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Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Michael Kennedy, a long-haul trucker who works for Medelez Trucking in Hermiston, drives his rig Wednesday in Hermiston. Later, he headed to San Diego with a load of frozen french fries.

PENDLETON Parades may pay for police support

Council considering \$1,500 fee, with four exceptions

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Pendleton parades are free to attend, but that doesn't mean they don't have a cost.

Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts said that a parade during Round-Up week requires 15 officers at a minimum to close down streets and provide security. Factor in staffing and overtime costs, and Roberts said it can cost \$6,000 to \$8,000 to cover.

In an attempt to recover some of those costs, the Pendleton City Council is considering amending the city's parade ordinance to include a \$1,500 fee.

The council held a first reading of the amended ordinance at a Tuesday meeting, but took no action.

Roberts said he originally got involved with amendment discussions over his desire to streamline the process on parade permits.

Although people applying for permits are supposed to submit them to the police chief 15 days before the parade, Roberts said he sometimes gets applications only a few days before the event is supposed to start.

In discussions with other city officials, the \$1,500 fee was eventually added in to recover public safety costs.

Although that could be a significant amount of money for some parade organizers, Roberts said it only applies to a narrow band of public events — moving events that require extended street closures.

Public marches or fun runs that mainly use sidewalks wouldn't need to apply for a parade permit or pay the fee. "Rolling events" like funeral processions or bike rides wouldn't see any changes to their organization process.

And Pendleton's biggest and most well-established parades — Westward Ho!, Dress-Up, Fourth of July, and the Little League Team parades — would be exempted from the fee.

Outside of the exempted parades, Roberts said it's difficult to quantify how many parades the city permits per year because they're more sporadic.

At the council meeting Tuesday, Councilor Scott Fairley questioned why the city would exempt four parades if they're expensive to cover.

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HAVE CDL, WILL TRAVEL

Trucker shortage puts drivers in high demand

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Dozens of new, qualified truck drivers popped into Umatilla County tomorrow, Bryan Medelez argued they would have no problem finding jobs.

Good paying jobs.

Medelez is the director of operations at his family's business, Medelez Inc. and BJK Transport, Hermiston, and they rely on lots of truck drivers.

"We know seed potato is right around the corner, so we'll be using 150 truck drivers," he said.

That would fill all the semis the company owns. Come the fall harvest, he said, the ranks of the business swell to 400, almost all of those are truck drivers. The company will contact the hundreds of drivers it keeps in a database and hire dozens of subcontractors to handle all the loads.

"There's certain times of the year that you better have all your trucks filled up because there's money to be made out there," Medelez said.

And that's the issue. According to the American Trucking Associations, the nation is short more than 50,000 truck drivers. The American Transportation Research Institute pegged the driver shortage as the top trucking industry concern for 2017 and 2018.

Bud Stephens teaches truck driving. He said he plans to reopen his driving school this spring in Hermiston because the need is there. He also said the shortage problem goes back for some time.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Michael Kennedy, a long-haul trucker who works for Medelez Trucking in Hermiston, checks his tires before heading to San Diego with a load of frozen french fries.

"We will never fill all the trucks that need drivers," he said, "and that's been going for at least 20 years, especially for long-haul drivers."

That is due to the lifestyle.

"Imagine," he said, "camping out the rest of your life, fighting everyday for parking ... not seeing your family, staying on the road two to four weeks at time."

The list goes on, he said, but little of living on the road is attractive to most people. He also said changes in laws

have made it easier to disqualify drivers while making it harder to be a driver. Washington, for example, Stephens said, requires a minimum of 160 hours of driving time to get a commercial license. And the cost of the training can run a few thousand dollars.

Oregon does not require a minimum number of hours to enter the field, but new drivers still have to go to school and pay plenty of fees. The knowledge test is

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Legislature harassment complaint to proceed

Newly-elected Hoyle delegates duties to deputy

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — Oregon's new labor commissioner said Wednesday her department will pursue its civil rights complaint against the Ore-

gon Legislature whose leaders were accused of allowing harassment to persist.

But Val Hoyle, who was sworn in on Monday, added that her deputy, and not her, would handle the matter. The complaint against leaders of the statehouse was initiated by Hoyle's predecessor, Brad Avakian. Because Hoyle replaced Avakian as complainant, protocol forbids her from

being the final arbiter, her spokesman Saul Hubbard said.

Hoyle said in a statement: "I'm fully committed to ensuring that all Oregonians feel safe in their workplaces, including the state Capitol."

There are two possible resolutions to the case: adjudication before an administrative law judge and conciliation, which means reaching an agreement to settle the

matter, Hoyle said.

State Sen. Jeff Kruse resigned last year amid accusations he repeatedly inappropriately touched women in the Capitol.

In reaction to Hoyle's statement, both House Speaker Tina Kotek and Senate President Peter Courtney pledged to make the Capitol a safe

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