

BMCC: Tasked with raising \$12.5 million

Continued from 1A

Association swinging a deal with the city to provide land to BMCC for the training center west of the Round-Up grounds, the college is now tasked with raising \$12.5 million to get the project done.

BMCC has already raised about half that amount, the lion's share coming from a \$5 million state contribution, and the college is looking to ask for more money during the next legislative session.

Whatever isn't covered by the state and local governments will come from a local fundraising campaign. Preus said the effort would likely take 30 months, a span that would involve both Green and her successor.

Preus said BMCC could also explore corporate sponsorships to garner funding for the project, a strategy Green is familiar with.

Green said she was able to raise millions of dollars for a new facility at Tillamook Community College by selling naming rights to rooms to companies and individuals.

But beyond the training center, Green said she's happy to take on the interim job because the college is in good shape.

"You usually don't step into a place where you don't have to fix something," Green said.

Preus spotlighted the college's new career technology facility in Boardman, where she said enrollment was swelling,

and BMCC's data center program, which has an accompanying scholarship program sponsored by Amazon.

But BMCC's overall enrollment is also starting to slow — Preus said that while enrollment in for-credit courses is up by 4 percent, enrollment in non-credit courses is down by 10 percent.

Preus attributed part of the trend to a decrease in enrollment in dual-credit courses at local high schools. She added that some students prefer to take Advanced Placement courses, dual-credit courses that are partnered with different institutions, or wait until after high school to apply for Oregon Promise, a program that offers two years of discounted tuition to recent high school graduates.

While Oregon is experiencing a period of full-employment, Green said community college enrollment tends to spike during recessions, when locals are looking to be retrained in fields that are offering more jobs.

Another recession isn't out of the question. State economists say a recession is a "reasonable scenario" that could happen by 2020.

In case the state experiences an economic downturn, Green said the state government would need to step in to accommodate the accompanying enrollment surge.

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LUNCH: 'It's really nice the way it's arranged here'

Continued from 1A

Catholic church and dreaming of the day they would get their own new building.

Edna Collier was grinning from ear to ear as she sat at one of the tables set up Thursday. She said she was "real thrilled" to be there.

"It's great," she said. "We've needed it for a long time."

She said the new building was "just super" and she hoped that some opportunities for games, such as pinochle, would be available.

Her daughter, Emily Mellick, said she loved the new building as well, and appreciated the extra room for meals and other events.

Colleen Moe and Elly Smith were sitting across the table from each other Thursday and both pointed out things they liked about the new center, which includes breakout rooms, a front desk, offices, commercial kitchen and a great hall with



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Guests gather in the main hall for lunch on Thursday at the Harkenrider Senior Activity Center in Hermiston.

a gas fireplace.

"It's really nice the way it's arranged here," Smith said.

Their only complaints were that Smith wished it were more out in the country and Moe said the acoustics in the building made for a very noisy lunch — something others noted as well.

Walter Liebe said it was his first time in the new building, which he called

"awesome" and "beautiful."

"I'm just happy it's finished, finally, and we're here," he said.

He said he hoped to attend some of the classes and clubs being offered at the center as well. A card club was planning to meet after lunch.

Beebe said that center has been used for Tai Chi, yoga, Bible study and other classes since its opening a few

weeks ago. She said they have been asking for donations instead of charging a set fee for groups to use the facility and so far that had been working well.

While someday the city hopes that it can use the building for evening activities that don't interfere with the seniors, for the next five years the rules of the \$2 million federal grant that helped fund the building state only activities for senior citizens are allowed. Beebe said the building is open for general use by seniors from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, and she was pleased to see earlier that two men were there drinking coffee and playing board games together.

"In the afternoons we would love to see people come in and do board games, puzzles, quilting, things like that," she said.

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HUCKABEE: Intended to avoid politics in speech

Continued from 1A

machine.

In an opening speech, Cynthia Holmes, the chairwoman of the Pregnancy Care Services Board of Directors, was clear about the non-profit's mission.

"One day we envision that anyone in this community will not choose ending a pregnancy as an option," she said.

After noting that he intended to avoid politics, he took time to praise President Donald Trump — who he ran against on the 2016 Republican presidential ticket — and



Photo contributed by Val Antcil

Mike Huckabee speaks with Pregnancy Care Services Executive Director Laura Jensen on Thursday before his speech at the Pendleton Convention Center.

Rep. Greg Walden, R-Hood River, who was in the audience and is up for re-election

in November.

"Your congressman is here tonight, not out of conve-

nience but out of conviction," Huckabee said.

Huckabee said he loved Pendleton and frequently attended the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, adding that rodeo contestants and fans would never kneel for the national anthem.

"If they did, the bulls couldn't do as much damage as the crowd could," he said to cheers from the audience.

As soon as Huckabee wrapped his speech to a standing ovation, he left the stage, pausing briefly to shake hands with Walden, and exited the building.

POLL: Touts the numbers as evidence of support for her platform against Walden

Continued from 1A

who identified as independent remained undecided, according to the poll.

"McLeod-Skinner has been able to translate deep enthusiasm among Democratic voters and donors into (a) one million dollar campaign effort boosted by over 2,500 volunteers across the district in her effort to unseat Walden," a memo from pollsters provided to the Oregon Capital Bureau states. "However, more support will be necessary in order to push the center-right targets identified above into Jamie's camp over the next two weeks."

In a statement, McLeod-Skinner touted the numbers as evidence of support for her platform against Walden, who helped design a failed plan last year to repeal the Affordable Care Act. "The numbers that are starting to come out reflect what we've seen throughout this campaign," McLeod-Skinner said in a statement. "People are frustrated by what the current representative has done to threaten their access to affordable health care."

Walden has outraced



McLeod-Skinner

McLeod-Skinner nearly 5-to-1, with about \$4.9 million in campaign contributions.

And a McLeod-Skinner victory is a tall order in a district that's been labeled as a "Likely"

Republican victory by Ipsos polling and "Safe" Republican district by the University of Virginia's Center for Politics. The Cook Political Report and Inside Elections also label it a "Safe R" district.

Nate Silver's politics and sports news site, pegs McLeod-Skinner's chances

of winning the race at 0.5 percent. FiveThirtyEight expects Walden to clinch about 59 percent of the vote. But the Democrat's campaign said that recent fundraising momentum and demographic changes in the district may work in her favor come election night. McLeod-Skinner has raised significantly more than prior Walden challengers — about \$1.06 million as of late September.

The district, which includes southwest Oregon and covers central and eastern Oregon, has seen its population grow about 7 percent since 2010, according to the McLeod-Skinner campaign.

Most of that growth, especially in cities like Medford and Bend, is people moving to the district from places like Portland, Seattle and California.

The number of nonaffiliated voters in the district (182,434) exceeds the number of registered Democrats (143,317), according to September figures from the state Elections Division. Republicans dominate the district with 188,755 registered voters. There are another 28,576 voters in the district who identify as members of the Independent Party.

The poll found that while 87 percent of Republicans surveyed supported Walden,

9 percent of them supported McLeod-Skinner. Meanwhile, 94 percent of Democrats surveyed said they supported McLeod-Skinner.

A spokesman for Walden said the campaign was "confident" in the incumbent's re-election.

"Greg Walden has a proven record of serving as a strong voice for rural Oregon in Congress," Justin Discigil, a spokesman for Walden, said in a prepared statement.

"That is why Greg's campaign has the backing of thousands of local supporters in Oregon and we are confident in his re-election in November."

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