



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Isela Bautista, center, of Sunnyside, Washington, restocks ears of corn at her booth for Bautista Farms on Thursday at the Hermiston Farmers Market.

MARKET: Final day is next Thursday

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ment shade structure where developer Mitch Myers had originally hoped to hold this year's market after the city approached him about taking the event over.

At the beginning of the summer Myers announced he would have to cancel the market after a dispute with the city's building department held up permits for the site and a stop-work order was issued. But after the city offered to hold the market on its new festival street instead, Myers changed his mind and said he could make it work on a property he owned across the street using a temporary canopy.

The building permit has since been issued, and work has begun again on the pavilion, which is expected to be complete in time for next year's market. Brown said they may be able to talk to the city about blocking off a road or doing something else

to create more room for the market.

In the meantime, this year's market drew more vendors than years past, and bigger crowds. Offerings Thursday included fruits, vegetables, honey, fresh bread, salads, meat, cheese, jewelry, soaps, rugs, fresh flowers and other locally sourced items.

Jonathan Tallman was manning a booth for his parents' small family farm Thursday, selling eggs, watermelon and a variety of vegetables. He said they hadn't participated in the old Hermiston farmers market but there was more incentive with the larger crowds and the fact that there was no fee for vendors.

"It didn't cost anything," he said. "That was the number one factor."

Kevin Englehart, who was selling produce from his garden, said this was also his first year participating in a farmers market. He and a

buddy from high school have a "giant garden" on about half an acre of land. Usually Englehart just gives away the results to family and friends, but this year he placed extra.

"I needed a place to market stuff," he said, touting the opportunity to buy local, organic, vine-ripened, hand-picked produce.

Teenager Katie Brink was selling soaps under the business name Mercy Bee Soaps. She said she started making and selling scented soap to raise money for a church camp. Early in the summer, when there were still a few spaces left, she and a friend saw the market and decided to stop.

"I thought, 'Oh my gosh, this is a perfect way to get my stuff out there,'" she said.

Her mom Stacey Brink said she felt that placing live music, empty tables and places to buy dinner outside of the canopy helped draw people in.

"People can sit and eat

and enjoy the evening," she said.

Tamara Warrington said she was a big fan of farmers markets and goes to others, including Echo's.

"I would rather go to one of these than go to the grocery store for fresh vegetables," she said.

She said she missed the trees and grass of when it was at McKenzie Park and had preferred having the market on a Saturday, but she did like the large range of vendors that the Maxwell Market had drawn in.

Mallory Bark, buying nectarines at the market with her young children, said the kids loved picking out produce and sitting and listening to the music.

"I think our community needed this," she said. "I'm glad it got worked out to do it."

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CHIEF: Pendleton has more area to cover, less people than Kansas City

Continued from 1A

The city selected the association to run its fire chief search, and due to several fire chief vacancies across the state, the association advised the city to pick an interim fire chief through the end of the year and then reopen the permanent position on Jan. 1.

Berardi traveled to Pendleton on Sept. 10, where he met with city officials and took in the Professional Bull Riders event at the Happy Canyon arena.

If Berardi wants to stay on past the end of 2018, Corbett said he could apply for the longterm job when the position is posted in January.

Shawn Penninger, the current interim fire chief, said he will revert to his permanent role as assistant fire chief and fire marshal when Berardi starts on Oct. 15.

Penninger said he was invited to apply for a promotion to fire chief, but he declined due to familial commitments. He plans to stay on with the Pendleton Fire Department and met with Berardi during his trip to Pendleton, calling him an "absolutely stellar candidate."

One of Berardi's former subordinates, Kansas City assistant fire chief Mark Mauer, also had kind words to say about him.

Mauer said Berardi was a hard worker who was passionate about his job and put a lot of time into it.

"One of his sharpest assets is his mind," he said.

He's been a past president of the Missouri Association of Fire Chiefs and a member of the International Association of Fire Chiefs in addition to holding a master's degree in public administration from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Working his way up from a firefighter to fire chief, Berardi's five-year tenure at the helm of the Kansas City Fire Department had its share of highs and lows.

According to *The Kansas City Star*, a 2013 natural gas explosion at a restaurant that killed one person led Berardi to announce new protocols on how to respond to gas leaks.

When a building collapse killed two firefighters, an internal review and federal report cited mistakes by the commanders. The department has since instituted a formal collapse zone policy.

But Berardi was also leading the department when Kansas City voters approved a 20-year exten-

sion of a quarter-cent sales tax for the fire department. He told the *Star* that he was most proud of an apprenticeship program for high school students and new trainings that were introduced during his time.

When Berardi arrives in Pendleton in mid-October, he will work in a department much smaller.

Mauer, the assistant fire chief in Kansas City, said the Kansas City Fire Department employs 1,300 personnel, including 225 emergency medical staffers and 1,000 firefighters. In comparison, the Pendleton Fire Department has about 30 positions.

Pendleton's coverage area is larger — 1,000 square miles versus 360 square miles for Kansas City — but the Kansas City Fire Department is responsible for about 500,000 people as opposed to the approximately 20,000 people the Pendleton Fire Department responds to with its ambulance service.

Despite the size differential, Berardi said that whether it's a rural fire district or a metro fire department, all agencies deal with public safety and preparation.

"We all have the same issues, just on a different scale," he said.

Corbett said the fire chief position will continue to be supervised by Police Chief Stuart Roberts acting as the public safety director, although the set-up will be re-evaluated when a permanent hire is made in 2019 based on experience and qualifications.

The police chief's supervision of the department was a point of contention between Roberts and the last full-time chief, Mike Ciraulo.

Ciraulo abruptly retired in April, and although both city officials and Ciraulo declined to provide a reason, Ciraulo's evaluations revealed that there were also disagreements over budget and personnel matters.

Ciraulo's departure was contentious, with both the firefighters union and residents publicly opposing the move.

While other city departments have experienced years of stability under their leaders, the fire chief position has been a revolving door. Including interim appointments, Pendleton has had seven different fire chiefs since 2010.

Corbett said Berardi will earn \$9,647 per month through the end of the year.

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CANNABIS: Oregon Liquor Control Commission cracks down, citing abuse

Continued from 1A

The limit dropped from a pound and a half of marijuana to 1 ounce — the same quantity recreational cannabis consumers are allowed to buy.

"What we saw was abuse, clear abuse of the standards," Steve Marks, executive director of the Liquor Control Commission, said Wednesday.

Over 19 days in August, for instance, one medical marijuana cardholder bought nearly 13 pounds of cannabis. Another bought 7 pounds over 10 days that month. Officials said the questionable transactions came from a small percentage of cardholders and that the typical purchase for most cardholders was 4 grams or less.

Marks said marijuana program overseers worried that the state's low marijuana prices enticed some cardholders to stock up and "take it to Iowa or wherever and sell for a profit."

"We saw that happening," he said, adding it was "a little bit of a Ponzi scheme."

Oregon has been in the crosshairs of U.S. Justice Department leaders for not doing enough to crack down on the black market. U.S. Attorney Billy Williams has repeatedly expressed frustration with the state's failure to contain production and he's chided top officials for not devoting enough resources to oversight and enforcement.

On Wednesday, patients and advocates for the medical marijuana program blasted the new limits at a contentious meeting of the state's rules advisory

committee.

Advocates said medical marijuana patients sometimes need large quantities of the drug to make products they rely on to treat their conditions and they accused the state of meddling with medicine.

The rules committee, made up of marijuana industry participants and advocates, called on the Liquor Control Commission to restore daily purchase limits to 24 ounces.

The at-times boisterous crowd included some of the same activists who have long championed Oregon's 20-year-old medical marijuana program since its early days. For many, the rule reflects the latest change to a program that has experienced a steep drop-off in participation since voters approved recreational marijuana in 2014.

State statistics show Oregon has about 39,000 medical marijuana patients, down from 78,000 in 2015. The number of grow sites serving three or more patients has also plummeted from about 4,000 in 2015 to about 800 today, according to Anthony Taylor, a longtime advocate.

Cannabis is tax-free for medical marijuana patients. They also are allowed to buy more potent edibles and oils than recreational users, and until the latest rule change, they could buy more cannabis flower.

It remains a vital program for those who remain, supporters said.

Brent Kenyon, a licensed producer, processor and retailer based in Medford, accused regulators of scapegoating medical marijuana

cardholders for black market diversion when recreational producers do the same.

"You cannot punish everybody for the few bad actors," he said. "You can't do it. It's not good policy."

During a particularly tense exchange, Jesse Sweet, the lawyer who has helped draft the state's rules for Oregon's legal marijuana market, asked Dr. Rachel Knox, a member of the advisory committee, to explain why one person would need so much cannabis.

"I need you to explain to me why a patient needs 6 pounds of flower," he said. Knox countered by saying the state had no proof that the transactions were linked to illegal activity and she wouldn't rule out that one person could have a legitimate medical need for a large quantity.

It was a claim that Sweet found incredulous, using an expletive to express his disbelief.

Sweet, the administrative policy and process director for the Liquor Control Com-

mission, then got up and walked out of the crowded meeting. He eventually returned and apologized for losing his temper.

Marks, after the meeting, struck a diplomatic note, saying he was encouraged by the lively discussion and some of the advocates' proposals, including allowing patients to buy more marijuana based on a doctor's recommendation.

"We are going to look at it," he said. "We are listening."



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Melissa Naff
RD, LD, CDE
Diabetes Educator

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