

Remembering Heather Corey



Cydney Corey Curtis and Bobby Curtis ride next to a riderless horse commemorating their mother, former Pendleton Round-Up director Heather Corey, during a ceremony for retiring directors Friday at the Pendleton Round-Up. Heather Corey was the first woman to be named a director for the Pendleton Round-Up. She passed away on July 6, 2012, at her home in Adams. Also on the track were outgoing directors — Randy Thomas, Rob Collins and Randy Leonard — in the same incoming class as Corey in 2010.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton police question central figures in Thursday’s stabbing

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts reported a detective caught up to more key figures involved in a Thursday morning assault that left two teens with stab wounds.

“In this instance, the two juveniles that were dropped off at St. Anthony Hospital instigated and/or participated in the assault of a 25-year-old Pendleton resident who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time,” according to Roberts.

Pendleton police launched an investigation when the emergency department at St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton, reported that a vehicle at about 3:10 a.m. Thursday dropped off two boys, ages 14 and 15, for treatment of stab wounds. The hospital treated and released the 15-year-old, but a ground ambulance took the 14-year-old to Oregon Health & Science University, Portland.

Police pursued the SUV that left the teens until the

driver and three occupants bailed out on 2300 block of Southwest Nye Avenue. The vehicle came to a stop after colliding with a retaining wall, and the driver fled the scene.

Roberts reported detectives as of Thursday at 7 p.m. “identified, located and interviewed” the 17-year old driver of 1999 Dodge Durango and the 25-year-old man who police suspected stabbed the pair of teens.

“This case has a lot of potential criminal outcomes from riot to varying degrees of assault,” Roberts wrote in a statement. “There are also several actor(s) that may potentially be charged. Self-defense is also a very real consideration given the totality of circumstances, which is why arrest(s) have not been made.”

Still, according to Roberts, while aspects of the investigation are ongoing, police gathered sufficient information to refer the case to the Umatilla County District Attorney for consideration of charges.

UMATILLA

City manager candidates make their pitch to community

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Three city manager candidates were in the hot seat Thursday night as residents grilled finalists for the Umatilla city manager position about their intentions for the job.

The city council plans to make a decision Tuesday, but gave the community a chance to meet finalists Blair Larsen, Scott Mezaros and David Stockdale. The three men spent about an hour answering questions from the public before having time to mingle informally with the crowd at the Umatilla Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center.

“We want to be transparent,” Mayor Darren Dufloth told the audience. “We want you to see what we see.”

Larsen has been city manager of Stanfield since 2013 and prior to that was senior budget and management analyst for Broward County, Florida’s office of management and budget. He said he applied for the Umatilla city manager position because he and his family have enjoyed living in the area, and moving to Umatilla would represent a good opportunity for career advancement without leaving Eastern Oregon. He said he is familiar with many of the things Umatilla

is working on, and knows the community has exciting opportunities for growth and interesting new projects.

“The things you have going on here in Umatilla are really very attractive — things I have been studying my whole life to do,” he said.

Mezaros has been city administrator of Meeker, Colorado, since 2012 and prior to that was town clerk for Monument, Colorado, for seven years. He told the group that he and his wife were preparing to become empty nesters, and it seemed like the right time to make a career change. He was attracted to Umatilla’s potential, and said he likes small-town life with nearby outdoor recreation activities.

He said now that Umatilla has a vision plan, put together by the community and Portland State University students, that plan should not sit on the shelf.

Stockdale was recently city administrator for Prosser, Washington, for more than two years and before that held several positions with Lane County, including senior public works analyst and supervising analyst for the parks department.

He said Umatilla is similar to Prosser in many ways, and he was attracted to the idea of navigating Umatilla through a similar balance

between growth and retaining a small-town charm. He also acknowledged he was “in transition” after resigning at the mayor of Prosser’s request after a “personal mistake” of not switching his driver’s license from Oregon to Washington in a timely manner, allowing him to still receive breaks on sales tax.

Much of Stockdale’s work in Lane County revolved around parks, and he said Umatilla has “unbelievable” potential with its RV park, marina and other parks and recreation assets. He also referenced successes he had in Prosser with revitalization and tackling housing shortages and said he hopes to do the same in Umatilla.

Afterward Dufloth told the *East Oregonian* that city staff had done a “fantastic job” of stepping up since Russ Pelleberg left in June, but the council is looking forward to having a city manager that can hit the ground running and allow staff more time for their other responsibilities. The city’s hiring committee is planning to tabulate the candidate evaluation forms from the meeting

and comments from staff, who also met with the candidates, and make a recommendation at Tuesday’s city council meeting at 7 p.m. at city hall.

Other Umatilla news

Interim city manager Tamra Mabbott, the city’s community development director, said she is looking forward to returning her full focus on community development.

She said the city continues to move forward on projects, including a water reuse project that will pipe recycled water from Umatilla’s industrial users at the port into West Extension Irrigation District’s canal for use in agricultural irrigation. The city is also looking at what it can do to develop its 23 CSF water right from the Columbia River so that it can supplement its industrial and residential users with river water instead of pulling everything from its wells.

“If we can save out those groundwater wells, so we’re not continuing to mine that aquifer, that will open it up for other users in the critical groundwater area,” she said.

The “Sixth Street project” that Umatilla has been working on with the Oregon Department of Transportation for several years is very close to going out to bid, she said. The project will revamp the section of Highway 730 through Umatilla, creating bulb-outs and other features to make it feel more like a downtown. The city is also looking at signage and other items for a downtown gateway, and has gotten permission from ODOT to place artwork on the Interstate 82 overpass.

It is working on re-designing the triangle of landscaping and waterfall sculpture at the intersection of Highways 395 and 730, with a plan to create a water feature with real water. New trails, new playground equipment and a new basketball court are in the works.

On the private side, new companies like Rae’s Dayz

diner are doing well, Mabbott said. Umatilla will likely be getting a new medical clinic, a new truck stop and other development soon.

Both Mabbott and Dufloth said that the city’s relationship with Umatilla County has improved in recent months, and the city and county plan to sit down together next week to talk about ways they can be better partners on economic development going forward.

When Pelleberg left, the city was in the middle of a dispute with the county over how much the city should receive of Strategic Investment Payments that Amazon is making in lieu of property taxes. Mabbott said that issue has not yet been completely resolved but their new, improved relationship should help them come to a resolution soon.

“That’s everyone’s desire, for sure,” she said.

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