

**HERMISTON**

# Where do you want bus stops?

City seeks input on route for free system

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
East Oregonian

Hermiston residents may have noticed a fake bus stop sign appear in their neighborhood on Wednesday, and the city wants to know what they think about it.

The signs are a precursor to the free public bus system the city plans to begin on Jan. 2 through an agreement with Kayak Public Transit. They provide a map of the proposed route and information about a Nov. 1 meeting that will give community members an opportunity to give feedback on the proposal before it goes in front of the city council for a decision on Nov. 14.

The meeting, held next Tuesday at 5 p.m. at city hall, will be the last meeting of the Public Transit Advisory Committee before it submits a recommendation.

The committee has been working with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to craft a bus route and times using information from an online survey conducted last month. A new survey released Wednesday on the city's website ([www.hermiston.or.us](http://www.hermiston.or.us)) asks for input on a name for the new bus system, which includes options like the Watermelon Express and Hermiston Loooper. A map of the proposed bus stops is also available on the website.

The route as currently proposed would run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, stopping in 25 locations and making one circuit through town each hour. Assistant city manager Mark Morgan said adding any more hours per week would necessitate hiring a second driver, raising costs. The initial survey about the bus system indicated that 74 percent of respondents preferred continuous daytime service to a split shift that would serve commuters in the mornings and again in the late afternoon.

In an Aug. 8 work session with the Hermiston City Council, CTUIR Planning Director JD Tovey said the cost to the city would depend greatly on the size of the system. He said the tribes have access to significant amounts of federal grant money for transportation and could bring in more using Hermiston's contribution as a match and counting Hermiston riders in their system-wide ridership count. The Kayak Public Transit system currently includes an inter-city system that runs between 17 communities.

He said a fixed route through Hermiston would allow the bus that runs between cities to stop just once in Hermiston, instead of three times, saving enough time to help the CTUIR reach its goal of extending service to Boardman in the future.

At a city council meeting Monday, city councilor Doug Primmer said he was excited about the work the advisory committee has been doing.

"All in all, the route looks pretty comprehensive," he said. "It serves different areas of town pretty well, and the great thing about it is the cost to the user is zero, and it is intended to stay that way."

The city still plans to operate its \$2 taxi ticket program for senior and disabled riders. But staff expect that



A temporary sign outside Foxwood Apartments in Hermiston shows a proposed bus stop location.



A temporary sign marks the location of a proposed bus stop near the corner of SE Fourth Street and Main Street.



A temporary sign at the Hermiston Plaza shows a proposed bus stop location.

**More online**

For a map of the proposed bus stops, visit [eastoregonian.com](http://eastoregonian.com)

some of those riders will start using the free bus system instead, reducing the \$100,000 per year the city has been

contributing to that program. The bus system will be open to anyone. For more information, including the name survey and route map, visit [www.hermiston.or.us](http://www.hermiston.or.us).

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**PENDLETON**

# Vacant school board seat draws 10 candidates

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**  
East Oregonian

**"It's going to be a hard choice. We have an excellent group of candidates."**

— **Debbie McBee**, school board chair

One of the most sought after jobs in Pendleton this week is a volunteer position on the local school board.

Hailing from a variety of professional backgrounds, 10 candidates will be interviewed Wednesday and Thursday by the school board before it makes its decision.

Board Chair Debbie McBee said she was thrilled to see so many candidates for the type of position that usually attracts one or two applicants.

"It's going to be a hard choice," she said. "We have an excellent group of candidates."

The candidates provided short summaries about themselves to the board in their applications, some of which is featured below:

- Gary George, Wildhorse Casino & Resort CEO. As a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation who works for a company that's financially contributed to the district in the past, George wrote he wants to help address the barriers facing Pendleton students.

- Stephen Bowen, retiree. Bowen is familiar with the school district, having been president of the Pendleton Teachers Association and the Blue Mountain Community College theater program, and wants to help continue to provide a quality education and safe environment.

- Rolinda Burd, retired bookkeeper. A member of Altrusa and the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce ambassadors, Burd wrote that she wants to be a part of the school board rather than complaining about it later.

- Rodney Parker, vice president/general manager at Pioneer Title & Escrow. As a small business owner with several family members in the Public Employee Retirement System, Parker thinks he would have the ability to understand the budget and the issues the board will face in the future.

- Pamela Johnston Duso, account representative at Trustime Retirement Plan Specialists. Duso was involved with the political action committee that supported the 2013 school bond and thinks her financial experience will be an asset to the district.

- Mark Christensen, retired teacher. A teacher

and coach in Pendleton for 30 years, Christensen thinks he can provide insight on the trenches of education and will be a hard worker for the school board.

- Mason Murphy, scientist. Murphy has been involved with the district's 3-D printing and robotics programs and thinks he can offer further insight on technology issues.

- Heidi Van Kirk, attorney. Having been a volunteer and a member of the site council at McKay Creek Elementary School, Van Kirk said she wants to work with a team of professionals to help make the school system as stimulating and challenging as possible.

- Brent Hall, attorney. Hall, a Pendleton High School graduate and school volunteer, wrote that he could use his professional experience to help with any legal issues and wanted to leverage the district's partnerships in an effective way.

- Fred Robinson, veterinarian. As president of the Pendleton Swim Association, Robinson is working with the district to find a long-term solution to its pool issues and thinks he would bring a non-biased view to the board.

The school board position became open following the resignation of Bob Rosselle, whose term runs through June 30, 2017. The person who is selected will have to run for a four-year term in the May 16 election to continue beyond that date.

The board will hold interviews open to the public on Wednesday at 6:15 p.m. and Thursday at 5 p.m. All will take place at the district office at the former Lincoln Primary School, 107 N.W. 10th St.

McBee said she plans to propose to the board that they set a separate meeting for discussing the candidates next week. A formal selection of the candidate is still set for the board's Nov. 8 meeting.

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## Aura Raley bronze unveiling ceremony set for Saturday

East Oregonian

The beginning of the end of Pendleton's series of downtown bronzes begins Saturday.

That's when a statue of Aura Goodwin Raley will be unveiled to the public at a ceremony on Main Street at 1 p.m.

Although there's still work that needs to be done, Mayor Phillip Houk said sculptor Jerry Werner of Bend will still be on hand to help present the bronze at the 300 block of Main Street, directly across from the Stella Darby statue.

Referred to as the "Mother of Pendleton," Raley helped found the city, operated a hotel and donated the land that would become Pioneer

Park and the Umatilla County Courthouse.

The last of Main Street's statues — a bronze of former Round-Up Indian Village co-chief Clarence Burke — is tentatively scheduled to open on the 100 block of Main Street across from the Jackson Sundown bronze Nov. 12.

Burke and Raley's bronzes will complete a series of six bronzes depicting figures from Pendleton's history at Main Street's midblock crossings.

Several bronzes, including those that depict Raley and Burke, have been funded through a combination of grants and the city's art fund, which is sourced from 1.75 percent earmark from the transit room tax.

**HERMISTON**

# Good Shepherd welcomes 17 new nurses

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
East Oregonian

Seventeen new registered nurses have joined the ranks of Good Shepherd Health Care System in Hermiston, representing the largest graduating class from the hospital's nurse residency program since its inception.

A news release from the hospital called the number "nothing short of remarkable" for a rural hospital during a nationwide nursing shortage.

"This is truly exciting for us," Vice President of Nursing Theresa Brock said in a statement. "We have an exceptional group of new graduate RNs who

joined our program because they were either from the community, enjoyed their clinicals at Good Shepherd, were impressed by our onboarding process and even wanted to work in a rural community."

The new nurses have begun working with an experienced nurse preceptor in their chosen area of specialty after completing an intensive learning experience that started on Aug. 29. Their preceptorship period will take up to a year, depending on the department.

There are two residents in the Family Birth Center, two in the Intensive Care Unit, six in the main patient care unit Medical-Surgical,

two in Surgery and five in Emergency Services.

Nurse educator Phyllis Garcia, RN, said after the preceptorship graduates will come away with the confidence and experience to take on their own patient care assignments.

"I believe we extended an invitation to the right nurses to join our residency program and I feel confident that my profession is in good hands," she said.

Good Shepherd's next residency program will begin in August of 2017. Nurses expecting to graduate prior to August can apply for the 2017 program at [www.gshealth.org/jobs](http://www.gshealth.org/jobs) or call Human Resources at 541-667-3546 for more information.

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