

EOCI: Only city in state to have ban on work crews

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nity. Two weeks later, the council voted 8-0 in favor of allowing minimum-custody inmates to work outside the prison. The program will be reconsidered after one year after studying its results.

Pendleton City Councilor Chuck Wood serves on the advisory board for EOCI. He said Pendleton was the lone city in Oregon to have such a ban on prison work crews. Yet people under the supervision of Umatilla County Community Justice Department have worked on crews in the community with success, he said, and inmate crews from Two Rivers have worked in area forests and on occasion in Pendleton. And the program benefits inmates as well.

"You end up with really good workers that can do good for the community, and this helps them reintegrate when they are released," Woods said.

Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts said in an email he has been involved in meetings about inmate work crews, their management, capabilities and the cost.

"I am not opposed to the action," he stated.

EOCI spokesperson Jackie Peck said the inmate workers from Umatilla would work eight days over about the next two weeks and only on prison property. That way, she said, the community can acclimate to seeing the crews outside the fence.

SEAPORT: Airport manager says it will be without flights for at least 30-60 days

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one at the SeaPort check-in desk.

Norquist said the sign noted the company had gone out of business and all flights were canceled.

She said the group was confused at first.

"We tried to page them to see if they are actually going to come, if it was a joke or whatever," she said.

They quickly realized it was no joke, and that they needed to find a new way to get home. The four, who had their plane tickets purchased by their company, said they decided to rent a car and drive home Tuesday night.

"We thought we had a nice quick flight home but that's not the case anymore," Norquist said from PDX.

According to a status report filed by SeaPort's attorneys Tuesday, SeaPort's reorganization plan had been contingent on retaining the Pendleton-Portland route it has operated since 2008.

Yet when the Pendleton City Council selected Boutique Air over SeaPort to supply air service starting in 2017, the Portland company believed it could overcome the loss of business because of the high expenses associated with operating out of the Portland airport.

The deciding factor came when Fountain Village Development, a property management company that had previously agreed to loan SeaPort up to \$1 million, told the airline it was cutting its credit line.

Regardless of the reason behind SeaPort's demise, Sieber said losing Pendleton was a tough loss that spurred existential questions.

"The loss of Pendleton was a shock to us," he said. "When you lose to a bid that's higher, with higher fares and an airplane that seats one less passenger, you really have to wonder how you can compete in this business over the long term. That's where we are. That really

shook our company to the core. We really had to question whether we could sustain ourselves on an ongoing basis."

Doug Pahl, an attorney representing SeaPort's creditors, said the airline will now liquidate its remaining assets and most likely dissolve.

"It's unfortunate for small communities like Pendleton," he said.

Given SeaPort's financial difficulties, Pendleton Airport Manager Steve Chrisman said this latest development didn't come as too much of a surprise. Chrisman's focus is now centered around finding an airline to provide service through the end of the year.

Chrisman said the U.S. Department of Transportation's standard practice is to issue an emergency request to cover the remainder of the Essential Air Service contract, which ran through the end of 2016.

Chrisman said he has talked with Boutique about starting service to Pendleton before its scheduled 2017 start date.

"We would like to see them come in as soon as possible," he said.

Chrisman estimated the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport would be without flights for at least 30-60 days.

The longterm future of commercial operations in Pendleton is complicated by the fact that the DOT is considering stripping Pendleton of its EAS subsidy because a lack of boardings caused the airport to exceed its \$200 per passenger cap.

The city is currently working on a waiver petition explaining the extenuating circumstances surrounding SeaPort's pilot shortage and bankruptcy, which is due to the DOT by Sept. 28.

The petition has already earned the support of Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, and Rep. Greg Walden, R-Hood River, who wrote to U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx urging him to issue a waiver.

RAIL: Oct. training class scheduled for Salem

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boom in the Columbia River after detecting a sheen on the surface of the water, though it was later determined the contamination did not come from the oil spill.

Michael Heffner, assistant chief deputy of emergency response services for the state Fire Marshal's Office, said there are a number of observations to take away from the incident. He pointed out communities need to make sure they have a sustainable supply of water to support emergency responders, while agencies need to make sure they have all appropriate officials available at the scene for as long as necessary.

"When you get to an event of this size, it's really important you have all agencies understand the role they play in the operation," Heffner said.

Heffner recommended agencies local agencies bring in an incident management team — similar to those assigned to large wildfires — to help coordinate agencies, provide consistent information and make sure the right people are able to access the right place at the right time.

Union Pacific has railroad lines that cross through downtown Pendleton, the city of Echo, south of Hermiston and along the Columbia River near the Port of Morrow.

Tom Roberts, emergency manager for Umatilla County, said their main concern is

with a possible derailment near a population center.

Tuesday's meeting was an opportunity to learn from what happened in Mosier, Roberts said.

"It was a reminder that anything can happen anytime, anywhere. We need to be prepared for any kind of incident that could occur," Roberts said. "We like to apply new processes and procedures that are learned from real-world responses."

The Umatilla and Morrow county LEPCs voted to pursue grant funding together not just for a rail safety plan, but for additional training that could benefit first responders and city leaders. Doug Paine, chairman of the Umatilla County LEPC, said grant applications should be submitted around the beginning of next year.

Paine said it makes sense for the two counties to band together, since they share so much in common.

"We're both rural areas," Paine said. "It just fits in with the way we work together."

According to the Fire Marshal's Office, oil trains now move through 15 counties and 80 fire districts across Oregon. The agency is working on putting together a hazardous materials rail emergency response class, which will be held Oct. 28-29 at Chemeketa Community College in Salem.

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