



**BUCKS IN THE
DAWG HOUSE**
SPORTS/1B



**‘STATE OF
THE UNION
IS STRONG’**
NATION/6A

EAST OREGONIAN

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2018

142nd Year, No. 75 WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD One dollar

PENDLETON

BMCC pitches council on indoor arena



Architectural drawing courtesy Blue Mountain Community College
A draft rendering of the FARM II facility, a proposed project by Blue Mountain Community College on the Pendleton Round-Up Grounds.

“We talk about what these investments cost us rather than what the value to the community is.”

— **Dale Primmer**, Pendleton councilor on funding request for FARM II project

College asks for \$150,000 to match county and port

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Blue Mountain Community College has already roped in \$5.3 million for its indoor arena project at the Round-Up Grounds and it’s now looking for a substantial financial commitment from the city of Pendleton.

At a city council workshop Tuesday, BMCC President Cam Preus made a presentation where she asked the city to commit \$150,000 to the project.

Between Preus and Mayor John Turner, a former BMCC president himself, the college has been working on building an arena for years. But the project started to come together over the past 18 months.

BMCC received \$2.1 million from the state toward its \$6.3 million Facility for Agricultural Resource Management, or FARM, and used the proceeds from a \$23 million bond passed in 2015 to fund the rest.

During the last session,

BMCC was able to convince legislators to offer another \$5 million for FARM II, a facility that would house an extended animal science program and the college rodeo team.

Without the benefit of bond funds, BMCC will have to do additional legwork to cover the rest of the costs for the projected \$10 million to \$12 million facility.

Preus said BMCC signed a letter of intent with the Round-Up Association and

See **ARENA/8A**

County budget to hold steady

Commissioners aim to stay ‘right sized’

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Umatilla County has no plans to spend general fund money on new employees in the 2018-19 fiscal year, but isn’t looking at drastic cuts either.

County commissioners and budget staff met Tuesday morning at the courthouse in Pendleton to get an overview of what to expect in the more than \$70 million upcoming budget that goes into effect July 1.

“We’re not in a position to expand,” chief financial officer Robert Pahl said. “We’re not in a position to be extravagant. We need to hold the line.”

Pahl in early December notified department heads not to ask for new hires or to reclassify employees to receive higher pay. Commissioner George Murdock re-emphasized that notion after the meeting as well.

“Our goal is to maintain a stable level of programs and services,” he said. “That’s our whole [operation]. It’s not to offer new programs.”

That’s along the same lines Murdock delivered in a Dec. 4 budget message to

See **BUDGET/8A**



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Workers drive forklifts with pallets of frozen goods in the loading dock of the Port of Morrow’s cold storage warehouse on Monday in Boardman.

PORT WITH A PLAN



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The Port of Morrow has secured the funding to install 24,000 feet of new track to its rail system.

Businesses churned out \$2.8 billion in 2017 as Port of Morrow built more infrastructure

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**
East Oregonian

The second-largest port in Oregon is also a driver of rapid local economic development. Capping off several years of steady industrial growth, the Port of Morrow’s 2017 economic impact analysis revealed that it had an output of \$2.77 billion last year — more than doubling the port’s numbers from a decade ago.

And the port still has room to grow. With more than 12,000 acres of land to its name, the port has 2,500 acres zoned for future industrial development and about 600 that are “shovel-ready.” Those parcels, which range from 10-acre to 100-acre plots, are actively being marketed to businesses, said Port of Morrow Workforce Training Coordinator Kalie Davis.

Port general manager Gary Neal said the port will continue developing infrastructure on vacant lands, as well as focus on attracting industries and businesses.

Neal said one key to the port’s continued success has been a focus on infrastructure,

even on lands that don’t yet have tenants. According to Neal, the port is the largest owner of vacant industrial land in the state, but the port works to keep that land equipped with water, sewer and wastewater facilities.

By the numbers

\$896 million
Business output in 2006

\$2.77 billion
Business output in 2017

8,000
People employed by the port and its tenants

3,383
Boardman population

“We have fairly aggressively invested on a regular basis, making capital investments for infrastructure,” Neal said. “We plan, plan, plan — and then react based on what comes at us.”

Neal said when he first came to the port nearly 30 years ago, the port had a lot of land, but limited infrastructure.

“I learned early on, we need to try to find funding opportunities to put infrastructure in, so when

(companies) came by, it was ready to go. That’s been our business model for many years.”

The port has mainly relied on state funding and grants, but Neal said they keep their eyes open for other opportunities.

“We think we have the opportunity to go after some federal grants as well,” said

See **PORT/8A**



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