

# Umatilla County approves hand off of EOTEC to city of Hermiston

By PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

Hermiston is about to become the sole owner of the Eastern Oregon Event and Trade Center.

Eastern Oregon's biggest city and Umatilla County were 50/50 partners in creating the center off Hermiston's Airport Road. But in recent weeks, officials from the two governments have been hammering out a deal to give Hermiston full ownership.

The county board of commissioners Wednesday

voted 3-0 to end the partnership and transfer its share of EOTEC to the city.

"The parties have decided that for the long term operation of the EOTEC facility and its financial viability, it is best that only one entity be the owner," reads the agreement.

County counsel Doug Olsen said there are a few details still to work out, including a property list, but otherwise the commissioners are ready to sign the deal.

Byron Smith, Hermiston city manager and EOTEC board chair, said he appre-

ciated the county's cooperation. The Hermiston City Council will take up the deal Monday.

Commissioner Larry Givens praised Smith for his leadership on EOTEC, and Commissioner Bill Elfering told him "good luck going forth."

The county board also voted 3-0 to funnel enterprise zone payments of \$500,000 a year for four years from the Lamb Weston project to Hermiston so the city can make water system improvements for a housing development.

Smith said the development north of Hermiston is planned for 300 lots, but that could expand to 600 or more. The Hermiston School District is also considering a new education facility in the area if development moves forward.

Lamb Weston will make 15 annual payments of \$500,000 to the county and the city beginning in 2020. Commissioner George Murdock said the county's general practice has been to pump these funds back into community development projects.

## HERMISTON

# Houfmuse hearings pushed to end of month

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
East Oregonian

A Hermiston man seeking release before his murder trial will have his request heard at the end of the month, a judge decided on Thursday.

Tyree Houfmuse, 35, appeared in the Hermiston Circuit Court on Thursday. His attorney Kara

Davis requested a motion to release, while District Attorney Dan Primus requested a motion to continue the trial. The trial was set to begin April 30, but at the end of February the state asked to delay while prosecutors waited for more test results from the state crime lab. Davis said Houfmuse would then have had to sit in jail for six additional months while being presumptively innocent.

Judge Eva Temple set a new hearing date for March 27, when she will hear requests for a motion to release and a motion to continue the trial.

Temple also told Houfmuse, who did not speak in court, that he could potentially have another settlement hearing. Houfmuse had a settlement conference in December 2017, but no deal was reached.

Houfmuse is charged with murder, manslaughter, felon in possession of a firearm and unlawful use of a weapon in the death of James Cragun. He has been in jail since he was arrested in June, with bail set at more than \$1 million.

Houfmuse is claiming self defense. In court documents, Davis states Cragun was violent and violated restraining orders not to

contact his ex-girlfriend. Davis cited in court documents, and again in court on Thursday, several text messages Cragun sent to his girlfriend. She said the

texts referred to Houfmuse, who is black, using a racial slur and stated that he was going to kill Houfmuse.

Houfmuse was aware of the threats the night they fought, Davis said, and contends Cragun had a gun and charged Houfmuse. Cragun died from a gunshot wound.

Davis said the state had already received tests saying the primary DNA on the gun belonged to Cragun.

"The only new tests say they can't locate Mr. Houfmuse's DNA on the gun that fired the fatal bullet," she said.

Davis said all the evidence that the prosecution has is consistent with the information that's been shared so far.

"How this would justify continuance, I don't know," Davis said. "They've had eight months. At any point during that time, they could have requested testing. Meanwhile, my client is sitting in jail, presumptively innocent."

Primus said at the pre-trial conference the state expressed concern that they would not be able to move forward as expected.

"The state's failure to talk to the crime lab for a case that happened Memorial Day weekend of 2017 is not a justification for keeping my client in jail for six more months," Davis said.

Contact Jayati Ramakrishnan at 541-564-4534 or jramakrishnan@eastoregonian.com.



Houfmuse

## PENDLETON



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A car passes over the Eighth Street bridge on Thursday in Pendleton.

# Eighth Street Bridge in final days

East Oregonian

Following years of preparation, the city is starting to close off the Eighth Street Bridge in Pendleton in anticipation of replacing it.

Pendleton Public Works Director Bob Patterson said Southeast Eighth Street will see temporary closures from March through May as contractors install footings for the new bridge and other prep work.

The bridge will close to vehicles in June and remain closed for the next 10 months as work crews dismantle the 109-year-old bridge and replace it with a new structure.

During that time, residents

on both sides of the Umatilla River will have to make some adjustments.

A temporary pedestrian bridge will be built 60 feet upstream from the existing bridge in June to provide access across the river. Pedestrians on the Pendleton River Parkway will be redirected at Southeast Seventh and Ninth streets to walk around the construction zone on Byers Avenue.

Additionally, houses on Eighth Street will lose access to their driveways during the construction period and will have to park on Southeast Byers Avenue.

Patterson said the city recently held a community meeting with nearby resi-

dents to explain the latest developments. He also intends to send out contact information for the project superintendent should anyone have concerns.

As it stands now, the project is behind schedule and over-budget.

When the Pendleton Enhancement Project, a community group comprised of local government officials and nonprofits, became interested in using the bridge trusses for a beautification project on Main Street, the city was forced to delay the project a year while the situation was sorted out.

Patterson said the delay added another half million dollars to the final cost,

meaning the budget is now more than \$8 million for a project that has funding from the federal government, the state, the city and Umatilla County. With the city agreeing to provide a more than 10 percent match, the city is responsible for roughly \$50,000 more than anticipated.

As for the Pendleton Enhancement Project, Patterson said the group wants to raise the rest of the money needed to relocate the trusses for Eighth Street to the Eagles parking lot off Main Street. If the group can't raise the money by the time the trusses are removed in August, they will be stored on city property on Byers.

## PUBLIC SAFETY LOG

### WEDNESDAY

7:13 a.m. - A Milton-Freewater resident reported someone broke into his pickup on the 1500 block of Walnut Street and stole multiple items.

8:33 a.m. - Two vehicles crashed near the Bottle Drop Redemption Center, 740 W. Hermiston Ave., Hermiston. The crash blocked a stop sign and one person may have suffered a head injury.

10:30 a.m. - A member of the Meacham Neighborhood Watch on Loka Drive reported a burglary in progress.

10:34 a.m. - An Irrigon business owner reported she evicted a man from her home and he stole items from her storage unit.

12:28 p.m. - Umatilla police received a complaint about littering at Lind and Bensen roads, but officers did not find the dump site.

1:20 p.m. - Clerks at Love's Travel Stop, 78665 Tower Road, Boardman, refused to sell beer to an intoxicated man, and he started "bumming gas and money" from people at the truck stop. Staff asked the Morrow County Sheriff's Office to send a deputy. The sheriff's office did not find the man or his vehicle.

3:46 p.m. - A caller at Lindsay West and Little Juniper lanes, Lexington, reported the theft of 75

gallons of the vegetation killer Roundup.

9:35 p.m. - A male and female fought at Jones Mini Storage, 1300 N. Elizabeth St., Milton-Freewater.

11:04 p.m. - Irrigon residents on Southwest Nevada Avenue reported someone hit their mailbox and the neighbor's fence.

### ARRESTS, CITATIONS

#### Wednesday

•Oregon State Police arrested Michael Charles Wilmot, 46, of the Milton-Freewater area, for felony in possession of a handgun.

#### Thursday

•Stanfield police reported arresting Danny Roman Siguenza, 21, of Hermiston. He faces charges of unlawful dissemination of an intimate image, a misdemeanor, and first-degree invasion of personal privacy, a felony.

The arrest was the result of an investigation regarding Siguenza "sharing private images taken of another partygoer without their consent on his phone," according to Stanfield police, "and in a place where someone has an expectation of privacy."

Siguenza now is a guest at the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton. Stanfield police also reported he does not have his phone.

**WILDHORSE RESORT & CASINO**  
3/9-11  
Cineplex Show Times

\$5 Classic Movie • 3/14 • 12:00 PM  
Planes, Trains, and Automobiles

**A Wrinkle In Time (PG)**  
11:20\* 4:20 6:50  
ED 1:50 9:20

**The Hurricane Heist (PG13)**  
11:40\* 2:10\* 4:40 7:10 9:30

**Red Sparrow (R)**  
12:40\* 3:40\* 6:40 9:40

**Death Wish (R)**  
11:50\* 2:20\* 4:50 7:20 9:50

**Black Panther (PG13)**  
1:00\* 4:00 7:00 10:00

\* Matinee Pricing  
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**EASTERN OREGON FORUM Presents**

TUESDAY, MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2018 AT 7:00 P.M.  
BLUE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE (BMCC), 2411 NW CARDEN, PENDLETON, OR.  
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY BUILDING, ROOM ST-200

**OUR OPIOID CRISIS FEATURING: ERIC HOLEMAN AND DR. JOEL RICE**

Jim Setzer, Umatilla County Public Health Director, will serve as moderator for the forum.

**Eric Holeman** obtained a Bachelor Of Science in Pharmacy from Oregon State University in 1986, and received his Doctor of Pharmacy degree and Hospital Residency from University of Washington/Harborview Medical Centers in 1988. Eric developed an interest in pain and opiate management in 1999 when he served as a hospice pain consultant and later in 2002, when he initiated a pharmacist managed pain service at Mid-Columbia Medical Center in The Dalles, Oregon. In 2012, he obtained certification through the American Academy of Pain Management as a credentialed pain provider.

Eric served as a member of the Clinical Advisory Panel to the Gorge Coordinated Care Organization from 2012-2016. He has been instrumental in leading a regional effort to develop strategic initiatives for chronic pain and opiate management throughout the Columbia Gorge and Central Oregon regions.

Eric has been employed at Mid-Columbia Medical Center since 2001, and currently serves in the capacity of Clinical Lead Pharmacist providing consultation related to cancer care, chronic pain, anti-coagulation and acute care management.

**Dr. Joel Rice** is Board Certified in General Psychiatry and Addiction Medicine, and started a small addiction clinic, Grande Ronde Recovery, in La Grande almost 20 years ago. Joel has been treating opioid use disorder with Suboxone and other medications in La Grande for 15 years, being the first in eastern Oregon to do so. Retired Pendleton Internist Dr. Dan Marier has the DEA Waiver to treat patients with Suboxone, and has just begun working with Joel.

Joel has been treating opioid use disorder in Pendleton for 3 years, in coordination with Umatilla County Human Services, and has plans to start seeing patients at their clinic in Hermiston soon. Joel currently has around 200 patients in Umatilla County with Opioid Use Disorder. He has established four "Sober Homes" in La Grande, where individuals with addiction can live in a supported, sober environment. They are working with Umatilla County Human Services to establish sober living residences in Pendleton and Hermiston.

Also in attendance will be Dr. Chuck Hofmann, Medical Director of New Directions Northwest addiction treatment center in Baker City, Mike Stensrud, the Eastern Oregon Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention Coordinator for Umatilla County Public Health, and Pendleton Police Chief, Stuart Roberts.

THE COST FOR THIS SERIES OF 4 FORUMS IS \$15 PER PERSON, \$25 PER COUPLE OR \$5 PER FORUM AT THE DOOR - STUDENTS ARE FREE

For more information about the EO Forum, please contact: Karen Parker at 541-966-3177.

The EO Forum is a collaborative effort among leaders from Blue Mountain Community College, InterMountain Education Service District, the East Oregonian, American Association of University Women, and Harriet Isom, a former United States ambassador who also serves on the committee. This EO Forum program is offered as part of Blue Mountain Community College's annual Arts and Culture Festival. For more information on the festival go to www.bluecc.edu.