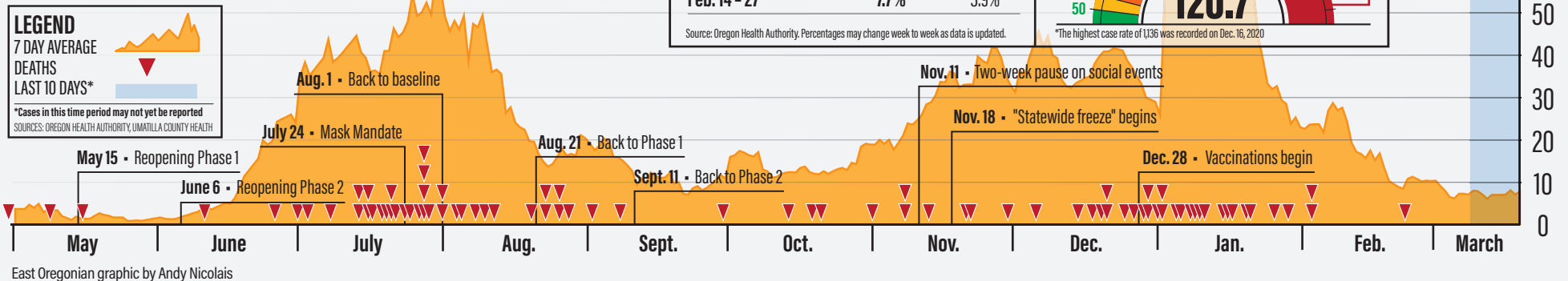


UMATILLA COUNTY COVID-19 TREND - AS OF MARCH 19

Umatilla County cases: **7,808** (60 new cases this week)
 Umatilla County deaths: **82** (0 new deaths reported this week)
 Oregon cases: **160,994** (1,957 new cases this week)
 Oregon deaths: **2,357** (38 new deaths reported this week)

Umatilla County vaccinations: **5,440** in progress, **6,958** complete (as of 12:01 a.m. 3/19/2021)

LEGEND
 7 DAY AVERAGE DEATHS LAST 10 DAYS*
*Cases in this time period may not yet be reported
 SOURCES: OREGON HEALTH AUTHORITY, UMATILLA COUNTY HEALTH



Hermiston Chamber announces new CEO

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Kristina Olivas has been chosen as the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce's new chief executive officer.

The chamber's board of directors announced the hire in an email to members on Friday, March 19. Olivas will start work on Tuesday, March 30.

According to the news

release, Olivas comes to the chamber from the Walmart Distribution Center in Hermiston, where she spent the past five years as human resources office and training manager, providing, "counseling, coaching and leadership to nearly 1,000 employees." Before that, she



Olivas

worked for Oregon Potato Company and Wilcox Furniture.

She was born and raised in Hermiston, is fluent in English and Spanish and is a mother to three children.

Annette Kirkpatrick, chamber board president, said in a statement that the board felt Olivas brought the skills, experience and personality needed to connect with a diverse and growing community.

"We are impressed with Kristina's energy, work history and love of community," she said. "She has a natural ability to listen and connect with others. We expect Kristina to not only continue our successful programs, but to work with members, partners and community stakeholders to bring our Chamber to a new level of service."

Olivas said her career goals have always been to develop

personal and professional relationships, while building up the community she loves.

"I feel excitement and pride," she said of her new job. "I'm so proud to be on the front lines in representing the businesses of Hermiston."

Olivas takes the helm at the chamber after the departure of Kimberly Rill, who was hired in April 2019 and resigned on Feb. 12, to take a new job as the education and workforce training coordinator for the

Port of Morrow.

In her new position, Olivas will be tasked with building relationships with chamber members, planning events and programs, coordinating the chamber's committees, and managing other parts of the chamber's day to day operations. She will also help lead efforts toward building the chamber's new offices planned for the intersection of South Highway 395 and East Evelyn Avenue.

Hermiston City Hall demolished

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Contractors began tearing down Hermiston's former city hall on Wednesday, March 17, to make way for a new city hall in the same location.

The building was originally built as a bank in 1965. According to the *Hermiston Herald's* archives, the city purchased the building in June 1986 from Benjamin Franklin Western Heritage Bank for \$365,000 before remodeling it and holding a public open house for the new city hall in March 1987.

Since then, the city's population has roughly doubled. At the beginning of 2019, the Hermiston City Council

concluded, "Prepare preliminary general concept for City Hall in current location," citing lack of space to fit all city staff in the current building, as well as poor accessibility for people with mobility issues.

In December 2019, a fire burned the building's HVAC system and caused smoke damage throughout the building, according to the city, and city councilors voted to push ahead with building a new city hall sooner than expected rather than put money into repairing the old building.

The new city hall, planned for the current space where the old building is being demolished, will be three stories and include not only space for city staff, but the new home

of the municipal court and office space for some Umatilla County departments.

The construction bid was awarded to Griffin Construction, of The Dalles, for \$8.66 million. The cost includes construction of the new city hall building and new parking lot, as well as replacement of two blocks of aging water and sewer lines near city hall and renovation of the municipal parking lot across Northeast Second Street.

Until construction is complete, most city staff are located in the old Carnegie Library or basement of the Hermiston Public Library. The ballot drop box previously located at city hall has been moved to the Stafford Hansell Government Center.

City council to discuss duplex zoning

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The Hermiston City Council will hold a 90-minute work session about zoning rules for duplexes on Monday, March 22, before its regular meeting.

A law passed by the Oregon Legislature in 2019 requires all cities with a population of between 10,000 and 25,000 to allow duplexes in all zones that also allow single-family homes. Hermiston's R-1 zone does not currently allow duplexes.

According to a memo from City Planner Clint Spencer in the agenda packet,

the state is also requiring that cities not impose additional restrictions on duplexes beyond what is required for single-family homes. That means the city will need to make decisions on standards, such as lot sizes, about whether to hold single-family homes to the current duplex standard, hold duplexes to the current single-family home standard, or create a new standard somewhere in the middle.

The work session on zoning will take place at 5:30 p.m. at the Hermiston Community Center, 415 S. Highway 395. The regular city council meeting will take place afterward, starting

at 7 p.m. Both meetings will also be livestreamed on the city of Hermiston YouTube page.

During the regular council meeting, councilors will discuss acceptance of a Federal Aviation Administration grant of up to \$2.5 million for reconstruction of the Hermiston Municipal Airport's apron for aircraft parking. The city has access to a grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation to cover most of the 10% local match, according to the agenda packet.

The council will also review and adopt the report of the council's 2021 goal-setting session.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Columbia Basin Bioscience gains certification

HERMISTON — Columbia Basin Bioscience, a CBD extraction company based in Hermiston, announced on Wednesday, March 17, that it has received a Current Good Manufacturing Practice certification.

The CGMP is in "manufacturing, packaging, labeling, or holding operations for dietary supplements" standards, awarded by AIB International.

According to a news release from Columbia Basin Bioscience, the certification "is a key indicator that a company adheres to stringent protocols to ensure a safe, consistent and quality product."

The business has more than 2,000 acres of USDA organic farmland for growing hemp and a processing facility that extracts CBD from the hemp, to be used in a variety of products. According to the news release, the company employs 50 people and currently extracts thousands of CBD isolate per month.

CEO Alan Cleaver said in a statement that the company

believes the hemp industry is lacking consistent, high-quality biomass like that produced by Columbia Basin Bioscience.

"GMP certification isn't easy or even required in the hemp industry, but it's something we believe in. We are very proud of our company's processes and dedication to quality," he said.

Columbia Basin Bioscience co-founder Sean Groer said in the news release that so far humans have "only begun to scratch the surface" of what is possible with hemp.

Open seat on Boardman commission

BOARDMAN — The city of Boardman is looking to fill an open seat on its planning commission, according to a press release.

The commission is made up of seven members appointed by the city council. The group advises the council on planning and development within Boardman, including land use and zoning matters like plan amendments, zone changes, conditional use permits, variances, and tentative subdivision projects, the press release said.

The group holds meetings on the third Wednesday of each month at Boardman City Hall at 7 p.m. People interested in the position must live within city limits. The term lasts through Dec. 31, the press release said.

Those interested should send an email to Community Development Director Barry Beyeler at bbeyeler@cityofboardman.com, or a letter to Boardman City Hall, P.O. Box 229, Boardman, OR 97818.

Hermiston resident appointed to state board

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown's latest submission of names for state Senate confirmation includes Michael Erickson of Hermiston.

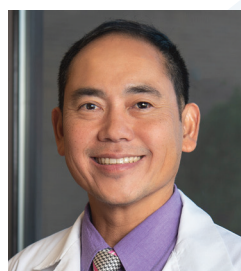
Erickson's name was submitted for a four-year term on the Respiratory Therapist and Polysomnographic Technologist Licensing Board. He would replace Tony Garberg.

— EO Media Group

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Chaos Walking (PG-13)
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Tom and Jerry (PG)
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