

PENDLETON

City set to OK \$74.6M budget

East Oregonian

After sending it out of committee, the Pendleton City Council is set to approve a \$74.6 million budget at a meeting Tuesday.

Although that figure represents a 21 percent increase from the year before, much of the increase comes from a \$10 million fire station bond Pendleton voters approved in May.

But even without the bond, the city's \$16.8 million discretionary budget also represents an increase, rising by 4 percent.

The city's discretionary fund and other revenue sources will pay for new projects, including \$1.8 million in road repairs, \$628,000 in airport improvements, \$240,000 for city hall complex improvements and \$650,000 for a fire engine and a rescue vehicle.

The city also is projecting new revenue, like a doubling of revenue from the Pendleton Unmanned Aerial Systems Range and \$25,000 from marijuana taxes.

While the budget doesn't go into effect until July, city officials are already beginning plans for the fire bond.

The council will consider authorizing staff to begin negotiations with the Mackenzie Group of

Portland for further design work for the new fire station.

The city previously hired Mackenzie to provide initial designs and updated estimates, retaining the right to negotiate final architectural designs and engineering services if the bond passed.

In a report to the city council, Fire Chief Mike Ciraulo wrote that money could be saved from this set-up because of the work Mackenzie has already done on the station designs.

Staff will return for council approval if they can agree to a favorable contract with Mackenzie. If they can't, Ciraulo wrote that staff would submit a new request for proposal.

Ciraulo estimates that the project, which will move the fire department primary station at 911 S.W. Court Ave. to 1601 S.E. Court, could be completed as early as 2018.

Staff will also deliver the first report to the council on the city's 2017-2019 goals. Besides a written report updating the council on all of the goals, staff will also provide a more in-depth report on sustainable infrastructure and energy reduction.

Adopted in January, the city goals prioritize improving infrastructure, land development, economic development and housing.

PENDLETON

District attorney indicts Lybrand on more cases

East Oregonian

Downtown Pendleton business owner and drug offender Jason Lybrand faces three new criminal cases in addition to charges of sex crimes. His arraignment in all four cases is Tuesday afternoon at the Umatilla County Courthouse, Pendleton.



Lybrand

Circuit court records show the district attorney's office filed the indictments last week against Lybrand, 46, who remains in the county jail, Pendleton.

The state in the latest cases accuses Lybrand of the following:

- Using a minor to help commit a drug crime on May 8, as well as possession and delivery of methamphetamine on that date;

- Using a minor to help commit a drug crime on May 12, as well as possession and delivery of methamphetamine on that date;

•Conspiring to deliver meth on two occasions. According to the indictment, Lybrand on April 3 conspired with a man named Brandon James to deliver the drug, and Lybrand conspired on May 3 with his wife, Sheri Lybrand, and with James.

According to the court documents, James testified at the grand jury, along with detectives with the Blue Mountain Enforcement Narcotics Team.

Lybrand also faces four counts of second-degree sexual abuse and two counts of witness tampering. Records also show the minor victim in the case also testified to the grand jury about the drug crimes.

The district attorney's office also indicted Sheri Lybrand with conspiracy to deliver meth. Her arraignment on the charge is June 27.

Umatilla County to vote on budget, salaries

East Oregonian

The Umatilla County Board of Commissioners are ready to approve the annual budget.

The board votes Wednesday morning to adopt the \$73.7 million budget for 2017-18, along with 2 percent cost of living increases for administrative employees and elected officials.

The meeting begins at 9 a.m. and is in room 130 at the county courthouse, 216 S.E. Fourth St., Pendleton.

In addition to the budget, the board plans to consider a proposal from the Columbia Development Authority for a sewer line to run from Umatilla's urban growth boundary to the former Umatilla Chemical Depot. The authority is waiting for the Army to hand over control of the former military site. To install the sewer line, the

county board must approve an exemption to land use laws.

And the sheriff's office is asking the board to approve the purchase of a Cellebrite Universal Forensic Extraction Device for "the purpose of examining cellular phones, tablets, GPS devices, cameras, and other forms of digital media." The device, according to the memo from the sheriff's office, is the leading tool in the field of digital forensic examination.

The sheriff's office would apply a \$9,149 grant to buy the device, as well as use \$1,584 in its budget to cover the difference.

And in other business, the board is to receive an update on the defunct Rodeo City Inn, the former hotel turned refuge and crime housing about five miles west of Pendleton.

County bristles at Scotch thistle

By GEORGE PAVEN
East Oregonian

George Newman has been fighting Scotch thistle ever since he was a child.

The noxious weed, native to Europe and Asia, is widespread across Umatilla County and nearly all of Eastern Oregon. It is instantly recognizable for its height, growing 6-8 feet tall, its spiny leaves and bright lavender flowers.

Newman, who farms and ranches along the Umatilla River in Hermiston, said Scotch thistle is a county-wide problem. Farmers are especially, seeds wind up in the river and irrigation ditches where they are inadvertently pumped and spread onto the land.

"You spend a lot of time and a lot of money trying to control it," Newman said. "It's just a never-ending battle."

Scotch thistle is a particularly nasty rangeland and woodland invader, forming in dense patches and crowding out native vegetation. Livestock won't eat the weed, Newman said, making it nothing more than a headache for landowners to try and control.

Teddy Orr, Umatilla County weed department supervisor, said Scotch thistle has increased this year due to the high amount of spring rain. The biennial weed germinates during the wetter parts of spring and fall, then produces flowers in the summer.

Because it is so distinct, Orr figures about 80 percent of all calls he gets are about Scotch thistle.

"It's the one (weed) everybody sees," Orr said. "It's so big, and it's such an eyesore."

Unfortunately, Orr said Scotch thistle is what the county defines as a "B-list"



Photo contributed by Teddy Orr

Scotch thistle is an ongoing problem in Umatilla County and Eastern Oregon, and can grow 6-8 feet tall.

weed, meaning it is well established and not economically feasible to eradicate. All people can do is try to control it and keep it from spreading further.

"Basically, what it boils down to is people need to be good stewards of the land and treat it if it arises," Orr said.

Each Scotch thistle plant is capable of growing 50-100 flowers, and each flower is capable of producing roughly 100 seeds, Orr said. If those seeds make it into the soil, they can remain in the seed bank for up to 30 years.

As for treatment, Orr mentioned

four possible methods: mowing, tilling, pulling and spraying. Mowing is not ideal, Orr said, and pulling can be tricky because the plant is so large and prickly.

For anyone thinking about spraying, Orr said residents can call the weed department at 541-278-5462 for suggestions on appropriate chemicals.

"It's an ongoing problem," he said. "I would just like to see people be good stewards."

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

BRIEFLY

UCFD fire chief Stanton elected to statewide board

HERMISTON — Umatilla County Fire District 1 Chief Scott Stanton will now wear two hats: fire chief and statewide board member. Stanton was recently nominated to serve as a director on the Oregon Fire Chiefs Association board.

"It's kind of an honor," Stanton said. "I'm the only one from Eastern Oregon, so I get to represent the entire area."



Stanton

Stanton said he was nominated by a colleague, and he had to write his own letter of intent to be selected.

Stanton said as far as he could recall, no other chiefs from Hermiston had served on the board of that group.

Like most boards of directors, Stanton said he expects his new role will include setting policies and best practices, and prioritizing certain issues for firefighters.

"The big ticket items right now are firefighter health and wellness, combating cancer in firefighters and PTSD — those are probably big things

on the horizon," he said.

Stanton will attend his first meeting as a board member in mid-June.

Wyden to hold Pendleton town hall June 10

PENDLETON — Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden is coming to Umatilla County for a town hall on June 10.

The public event will be held at 1 p.m. at Nixyaawii Community School, 73315 July Grounds Lane in Pendleton.

He will also hold a town hall later that evening at 6 p.m. on the Wheeler County Courthouse lawn, 701 Adams Street in Fossil. There will be another town hall in the public park in Condon at noon on June 11.

Wyden has pledged to hold at least one town hall meeting in each county in Oregon each year. This will be his second in Umatilla County this year.

"It's clear from the incredible turnout at my 42 town halls so far in 2017 throughout Oregon that there's unprecedented interest in issues such as climate change, healthcare and the Russia investigation," Wyden said in a statement. "With such strong evidence that participatory democracy is alive and well in our state, I want Oregonians to have every possible opportunity to share their views with me."

Hermiston School District seeks community feedback

HERMISTON — The Hermiston School District is seeking community feedback after voters rejected a \$104 million bond measure this May.

If passed, the bond would have allowed the district to build one new elementary school, completely rebuild two elementary schools, and make significant upgrades and additions to the high school.

The district will collect information from the community through an online platform called "Thought Exchange," which allows people to submit comments and opinions anonymously. District administrators and school board members will use the feedback to inform their decisions about how to approach the school's growing population, and to decide when they might put another bond measure on the ballot.

To comment, community members can go online signup.thotex.com/hermiston/Lnj and sign up, and then click on the "Share your thoughts" link. Participants will then answer a series of questions, and can add, delete, or change their answers any time after completing it, until the forum closes on June 11.

Pendleton man dies after jumping into traffic

East Oregonian

Oregon State Police Lt. Mike Turner reported a Pendleton man jumped into traffic Saturday near Pilot Rock and died after a vehicle struck him.

State police troopers at about 11:22 a.m. Saturday responded to a report of a vehicle versus pedestrian crash on Highway 395 near milepost 14B. Turner said the preliminary investigation revealed Kelly Rae Flanagan, 46, of Halfway, was driving a white 2014 Ford Edge southbound when Bradley Deshawn McMann, 23, of Pendleton, jumped in front of her vehicle. Flanagan was unable to avoid a collision and struck McMann.

"We believe it was intentional," Turner said. "Witness and family interviews at the scene indicate McMann intentionally jumped into traffic."

Bystanders performed CPR on McMann, who died at the scene. Turner also said the driver of the Ford cooperated with the investigation.

The Pilot Rock Rural Fire Protection District and Pendleton Fire and Ambulance Service responded to the scene, as did the Pilot Rock Police Department and Oregon Department of Transportation.

Suicide is preventable, and help is available for community members struggling from a mental health crisis and/or suicidal thoughts. If you or someone

you know needs help with suicidal thoughts or is otherwise in an immediate mental health crisis, professionals are on call to handle mental health emergencies 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Call the Umatilla County mental health crisis number at 800-452-5413 or 541-278-5720; and the Lifeways, Inc.

crisis number is 866-343-4473 or 541-276-6207.

More information is available online at www.co.umatilla.or.us/AD/index.html

Help also is available at the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 800-273-8255, or visit suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

**HHS Class of 1972
45th Reunion!**

No Host Celebration at

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1750 N 1st, Hermiston

Saturday, June 17 • 6PM - Close

All Classes are Invited

A class picture will be taken at 6:00 PM

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QUESTIONS? CALL:
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Barbara (Bailey) Payne 541-969-9199
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