

EAST OREGONIAN

THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 2019

143rd Year, No. 116

WINNER OF THE 2018 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

\$1.50

PENDLETON

Return of the gas tax?

City manager unveils proposal to bring in \$1.2 million a year to repair streets

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Pendleton residents could again consider a gas tax to help repair the town's miles of deteriorating roads.

Pendleton City Manager Robb Corbett presented the proposal Tuesday night to the city council during a work session. He said the council tasked him with getting the city's street budget up to \$1.2 million a year and finding a long-term fix for streets.

"What I've done is brought you a proposal that could realistically do that," he told the council.

The plan has three prongs.

First, Corbett wants the city to immediately use \$3 million from the Urban Renewal District for road repairs in 2020.

The district expires in four years, and Corbett said it has \$5 million in funds and is receiving fewer requests for the money. He said the plan has been to use any money left over for public projects, and \$3 million would be an important injection to help streets in the district.

Second, the city would ask Pendleton residents



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Raindrops cause ripples across a puddle in a pothole on Southeast Byers Avenue on Wednesday in Pendleton.

to pass a 6-cent-a-gallon tax that would generate \$660,000 a year for road maintenance.

Third, Corbett said the city would end the \$5.30 monthly utility fee property owners pay if voters pass an additional gas tax of 7 cents a gallon.

The utility fees come to \$63.60 a year for Pendleton homeowners. Corbett said the additional 7-cent tax would cost the same, so it would have a neutral effect on the average Pendleton

taxpayer while producing an additional \$332,000 a year for roads.

The total of 13 cents a gallon would generate \$992,000 a year. The average Pendletonian would pay \$127 a year, or almost \$10.60 a month. But 40 percent of the total revenue, Corbett said, would come out of the pockets of travelers.

Corbett said tackling the town's streets over 10 years would cost \$41 million. That's based on the most

recent "Pavement Condition Report," he said, but the city can cut the amount almost in half.

Using the \$3 million from Urban Renewal drops the need to \$38 million. Using a "surgical" approach to road repairs, he said, shaves off 25 percent. Surgical means the city would rebuild only the sections of streets in need of rebuilding while maintaining the other sections.

Another 25 percent comes off due to the

increase in water and sewer rates. Many streets in need of repair also need water and sewer upgrades, and the higher fees include the cost of the road work. Corbett said that leaves \$21.4 million over 10 years.

The two gas taxes and the \$1.2 million the city is putting each year into street repairs would add up to about \$2.2 million a year, enough to cover the tab.

The plan is about

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Revision gives nod to rural Oregon

Update to carbon cap bill also removes industry exemptions

By AUBREY WIEBER
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Climate advocates are coming up roses after legislative revisions to a proposed carbon pricing policy for Oregon left unchanged the most significant mandates while softening the impact across the state.

Rural Oregonians would not get additional special treatment, while polluters were given little, if any, concessions. Two major exemptions originally proposed for polluters were stripped following advocacy from environmentalists.

The anticipated changes are the first major changes to House Bill 2020, the Legislature's latest attempt to impose new environmental standards that would limit and price pollution in new ways. The "cap and trade" policy was the subject of recent hearings across the state, drawing unusually large crowds for a legislative hearing as witnesses either painted gloomy pictures of what would happen with such a new policy or said it wasn't tough enough.

The changes were revealed Monday by state Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland, and state Rep. Karin Power, D-Milwaukie, who are co-chairs of the Legislature's Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction. The 129-page amendment is based on public testimony from citizens and industry players providing the a range of concerns. Overall, Power and Dembrow said, the heart of the bill remains.

"Our goal is not only to create a program that will effectively combat climate change, but also of course to do it in a way that invests in Oregon's economy, especially our rural economies," Dembrow said.

The program would put a cap on certain emissions. Companies would have to reduce their emissions to under 25,000 metric tons of greenhouse gasses a year or buy certificates allowing excess pollution.

Money from selling allowances would pay for

See Cap and trade, Page A6

Accident has a happy ending for stray dog and her pup



Photo contributed by Robin Barker

This dog was run over by a car in Hermiston, and doctors discovered she needed an emergency C-section.

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

A stray dog was run over by a car Tuesday in Hermiston, but the injury ended up saving the life of the dog and her then-unborn pup.

Late Tuesday afternoon, Hermiston Pet Rescue and Fuzzball Animal Rescue responded to a call about a small dog that had been hit by a car on Southwest 11th Street and Hermiston Avenue.

Robin Barker, a board member with Fuzzball Animal Rescue, said when they went to pick up the dog, a Chihuahua, they noticed there was milk leaking.

"At first we thought she had pups nearby, but it turned out she was pregnant," Barker said.

The pup was too big for the dog to deliver, and the veterinarian at Oregon Trail Vet Clinic ended up having to do an emergency C-section. They also had to amputate the dog's leg, as it had shattered when she was hit.

"The guy who hit her was so upset,"

Barker said. She said several people, including the person who hit her and people from nearby businesses, immediately stopped and tried to find the dog, but she ran into a nearby field.

Barker said this is not an uncommon problem in Hermiston.

"The stray population and roamers are a huge problem," she said. "We have another one in rescue who got hit and has a double fracture."

Barker said after some initial shock and uncertain moments, both the mother and her pup are doing well and are expected to survive and recover.

"How she survived, I'll never know," Barker said. They will both be in foster care for the next two months, while the mother heals.

Barker said they haven't quite figured out a name for either dog yet, but they have some ideas.

"We're thinking 'Xena' for the mom, like Xena: Warrior Princess," she said. And for her pup, they're thinking "Marvel."

"Like a miracle," she said.

Daylight saving decision tied to neighboring states

By MARK MILLER
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon may not go it alone on switching to daylight saving time year-round.

In the latest legislative proposal, Oregon would only stop "falling back" in November if neighboring California and Washington do likewise.

Washington lawmakers approved the idea this month. They still need to reconcile differences between the competing proposals — one bill would refer the question to voters, while the other would not — and submit one to Gov.

Jay Insee for approval.

In California, voters passed Proposition 7 last year, allowing a change to permanent daylight time if two-thirds of legislators approve. A bill to put California on year-round daylight time has not yet received a vote.

If all three states move to daylight time, the West Coast of the continental United States would effectively run on Mountain Standard Time year-round. British Columbia is considering a similar idea, and its premier said he expects the Canadian

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Water boils out of the spillway and into McKay Creek beneath the McKay Reservoir on Wednesday in Pendleton. A fresh round of rain and continual spring meltoff is leading to river levels remaining high.

