

All board members concluded the meeting by expressing that they thought unification of the districts was a positive step for the community. Before he adjourned the meeting, Sherman expressed gratitude to all in attendance and encouraged people to continue to come to the meetings.

"It's not quite as exciting as a Trump rally, but all meetings are open to the public," he said.

The next meeting will be July 13 at the Hermiston Safety Center, 320 S. First Street. Items of business will include discussing the capital improvement priorities and needs for the new district.

BRIEFLY

Vets swim free on Sunday

HERMISTON — As a "thank you" to those serving in the military, the city of Hermiston is offering free passes to the Hermiston Aquatic Center to all current and retired service members on Sunday.

Service personnel showing a current military ID will swim for free during regular swim hours, 11:10 a.m. to 6 p.m., at the aquatic center, 879 W. Elm Ave.

Registration open for new MoCo preschool program

The Morrow County School District will be providing new educational opportunities for preschoolers in the 2016-2017 school year.

As a part of the newly announced "Ready for Kindergarten" program, the district will offer four preschool classes with the goal of offering quality education to all 4-year-olds in Heppner, Irrigon and Boardman.

Classes will be held twice a week for two and a half hours at Head Start's Irrigon Early Learning Center, Sam Boardman Elementary and a location in Heppner that will be announced later this summer.

The preschool classes are free and will offer a snack each day.

Registration is happening now through the UMCHS website. Classes will run from September 6, 2016 to May 18, 2017. For

more information call Ana Pineyro at 541-256-0514.

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

IONE'S 4th of July Celebration

FREE Concert! *Bring your own lawn chairs or blanket. Grass amphitheater.



QuarterFlash
8:30pm
"Harden My Heart"
1980's Chart Topper



Martin Gerschwitz
7:00pm
Musician, composer & former lead singer of Iron Butterfly

SUNDAY, JULY 3, 2016		
Golf Tournament	Willow Creek Country Club, Heppner	9:00am
Volleyball Tournament	Ione City Park	9:00am
MONDAY, JULY 4, 2016		
Fireman's Breakfast	Ione Fire Hall	7:00-10:00am
Creative Care PreSchool 5k Walk/Run (\$10 registration)	Ione City Park	7:00 Registration - Walk starts at 7:30am
Ken Turner Memorial Horseshoe Tournament	Horseshoe Pits	9:00am
3-On-3 Basketball Tournament	2nd Street, in front of Legion Hall	10:00am
Blues Cruise Car Show	Main Street	10:30am
Vendors & Booths	Ione City Park	11:00am
Fish Pond, Frog Jump, Bike Raffle	Fire Hall/Park	11:00am
Altar Society Pie Sale	Ione Fire Hall (or Church Basement)	11:00am
Parade (Grand Marshall: Fireworks Crew)	Main Street	1:00pm
Park Activities Begin - Dunk Tank, Duck Races, Money Pile, Much More	Ione City Park	1:00pm
Free Swimming	Ione Swimming Pool	1:30-3:30pm
Blues Cruise Awards	Ione City Park	3:00pm
COREY PETERSON BAND	Amphitheater Stage	3:30pm
Talent Show	Amphitheater Stage	4pm Registration/Show at 4:30pm
Featured Entertainment	Amphitheater Stage	After Talent Show
MARTIN GERSCHWITZ (6:30pm) QUARTERFLASH (8:30pm)	Amphitheater Stage	7:45pm
Boat Trip Auction		Dusk
FIREWORKS DISPLAY	Visible throughout Ione	

*All event, times and locations are subject to change.
Ione's 4th Of July Celebration Is Sponsored In Part By Morrow County Unified Recreation District.

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PENDLETON

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