

Pendleton officials fear cuts to library budget

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The city of Pendleton held its first budget committee meeting Tuesday morning, and although discussion touched upon the Public Employees Retirement System and street funding, committee members didn't comment on one of City Manager Robb Corbett's stated concerns.

"We largely rely on the (Umatilla County Special Library District), which seems to be (in) a state of flux as it tries to determine the appropriate method to appropriate their tax dollars," he wrote in a 2019-20 budget statement he read before the committee. "The city is concerned as this threatens to reduce or share of tax dollars for operations."

In an interview after the meeting ended, Corbett said the city hadn't been given a specific cut in funding, but the prospect of changing the formula nonetheless worried staff that it would result in some sort of reduction.

"We don't want to see any further cuts to the library," he said.

Library district Director Erin McCusker didn't agree with Corbett's assessment that the district was in "a state of flux," adding that this was exactly the reaction the district was trying to avoid when it informed cities that it was taking another look at its funding formula.

Formed in the 1987, the Umatilla County Special Library District levies 37 cents per \$1,000 in assessed value to support community libraries across the county.

Twenty percent of the of the library district's budget goes toward its operations. Besides staffing three personnel, the district provides courier services, small library cataloging, training, ebook access and more to its member libraries.

The other 80% goes directly to a public library sponsored by the Ukiah School District, the Hermiston Public Library to provide library services to Hermiston's rural residents, and the libraries in Umatilla County's 10 other incor-

porated cities.

McCusker said libraries can spend the money on staff and other library related expenditures, but facility maintenance is the responsibility of the local governments that manage the libraries.

With the Hermiston library largely independent of the library district, the Pendleton Public Library takes a strong plurality of the funding: 29%.

In the proposed 2019-20 budget, the library district's contribution is nearly half of the \$1 million library fund. By comparison, the contribution from the general fund, which is mostly derived from the city's cut of property taxes, is only 10%.

The library district has long existed with the same distribution formula, but it tried revisiting its formula around 2016.

Corbett said he was a member of the ad hoc committee that came up with recommendations for the formula, but the library district board rejected them.

McCusker didn't arrive at the

library district until July 2017, but she's reviewed the committee's meeting minutes and described the meetings as "contentious."

"It became a really contentious situation and it left a bad taste in a lot of people's mouths," she said.

McCusker said there wasn't consensus amongst the committee by the time it recommended a new 85-15 split in the funding formula, among other significant changes, and with dissension from several library directors, the board voted to reject the committee's findings.

Nearly two years later, McCusker said the library district wants to more clearly define its funding formula while avoiding past conflict.

The metrics the library district used to determine its formula are mostly lost to time, although McCusker is starting to piece the district's original logic together by combing through old documents.

McCusker said the library district wants a transparent formula that all of its libraries can follow and it hasn't committed to chang-

ing any of its members' allotments. The district sent out a letter April 2 to lay out the reasoning behind revisiting the formula and the process it would use to determine it.

"Our intent is to understand and confirm the current distribution percentages through a distinct formula or possibly create a new formula through a meaningful and deliberate process that encourages input and participation from our 12 partner libraries and stakeholders," the letter states.

The library board plans to start having formal discussions on the funding formula in February with a final decision made in July 2020.

Even if negotiations result in an altered formula, it wouldn't take effect immediately. The district and its member libraries are locked into a contract under the current formula under a multi-year contract starting in July.

As for the Pendleton Budget Committee, it's members will get a chance to talk more about library funding when it reconvenes Thursday.

Fire board incumbent launches write-in campaign after missing deadline

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

A director on the Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District board is hoping to keep his seat after accidentally missing the deadline to get on the ballot.

"I thought I had one more week, but I didn't," Robert Holden said.

Former Umatilla city councilor Mark Keith has filed for position #5 on the board, currently held by

Holden, and will be the only name on the May 21 ballot. There will be a space to cast a write-in vote, however, and Holden hopes voters will write in "Robert Holden II."

Holden has served on the board since 2012. Since then the district has passed a bond, purchased new equipment and added staff. He said he joined because he wanted to serve the community. Now he says he wants to serve another term to

see current projects through.

"We're striving to do good things for citizens and I want to continue to do that," he said.

Umatilla assistant fire chief Rob Tooley wrote an endorsement for Holden, noting that he came onto the board during a time of contention between board members and volunteers and helped those volunteers feel heard and valued.

"Robert Holden II knows what

it takes to help keep the Umatilla Rural Fire District Board of Directors moving in the right direction, he supports the volunteers, and he's supported by the volunteers," he wrote.

Keith is a former Umatilla city councilor, a volunteer firefighter/paramedic and director of Encore Wellness 4 Life, a Umatilla medical clinic. He said during his time on the city council he helped

the fire district in multiple ways, including making sure the city's out-of-commission fire hydrants were repaired. He said he is running because the board needs a perspective of someone who has served as a firefighter and paramedic in the district.

Other candidates include Darla Huxel for position #4, Fred Sheely and Kelly Payan for position #2 and Kyle Sipe for position #3.

COMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1 COLLECTIVE GOODS SALE, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Good Shepherd Medical Center conference room 1, 610 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston. Toys, books, gifts and games. Proceeds support scholarships for local medical students and equipment purchases.

PENDLETON SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12-1 p.m., Pendleton Senior Center, 510 S.W. 10th St., Pendleton. Costs \$3.50 or \$6 for those under 60. Pool, puzzles, crafts, snacks, Second Time Around thrift store 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For Meals On Wheels, call 541-276-1926. (541-276-5073)

STANFIELD SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Stanfield Community Center, 225 W. Roosevelt, Stanfield. Cost is \$3.50 for seniors, \$6 for others. (541-449-1332)

ADVENTURE TIME STORY TIME, 2-3 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. Stories and activities for developmentally disabled children and adults. Free. (541-567-2882)

ADULT BEGINNERS' COMPUTERS, 3-4 p.m., Pendleton Public Library meeting room, 502 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Registration is required. (541-966-0380)

ADULT & TEEN COLOR CLUB, 5:30 p.m., Pendleton Public Library, 502 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. A relaxing hour of coloring. Supplies provided. (Mary Finney 541-966-0380)

PHS MUSIC DEPARTMENT SPAGHETTI FEED, 5:30-7:30 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 201 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Spaghetti dinner including bread, salad and dessert, and live entertainment. Tickets are \$10 per person or \$30 for a family of 4, additional members \$5 each, available from PHS music students, PHS main office, or at the door. (541-966-3892)

VEGAN/SUSTAINABLE LIVING POTLUCK SUPPER, 7 p.m., location varies, Pendleton. Bring a vegan dish and recipe. Gluten-free friendly group. Call to RSVP and for driving directions. (541-969-3057)

TOUR OF KNOWLEDGE, 7-8 p.m., Eastern Oregon Higher Education Center, 980 S.E. Columbia Drive, Hermiston. Discussion of public hearings, meetings and events relevant to the area, and reports on sites and facilities that impact natural resources and places of historical interest. Free and everyone welcome. (Eileen Laramore 541-303-3872)

THURSDAY, MAY 2 PENDLETON CATTLE BARONS WEEKEND, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate, Pendleton. Metalsmithing classes, working dogs clinics, preview and sale, working horses previews and sale, steer roping, ranch rodeo and saddle bronc exhibitions and competitions, Tra-

din' Post, Buckaroo BBQ Challenge and more. Calendar at <https://www.cattlebarons.net/> Proceeds benefit scholarships for local students. events continue Friday and Saturday. (541-310-7071)

PRESCHOOL STORY TIME, 10:15-11 a.m., Pendleton Public Library, 502 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Stories and activities for young children. (541-966-0380)

PRESCHOOL STORY TIME, 10:15 a.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. For children from 3-6 years old. (541-567-2882)

PRESCHOOL STORY AND CRAFT TIME, 10:30 a.m., Milton-Freewater Public Library, 8 S.W. Eighth Ave., Milton-Freewater. (Lili Schmidt 541-938-8247)

PENDLETON SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12-1 p.m., Pendleton Senior Center, 510 S.W. 10th St., Pendleton. (541-276-5073)

HERMISTON SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Harker Center, 255 N.E. Second St., Hermiston. Cost is \$4 for adults, free for children 10 and under, \$4 for Meals on Wheels. Extra 50 cents for utensils/dishes. Bus service available by donation. (541-567-3582)

BOARDMAN SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Boardman Senior Center, 100 Tatone St., Boardman. Cost is \$4 for seniors 55 and over or \$5 for adults. (541-481-3257)

SENSORY STORY TIME, 12:30 p.m., Boardman Public Library, 200 S. Main St., Boardman. For children from birth to age 4. (541-481-2665)

FIRST THURSDAY SCREEN FREE WEEK EVENT, 4:30-7 p.m., Festival Street, downtown, Hermiston. Ditch the screens and enjoy Food Hero recipe samples, spin art, bike helmet fitting, kids' dance and yoga, Zumba and fitness, floral art, preschool activities, books, prizes and more. Free. (541-567-8321)

YARN CLUB, 5:30 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)

THE ARC UMATILLA COUNTY BINGO, 6-10 p.m., The Arc Building, 215 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. Doors open at 6 p.m., games begin at 7 p.m. Proceeds benefit Umatilla County citizens with developmental disabilities. 18 years or older, must have proof of age and photo I.D. Basic pot \$20, prizes range from \$20-\$750. (541-567-7615)

FIDDLER'S NIGHT, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Avamere Assisted Living, 980 W. Highland Ave., Hermiston. All ages welcome. (Lori 541-567-3141)

FRIDAY, MAY 3 FREE FIRST FRIDAY, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Tamastlikt Cultural Institute, 47106 Wildhorse Blvd., Pendleton. Free admission all day. (541-966-9748)

TODDLER STORY TIME, 10:15-11 a.m., Pendleton Public Library, 502 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. (541-966-0380)

PENDLETON SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12-1 p.m., Pendleton Senior Center, 510 S.W. 10th St., Pendleton. (Tori Bowman 541-276-5073)

FREE FRIDAY LUNCH, 12 p.m., Echo Community Church, 21 N. Bonanza St., Echo. Everyone welcome.

STORY AND CRAFT TIME, 2 p.m., Echo Public Library, 20 S. Bonanza, Echo. (541-376-8411)

KYLE PETTY CHARITY RIDE ACROSS AMERICA, 2:45 p.m., Arrowhead Travel Plaza, 72485 Highway 331, Pendleton. Meet celebrity riders such as NASCAR legend Harry Gant, NFL great Herschel Walker and many more as they ride in support of Victory Junction and other children's charities. Merchandise will be available for purchase; donations accepted. (Ginny Talley 704-714-4545)

LIVE FROM THE LESLIE: VANDOLIERS, 6-11:59 p.m., The Pendleton Lodge, 14 S.E. Third St., Pendleton. Doors open at 6 p.m. (Stag Bar), concert doors open at 7 p.m., opening solo artist Cody Branan at 8 p.m. followed by Vandoliers. Food by Mario's Basque Bar-B-Q, beer by Prodigal Son Brewery & Pub. Tickets \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door, available online at brownpapertickets.com. 21 and older only. (Adam Mack 503-720-5370)

VFW BINGO, 6 p.m., Hermiston VFW, 45 W. Cherry St., Hermiston. Doors open at 6 p.m., games begin at 7 p.m. Everyone welcome. (541-567-6219)

SATURDAY, MAY 4 PANCAKE BREAKFAST, 7-10 a.m., Stanfield Community Center, 225 W. Roosevelt, Stanfield. Costs \$6 for full breakfast/\$3 for light meal. (Rose Emerson 541-449-1332)

HERMISTON JR. ACADEMY HOMECOMING, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Hermiston Jr. Academy gymnasium, 1300 N.W. Academy Lane, Hermiston. Friends, former students, faculty and board members invited to enjoy inspiration, fellowship, food and reminiscing. (541-567-8523)

DIRT DABBLERS PLANT SALE, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Peace Lutheran Church parish hall, 210 N.W. Ninth St., Pendleton. Free admission. Donations welcome.

SURE SPRING CLEANUP, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Stillman Park and Pendleton Riverwalk, 403 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Join Stewards of the Umatilla River Environment for the annual riverwalk cleanup. Orientation at Stillman Park followed by organization of cleanup crews. All volunteers will be served lunch after the cleanups. Wear sturdy shoes and bring a bottle of water. Trash bags and gloves provided. (541-278-2667)

Murder defendant to enter plea

East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Aggravated murder defendant David Edgar Sommerville of Boardman has a hearing to enter his plea.

Sommerville, 19, along with Vincent Wesley David Shermantine, 29, of Hermiston, are on the hook for the 2018 shooting death of Eric Navarrete of Hermiston. Sommerville faces the

aggravated murder charge, the only crime that carries the threat of the death penalty in Oregon, as well as murder, first-degree robbery and unlawful use of a weapon. Shermantine faces murder but not aggravated murder, first-degree robbery, felon in possession of a weapon and unlawful use of a weapon.

Shermantine on April 12 pleaded not guilty to the

charges. But Sommerville has yet to enter a plea. He remedies that with a hearing Wednesday at 8:15 a.m. at the Stafford Hansell Government Center, Hermiston. Circuit Judge Daniel Hill also will consider a defense motion to preserve evidence.

Shermantine had a pre-trial hearing Tuesday morning. Hill set the next conference for May 29.

Run for Ribbons
TRI-CITIES CANCER CENTER

SATURDAY May 11th, 2019

What will you run for?

Join the Tri-Cities Cancer Center Foundation in support of local cancer patients and their families. Run for Ribbons is a 10k, 5k and 1 mile run/walk community event to raise awareness and promote prevention of all forms of cancers. All funds raised from this event stay LOCAL.

Participants can purchase an event t-shirt featuring a blank ribbon. It's the Run for Ribbons tradition to decorate it, customize it, use it to honor a memory, celebrate survival, or to simply encourage hope.

\$25 Adults / \$15 Youth / \$10 for t-shirt
(Registration fee does not include t-shirt)

10k, 5k and 1 mile Run - Walk
Howard Amon Park in Richland

RibbonFest / Check In 8:30 am
Run - Walk Begins 10:00 am

Register online: www.runforribbons.org
Register by phone: 509.737.3413