

HERMISTON

City takes over portion of Highland Avenue

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

The city of Hermiston approved a request by Umatilla County on Monday to take over jurisdiction of West Highland Avenue between Southwest 11th Street and Southwest 15th Place.

City Manager Byron Smith said the city already sweeps that portion of road, and most of the property on either side is within city limits. The county made the request after the city approved a conditional use permit for a mini-storage project along that stretch of roads, which the county said would cause problems in its permitting process if storm drains were required along their portion of road as part of the development.

"This is a new approach the county is taking, I guess," Smith said.

On Monday the city council also authorized Smith to accept federal and state grant funding to hire Century West Engineering to update the master plan for the Hermiston Municipal Airport. Using Oregon Department of Aviation dollars as a match for the Federal Aviation Administration funds, the city's

maximum out of pocket cost for the \$300,000 project is expected to be no more than \$3,333.

During a work session preceding the regular council meeting Smith shared updates on a number of city projects that councilors and citizens have inquired about in recent months.

He said that representatives from the Portland Trail Blazers (possibly including players) will be at Sunset Park sometime in September to help dedicate new playground equipment paid for by the Moda Assist online competition that Hermiston won.

New play equipment for Greenwood Park is expected to arrive in August.

The parks and recreation department is ready to start pouring concrete pads for a new disc golf course across from Good Shepherd Medical Center.

The city is almost done finalizing an agreement with the Department of Fish and Wildlife to take over management of the Steelhead Park area, allowing the planned West Highland Trail project to loop under the Highland Extension bridge there and into Riverfront Park.

Now that recreational immunity for cities has been

restored by the legislature, the city is searching for an architect with experience designing skate parks to move forward on the planned skate park on North First Place across from the fire station.

Parks and Recreation director Larry Fetter has been working on a plan with the Bureau of Reclamation to manage the dry grasses and weeds along the Oxbow Trail so that they pose less of a fire hazard. Police Chief Jason Edmiston said no suspect has been caught in the fire that recently swept through those grasses and burned down a duplex, which witnesses said was started by fireworks. He said the case shows the need for the department's new arson officer that started July 1.

The Oregon Department of Transportation project to place traffic signals at Northwest 11th Street's intersections with Orchard Avenue and Elm Avenue did not receive any bids from contractors, so the department has postponed the project and hopes to put it out to bid again in the fall.

The planning department continues to work on opening the door for increased housing development in Hermiston, including rezoning 40 acres

off of Diagonal Road from industrial to residential mixed with some commercial. On Wednesday at 7 p.m. at city hall the planning commission has invited real estate professionals, developers and lot owners to come discuss further ways the city can help clear away barriers to housing development.

Smith said the city reached out to Hermiston Foods after hearing of its impending closure at the end of the year. The local managers referred the city to the vegetable-processing plant's parent company NORPAC. Smith said the city would like to offer whatever services it can in helping market the building or otherwise clear the way for re-purposing the property. However, he said NORPAC has a history of not being very communicative.

Smith also noted that the city has been pursuing all legal avenues available to address nuisance complaints against a property owner in the Highway 207/Feedville Road area that has been causing a strong rotting food odor. He said within a week or so there should be a form on the city's website for citizens to directly submit complaints that can be used in court.

BRIEFLY

UEC board member to resign

HERMISTON — RoseEtta Ansoategui, of Pendleton, will resign from the Umatilla Electric Cooperative board of directors effective Saturday.

Ansoategui, who represents District 6 southeast of Pendleton, is stepping down to care for family members with health issues, according to a statement from UEC.

"This was a tough decision but the right choice to make, and we wish the very best for RoseEtta and her family," said Bob MacPherson, UEC board president.

Ansoategui is a retired academic assistant for Blue Mountain Community College. She was first elected to the UEC board in 2005, and was re-elected four times.

The board will choose a successor to complete Ansoategui's current three-year term, which expires in 2020.

MacPherson praised Ansoategui's time on the board, which included support of the United Way, Pendleton Round-Up and service on the UEC Scholarship Committee. She also achieved the highest level of board director training offered by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

The UEC board is composed of seven members across Umatilla and Morrow counties. Members are charged with setting policy and electricity rates for the co-op.



Ansoategui

16-year-old boy remains missing

PENDLETON — A 16-year-old boy remains missing from the Umatilla Indian Reservation near Pendleton.

Shaydin Jones-Hoisington went missing May 1. Chuck Sams, communications director for the tribes, said tribal police have responded to numerous reports of the boy's whereabouts.

Sams also said police along with tribal Children and Family Services are working with the family to help bring Jones-Hoisington home. Relatives and friends also have reached out to the boy on his Facebook page.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children in an alert about Jones-Hoisington described him as 5 feet 8 inches tall and weighing 175 pounds.

Anyone with information about Jones-Hoisington can call the center at 800-843-5678 or the Umatilla Tribal Police Department at 541-278-0550.



Jones-Hoisington

Four Morrow County rape cases head to court Thursday

East Oregonian

Four Morrow County men facing rape and other sex crimes in unrelated cases have pretrial hearings Thursday. Two of the defendants remain in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, and two are out of jail on conditional releases.

Corey Scott Baker, 40, of Ione, has been free on his own recognizance since his arrest March 22 for first-degree rape and sexual abuse of a girl younger than 12. According to court documents, the Morrow County District Attorney's Office alleged Baker raped and molested the girl between July and December 2016.

Baker in May filed a motion asking for permission to travel to Gilliam County to service and repair farm equipment for Crum Farming Inc. Baker in the request told the court taking the job would end his reliance on unemployment payments.

Circuit Judge Eva Temple on June 13 granted Baker's request.

Kenny Cole Blurton, 19, of Irrigon, remains free after posting \$5,000 bail in January. According to the indictment, the district attorney's office alleged Blurton raped and assaulted a girl younger than 14 between July 1 and Dec. 22, 2015. He faces four counts of second-degree rape, three of second-degree

unlawful sexual penetration, two of first-degree sexual abuse, and one of second-degree sodomy.

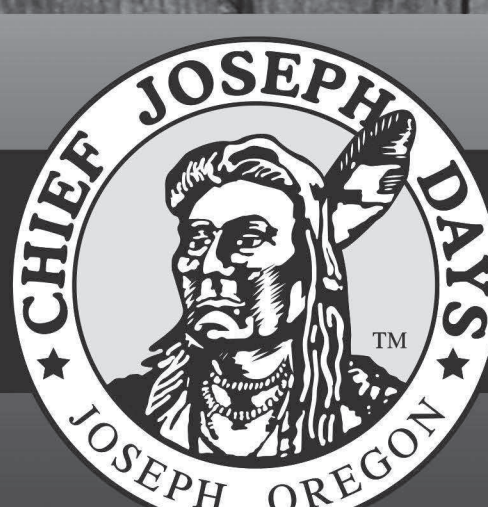
Jason Kane Kissler, 35, and Eduardo Salas, 60, both of Irrigon, remain in the jail.

The Morrow County Sheriff's Office arrested Kissler on April 15 after responding to a disturbance at a home off Depot Lane, Irrigon. The victim told deputies that Kissler raped her, according to a statement from the sheriff's office. The district attorney's office subsequently charged Kissler with rape, sodomy and unlawful sexual penetration, all in the first degree, and one count of fourth-degree assault.

And the district attorney's office charged Salas with attempted first-degree sexual abuse, two counts of first-degree rape and nine of first-degree sexual abuse for harming two girls younger than 12 between April 1, 2016, and May 28, 2017.

Salas filed motions on July 3 to disqualify circuit judges Christopher Brauer and Lynn Hampton. In the requests, defense attorney Dan Stephens of Hermiston asserted Salas "believes he cannot receive a fair and impartial hearing and trial" from either judge.

Under Oregon law, that's enough of a reason for a disqualification, and Circuit Judge Dan Hill approved both requests.



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	9:00pm	Family Fun at the Thunder Room
THURSDAY	9:00am	Tough Enough to Wear Pink Walk
	9:00am	Steer Tripping, Three Rounds
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	2:00pm	Slack — Arena
	6:00pm	Craft Beer Tasting at Thunder Room—til 9:00pm
	7:00pm	PRCA RODEO — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
		Tough Enough to Wear Pink — Support Cancer Screening
		Barrel Racing Slack — After the Rodeo
	9:00pm	Music and Dancing at Thunder Room
FRIDAY	7:00am	Golf Tournament — Alpine Meadows Golf Course
	10:00am	Chief Joseph Junior Parade — Main Street
	2:00pm	Slack — Arena
	7:00pm	PRCA RODEO — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
	9:00pm	All Teen Dance — Joseph Community Center
	9:00pm	Music and Dancing at Thunder Room
SATURDAY	6:00am	Shrine Breakfast begins
	10:00am	Grand Parade — Main Street
	12:00pm	Nez Perce Friendship Feast — Encampment Pavilion
	2:00pm	Slack — Arena
	3:00pm	Traditional Indian Dance Contest — Encampment Pavilion
	7:00pm	PRCA RODEO — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
	9:00pm	All Teen Dance — Joseph Community Center
	9:00pm	Music and Dancing at Thunder Room
		After Rodeo — Cowboy Breakfast — Rodeo Grounds — Until 3:00am
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