

Solar: Eastern Oregon avoids glare from panels

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less than 5 percent of the proposals would go on high-value farmland.

Umatilla County planning director Bob Waldher said the county has plenty of Class 1 or Class 2 soil, the stuff that qualifies for high-quality farmland, with large swaths around Athena and the Milton-Freewater area. But, he said, solar development does not seem much of an issue in the county.

"We don't have an application currently that we're reviewing," he said.

Morrow County also might not have to worry much about the new rule. County planning director Carla McLane said the county has little of that rich soil.

"To get to that in Morrow County, you have to have lots of stars align," she said, primarily due to a lack of water. But the ruling still raises concerns for her.

"It felt like a really rushed process," she said.

McLane said she served on the LCDC Rules Advisory Committee, and the development commissioner and staff wanted to get the ruling in the books before the legislative ses-

sion. That push, she said, ignored the bigger picture.

Oregon's list for uses on farm land runs to 30 pages, she said, with exemptions for everything from bed and breakfasts to music concerts, and this rule focuses on one use. Should the question be, she said, whether there are too many solar projects on farm land or too many cumulative impacts on farm land?

McLane also said the new rules are about protecting prime farm land in the Willamette Valley, but Land Conservation and Development "applied a broad brush to the entire state."

Still, she said, the rules contain "one golden nugget" — they allow counties to create a program for solar facilities if the project proposes a dual use. Counties might have to go through the effort of making the program, McLane said, but it could be beneficial as long as it was put to use and not just taking up space on the shelf.

Waldher also said the dual use was a good move. Agriculture activities such as beekeeping or cattle grazing, he said, could work just fine under solar panels.

GOP: Oregon Senate Republicans threaten second walkout

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walkout were reinforced when the caucus sent out a news release confirming that it's under consideration.

Unlike the May stunt, this one comes 12 days before the constitutional end of the legislative session.

If there's no quorum to do business, the state constitution allows legislators to "compel the attendance of absent members."

In 2007, on the request of Senate President Peter Courtney, then-Gov. Ted Kulongoski dispatched state troopers to bring two Republican senators from Corvallis to the Capitol for a vote. That standoff was averted before police had to bring either of them to Salem.

When Republicans staged their walkout last month, Courtney opted not to call the police on them, and he and Brown negotiated with Republican leaders to end the boycott. This time, with less than two weeks before the Legislature is scheduled to adjourn for the year, Brown is taking a hard line.

Kate Kondayen, Brown's deputy communications director, said the governor is "prepared to call upon those resources available to her—including authorizing state troopers to bring senators back to the Capitol and, if necessary, calling legislators back to Salem to complete their work over the summer."

Kondayen said when Republicans agreed to return to the building last month, they also agreed not to walk out again. Brown "expects them to honor their word," she added.

A number of major policies have yet to be considered in the Senate, including HB 2005, which would create a statewide paid leave program for new parents and others needing time away from work to care for family, and HB 2015, which would allow

undocumented immigrants to get Oregon drivers' licenses.

Bills aimed at relieving the state's housing crisis, raising the tax on tobacco and at reforming Oregon's campaign finance laws could also be left hanging if Republicans skip town.

That's not to mention the state budget. The only thing the constitution compels lawmakers to do during their legislative sessions is pass a balanced state budget for the next two years.

And less than two weeks before lawmakers have to adjourn, the budgets for major agencies, including the health and human services agencies that oversee programs impacting more than 1 million Oregonians, have yet to receive a vote.

If they do walk out, Democrats would likely bring the gun and vaccine bills back from the dead. When asked about the hypothetical last week, Brown quickly said she's confident there would be enough time to get both through.

With budget bills and other priority items needing to get through over the next week, Republicans would have more leverage with a late walkout than they did the first time.

During the first lockout, Sen. Tim Knopp, R-Bend, returned to work after the first day, which still left the Senate one person short of the number they needed to do business.

If he played it the same way in the second go-around, it would put pressure on Oregon's soon-to-be-newest senator.

A replacement for the late Jackie Winters, who died May 29, will be named by Tuesday. Among the three nominees is Rep. Denyc Boles, R-Salem, who spoke out against HB 2020 on the House floor Monday night.

House Bill 2020 had a first reading Tuesday, and could be up for a vote as early as Thursday.

Goals: Find better way to identify, implement

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and federal agencies to identify another \$20 million in projects.

Hermiston took a different approach, Fairley said, by using the mayor to facilitate a meeting with department heads to identify where Hermiston's issues are.

Those issues helped formulate goals, which Byron Smith, Hermiston city manager, regularly updates the council on.

The approach has yielded results, he said, as evidenced by the completion of the Eastern Oregon Trade and Events Center and its downtown plan in recent years.

Fairley said the council needed to consider both changing the content of its goals to include more timelines and deliverable outcomes, and the process it uses to implement them.

The workgroup suggested holding an annual meeting with key department heads to discuss a five-year outlook on the city's challenges and opportunities.

The council would then use those discussions to form goals and direct the city manager to come up with an implementation strategy before the council decides whether to adopt them or not.

Fairley said another key part of the goals process would be to assign new or existing revenue to each goal. "Ultimately, what matters is where you put your money," he said.

Like the cities the workgroup considered exemplary, the city manager position would be evaluated on how well they were implementing the goals.

But Fairley said the pressure would still be on the council to fund those goals, or else they wouldn't be able to properly evaluate the city manager on his or her ability to implement them.

After Fairley ended his presentation, some councilors said they want to make sure the public is as involved



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

A crew from Pendleton Ready Mix pours footings Tuesday for a new house on Southwest First Street in Pendleton.

in the goals making process as they did the last time the council overhauled the process.

Shortly after he was elected in 2016, Mayor John Turner convened a committee to draft new goals for the city.

After the committee submitted a variety of options, Turner and other councilors took them to various community groups to figure out which ones rose to the top.

The council approved the top four goals — improving infrastructure, land development, housing and economic development — in 2017 and renewed them recently.

A January analysis of the

goals showed that the council had a mixed bag of success, hitting many of its housing objectives while falling behind on infrastructure.

Councilor Becky Marks said she was concerned that the council would focus so much on goals under the new process that it could neglect sudden opportunities like the Pendleton Unmanned Aerial Systems Range.

She also contrasted Pendleton with Hermiston and John Day, saying that Hermiston's relatively flat topography allowed for a different type of development that wasn't available to Pendleton while John Day was much smaller than Pendleton.

"I know, Scott, you and I have butted heads over John Day quite a little bit," she said. "However, John Day has 1,600 people.

Fairley said Pendleton was different than John Day, but his point stood that John Day was successful in implementing its goals. He added that the new process would give the council the flexibility to change and tweak goals as circumstances change.

The workgroup had suggested integrating the new process into the city council's rulebook, but City Manager Robb Corbett advised that the council also put it into the goals document if they decided to do it.

Renewal: Pendleton could target Byers Avenue

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lay and another 36 segments that need a complete reconstruction.

But the biggest target is Southeast Byers Avenue from Fifth Street to 12th Street.

Beyond its crumbling condition, Simons said Byers gets more traffic than its designed for.

Byers is one of Pendleton's older neighborhoods, meaning the street is narrow and most houses along it don't have driveways.

Parked cars cling to the sides of Byers, further narrowing the roadway and spurring some cars to park on curbs and sidewalks, damaging walkways.

Simons suggested not only reconstructing Byers,

but widening it to better accommodate on-street parking.

He added that the city had been saving a source of street funding to reconstruct Byers, but if the urban renewal district paid for it, the money could go toward other important street projects, like repairing North-West Despain Avenue.

The project has an estimated cost of \$1.7 million, and with the complete list of repair projects totaling \$6 million, Simons said staff made a priority list of streets that could fit inside a \$3 million budget.

Those streets include parts of Southwest Fifth Street, Southwest First Street, Southeast Third Street, Southeast Eighth Street, Southwest Fourth

Street and Southeast Goodwin Avenue.

But Simons warned that the money might not stretch that far because, excluding Byers, the city hadn't calculated the costs of new sidewalk ramps, curb repairs and drainage issues.

Although the development commission has mostly used urban renewal money for private projects, there are a few notable exceptions.

In 2010, the commission agreed to spend \$400,000 to build the Riverfront Plaza, a park that connects the 400 block of Southwest Court Avenue with the Pendleton River Parkway.

And in 2016, the commission contributed nearly three-quarters of the \$91,915 cost to repave two public

parking lots in the downtown area.

The one-time boost in urban renewal funds is meant to bolster an annual street maintenance budget that's struggled to stop the bleeding.

In its 2019-20 budget, the city allocated \$1.2 million toward street maintenance, a figure the city's consultants say will maintain the status quo.

Although the council didn't take any action on Tuesday, City Manager Robb Corbett said members would need to take action soon if it wanted to move forward with the projects.

Councilor Paul Chalmers, the chairman of the commission, said members would vote on the proposal at its July 16 meeting.

Firefighter: Janice Arsenault remembered as a dynamic and outgoing personality

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said Williams did not pop up on local police databases, and the investigation will look into why he was here as well as the relationships between the three.

"We should be able to get to more answers today and possibly tomorrow," Rowan said.

He also expressed his admiration to members of the Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District, which lost one of its own with Arsenault's death. She was a volunteer firefighter for the local department.

"That was pretty humbling to watch them standing at attention on the dock waiting for the boats to come in, and then the procession from Hat Rock to Burns (the mortuary in Hermiston)," Rowan said.

The fire district posted

this message about Arsenault on its Facebook page:

"It is difficult to write this through the tears and heartache, as we continue to process this sudden and tragic loss for us all. Janice's positive outlook on life, contagious laugh, and her desire to live life to its fullest will be missed. We are glad that she was part of our family too.

"Words alone cannot express the appreciation and gratitude we have to all of those individuals and groups who stepped forward to help up our agency, our family, in our efforts to bring home our sister. You stood steadfast by our side in our greatest moment of need. Thank you.

"May we all find solace in knowing that Janice is in a better place and will forever be watching over us."

On Tuesday afternoon

an impromptu memorial started as people began leaving flowers and other items outside the Umatilla fire station.

Arsenault was a student and employee at Blue Mountain Community College. Jacelyn Keys, director of BMCC's Hermiston Center, was Arsenault's supervisor. She recalled Arsenault as a dynamic and outgoing personality.

One of Arsenault's joys outside studying was riding her Harley Davidson motorcycle. She recently returned from a rally with family and friends, Keys said, but Arsenault did not let blood lines draw the boundaries of who she called family.

"I don't know if that woman actually knew a stranger," Keys said.

Arsenault's definition of relaxing left folks in the dust. She earned her GED

at the college, took classes to become a volunteer firefighter and this spring earned her national EMT credentials. She also worked full time as an office assistant and was a mother of four.

"Janice did everything big," Keys said. "She loved big. She laughed big."

But something small from her friend was really sticking with Keys.

Keys said she is not a morning person. While she arrived at work at 8 a.m., she would be content not to engage with anyone until 10. Arsenault told her she needed to hear Key's tell her, "Good morning." Arsenault pushed for her work day to begin on a positive note. Keys said over time she gave in.

"I think the last two mornings," Keys said, "I miss that the most."