



EO file photo

Rail cars roll down the hump and into the yard at the Union Pacific Railroad Hinkle Locomotive Service and Repair Facility and Freight Classification Yard near Stanfield in May 2012.

## Layoffs: Union Pacific announces layoff of up to 195 employees at Hinkle

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of accelerating (Union Pacific's) continuous improvement plan and implementing Precision Scheduled Railroading principles," he wrote in an email.

Union Pacific announced its Unified Plan 2020 last year to improve efficiency. It announced record earnings in 2018 of more than \$6 billion, and during a first quarter earnings call with shareholders on April 18 announced record 2019 first quarter net income and a 15% increase in earnings per share compared with 2018, despite the fact that total volume decreased by 2% compared with the previous year.

During the call, Chief Operating Officer Jim Vena said UP increased train length by 7% and was focused on reducing "touch points" where trains are handled. He said the company had "stopped humping cars at Hinkle and Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and curtailed yard operations in Salt Lake City, the Kansas City complex and Butler Yard in Wisconsin, to name a few."

State Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner, called the cuts at Hinkle "devastat-

ing" for the area.

"These are good family wage jobs with benefits," Smith said. "That job loss is going to have a significant economic effect throughout the region."

State Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, said he found out about the job cuts on Tuesday afternoon.

Hansell questioned whether legislation, such as the recent gross receipts tax, is making neighboring states more attractive to business. That's been the talk in some circles at the Capitol, he said, and perhaps Union Pacific relocating operations from Hinkle to Idaho and Washington signals that is happening. However, Hansell cautioned, he does not know if that's the case here.

George Murdock, chair of the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners, said Union Pacific has long been a "major employer" in the county.

"These are the kind of jobs people occupy for an entire career, so their loss is particularly acute," he said. "I had heard rumors that it was a possibility, but had hoped it was only a rumor."

Murdock said his understanding was Union Pacific would continue to have a presence at Hin-

kle and the county will remain a major freight route. He said it will be important to work with the unions and affected employees in the coming months.

While the jobs represent a significant loss for the area, Hermiston's increasingly diversified economy helps absorb the blow. Drotzmann pointed to the closure of the Simplot plant in 2004 and the closure of Hermiston Foods in 2017 as an example of times that Hermiston lost one of its largest employers but continued to grow.

"This community is really resilient," he said.

That might be small comfort to the employees whose jobs have been cut in recent months. Locals took to community Facebook forums on Tuesday to share that family members had been laid off or to share condolences with friends who had lost jobs.

Oregon has designated CAPECO in Pendleton as the lead organization for when major job losses occur in Hermiston, and CAPECO will conduct trainings and job fairs for former Hinkle employees in June. In the meantime, some employees will be eligible to apply for transfer to one of Union Pacific's other rail yards.

## Election: Stanfield passes school bond

there would be no guarantee the district would win that lottery again the next time.

Stanfield School District has an old bond that will be dropping off of residents' tax bills in June. The new

bond will replace that one, at \$2.70 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Burton said she enjoyed the experience of going out into the community and knocking on doors to edu-

cate people about the bond, and she was grateful to voters for their support.

"I feel really fortunate to work in a district where the community is so supportive," she said.

### SCHOOL BOARD RACE TO BE DETERMINED BY WRITE-IN VOTES

Some local races, like Pendleton School Board Position 6, drew no candidates, meaning the election will be determined by write-in votes.

Umatilla County Elections Manager Kim Lindell said the county will post a raw total of write-in votes on election night, but staff won't start tallying write-in votes until Wednesday.

Lindell said winners in write-in races won't be determined until the election is certified on June 4. Each winner will be sent a form in the mail asking them if they will accept the elected position. If not, the elected body with the vacant seat has the ability to appoint someone to the seat.

### STANFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

Cecili Longhorn is winning the open seat on the Stanfield School Board, defeating Jim Griffin with 201 votes to 182 votes.

### BOARDMAN RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Loren Dieter and David Boor are winning the at-large seats on the Boardman Rural Fire Protection District. Five candidates filed for the two seats, and Dieter has the most votes, 238, and Boor is in second place with 173. Bill Hancock was in third with 136 votes. Morrow County Clerk Bobbi Childers said the outcome was unlikely to change, but she has some ballots yet to count.

### MORROW COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT

Voters renewed the 5-year local option tax 79.9 percent to 20.1 percent. The 39-cent levy funds Pioneer Memorial Hospital, Heppner, three clinics across the county and county-wide ambulance services.

### MORROW COUNTY TURNOUT

Morrow County voters returned 33 percent of ballots. The county sent out 6,282 ballots and received 2,071, as of 8 p.m., when polls closed. All election results remain unofficial.

### PORT OF MORROW COMMISSION

John Murray won Position 5 on the Port of Morrow with 1,157 votes over 807 for Debbie Radie.

### ATHENA-WESTON SCHOOL BOARD

Incumbent Jennifer McClure-Spurgeon won another term on the Athena-Weston School Board, defeating challenger Shannon Hoehna with 190 votes to 126.

### ECHO SCHOOL BOARD

Emily Spike is headed to take Position 2 on the Echo School Board. She defeated incumbent Connie Caplinger with 105 votes to 18 votes.

### UMATILLA COUNTY TURNOUT

Umatilla County shows 5,861 out of 43,686 voters cast ballots for a turnout of 13.4 percent. The Oregon Secretary of State reported the statewide average was 19 percent as of 8:30 p.m. All elections results are unofficial. Umatilla County elections manager Kim Lindell said her office is awaiting for ballots from the several drop boxes, but she expected to post final results as early as 9:30 p.m.

### UMATILLA SCHOOL BOARD

Umatilla School Board member Toby Cranston retains his seat with 254 votes over challenger Jennifer Armstrong's 178 votes.

### UMATILLA FIRE DISTRICT

Incumbent Fred Sheely won another term on the Umatilla Fire District, taking 268 votes to 149 for challenger Kelly Payan.

### UMATILLA COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT

Incumbent Spike Piersol heads back to serve on the Umatilla County Fire District No. 1 with 1,441 votes to defeat challenger Sebastian Sanchez with 490 votes.

## The Tribes: CTUIR agrees to buy Pendleton Country Club

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a business plan and present it to the board of trustees within the next six to seven months.

In an interview, CTUIR spokesman Chuck Sams said the tribes are still determining whether the country club property will be added to the tribes' land trust.

The country club purchase gives the CTUIR two 18-hole golf courses. The Wildhorse golf course is already in the midst of renovations that will include a new clubhouse that will feature a restaurant, banquet room, and bar.

Founded in 1929, the

Pendleton Country Club was previously operated as a member-owned nonprofit.

The organization's 2017 tax forms show that for that year, the country club employed 30 people and took in \$664,740 in revenue versus \$673,262 in expenses. The country club also listed more than \$3 million in total assets.

In a text message, Sam Byrnes, the president of the Pendleton Country Club Board of Directors, wrote that he was out of town and had not seen the CTUIR's press release.

When prompted for comment again, he did not respond.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Golfers fill the parking lot at the Pendleton Country Club clubhouse south of Pendleton. Wildhorse Resort and Casino has already assumed golf course maintenance supervision and will integrate the property into its daily operations.

## Democratic impeachment calls swell as McGahn defies subpoena

By MARY CLARE JALONICK AND LISA MASCARO  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — More Democrats are calling — and more loudly — for impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump after his latest defiance of Congress by blocking his former White House lawyer from testifying on Tuesday.

A growing number of rank-and-file House Democrats, incensed by former counsel Don McGahn's empty chair in the Judiciary Committee hearing room, are confronting House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and pushing her and other leaders to act. Their impatience is running up against the speaker's preference for a more methodical approach, including already-unfolding court battles.

Pelosi summoned some of them — still a small fraction of the House Democratic caucus — to a meeting of investigators Wednesday to assess strategy.

Some other Democratic leaders, while backing Pelosi, signaled that a march to impeachment may at some point become inevitable.

"We are confronting what might be the largest, broadest cover-up in American history," Majority Leader Steny Hoyer told reporters. If a House inquiry "leads to other avenues including impeachment," the Maryland Democrat said, "so be it."

Reps. Joaquin Castro of Texas and Diana DeGette of Colorado added their voices to the impeachment inquiry chorus.

"There is political risk in doing so, but there's a greater risk to our country in doing nothing," Castro said on Twitter. "This is a fight for our democracy."

Tweeted DeGette: "The facts laid out in the Mueller report, coupled with this administration's ongoing attempts to stonewall Congress, leave us no other choice."

One Republican congressman, Justin Amash of Michigan, has called for impeachment proceedings. He said Tuesday he thinks other GOP lawmakers should join him — but only after reading special counsel Robert Mueller's report carefully.

Republican House leader Kevin McCarthy dismissed Amash as out of step with House Republicans and "out of step with America." And Sen.



AP Photo/Andrew Harnik

Ranking Member Rep. Doug Collins, R-Ga., right, listens as Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., left, speaks at a House Judiciary Committee hearing without former White House Counsel Don McGahn, who was a key figure in special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation, on Capitol Hill in Washington on Tuesday.

Lindsey Graham of South Carolina said wryly of Amash's position, "I don't think it's going to be a trend-setting move."

As Democrats weigh their options, Trump is almost taunting them by testing the bounds of executive power in ways few other administrations have. The White House contends that even former employees like McGahn do not have to abide by subpoenas from Congress.

A short time later House Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler issued subpoenas for more Trump administration officials — former White House

communications director Hope Hicks and Annie Donaldson, a former aide in the White House counsel's office — for documents and testimony.

Trump's former White House counsel is the most-cited witness in Mueller's Trump-Russia investigation report, recounting the president's attempts to interfere with the probe. And that makes his silence all the more infuriating for Democrats.

Nadler gavelled open Tuesday's hearing with a stern warning that McGahn will be held in contempt for failing to appear.