

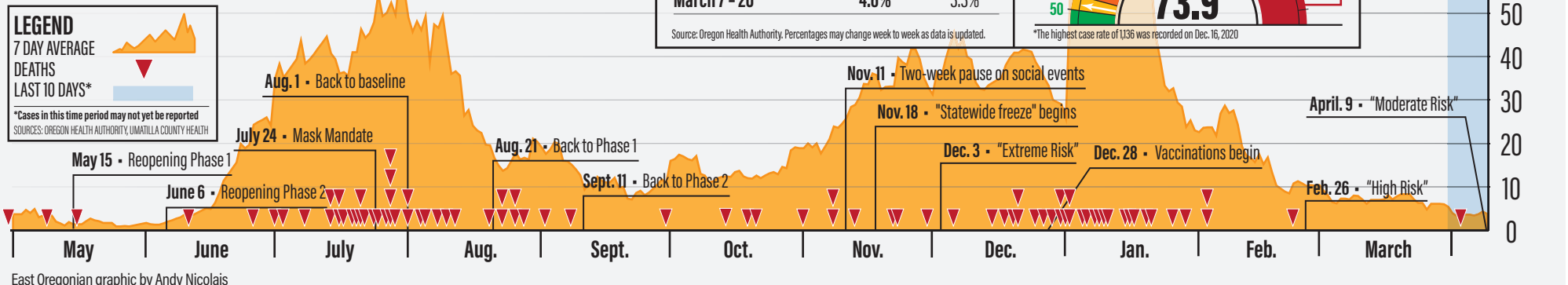
UMATILLA COUNTY COVID-19 TREND - AS OF APRIL 9

Umatilla County cases: **7,913** (36 new cases this week)
 Umatilla County deaths: **83** (1 new death reported this week)
 Oregon cases: **169,338** (3,325 new cases this week)
 Oregon deaths: **2,440** (55 new deaths reported this week)

Umatilla County vaccinations: **4,363** in progress, **12,528** complete (as of 12:01 a.m. 4/9/2021)

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



Primmer gets green light to temporarily move out of Ward 3

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — For the next few months, Pendleton City Councilor Dale Primmer will represent his constituents from a bare piece of dirt. For several months after that, his official place of residence for holding his Ward 3 seat will be uninhabitable.

Primmer's new setup comes after the Pendleton City Council unanimously voted Tuesday, April 6, to allow him to use the undeveloped site where he intends

to build his home as his place of residence until he can move to the location.

Primmer explained to the council that he recently purchased bare land in Ward 3, which encompasses the entirety of the city south of Interstate 84, with the intention of building a new home for him and his wife.

But in order to gain the equity needed to pay for the



Primmer

house's construction, Primmer said he needs to sell his existing house in the Sunridge area before the project can start. Given Pendleton's notoriously tight rental market, Primmer said he needed the flexibility to seek temporary housing outside of Ward 3 while his new house is being built.

Councilor Linda Neuman asked Primmer if he had started the process of selling his house yet.

"Not unless you want me to live in a tent in your front yard," Primmer joked, before

adding that he wouldn't put his current house on the market until he secured a rental.

Primmer said he's already looked into a few rental opportunities in Ward 3, so the council's action could be rendered moot. But nonetheless, City Attorney Nancy Kerns gave her legal opinion that the address of Primmer's future home is suitable for the purpose of council representation.

Primmer said the house construction was set to start in June with a six-month completion timeline, although

he added that he wouldn't be surprised if it took a few months longer.

Primmer, who works as the director of the Umatilla County Community Corrections, was elected to his seat in 2016 and easily won reelection in 2020.

In other news, the council unanimously passed an ordinance that will allow electric scooters and other electric vehicles weighing less than 100 pounds to be operated on the Pendleton River Parkway and other paths, roads and parking lots in parks.

The amended ordinance comes on the heels of the council approving an ordinance in March that opened the door to California company Bird to begin operating its dockless electric scooter program.

The council intends to change one more bit of policy to ease access for electric scooters. At its April 20 meeting, the council is scheduled to vote to amend its noncriminal offenses ordinance to match up with the parks ordinance and allow electric scooter travel on the levee system.

Council to discuss giving property for a senior housing development

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The Hermiston City Council will discuss giving up 7.18 acres of land for a proposed senior housing project during the council's Monday, April 12, meeting.

The city owns 20 acres of land known as the Green Property, located next to the city's recycled water treatment plant. The city purchased the property for \$420,000 in 2005 with a plan to use it to cool off recycled water before it was discharged into the Umatilla River. After purchasing the land and testing out the process, however, city staff determined the solution wasn't viable.

In August 2020, Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan asked for the city council's blessing to pursue a senior housing project on the part

ABOUT THE MEETING

The meeting begins at 7 p.m. at the Hermiston Community Center, 415 S. Highway 395, and will also be livestreamed on the city of Hermiston YouTube page.

of the property on the far side from the plant. The idea was that the city would solicit proposals for housing for senior citizens, and offer up the land for free to the developer with the best proposal.

Morgan stated at the time that it was unlikely the city would be able to sell the land to a developer at market price due to its location. However, if the land were developed into a housing complex, the city could gain as much as \$3 million in the first 20 years

from property taxes and utility bills.

According to a memo from Morgan in the agenda packet for the April 12 meeting, the city received several submissions of ideas for senior housing projects, and after reviewing the proposals, a committee of two city councilors, a planning commission member and multiple city staff is recommending the council choose a proposal by Paradigm Compass, LLC that includes a mixture of assisted living facility, memory care and cottages.

Morgan is requesting the council vote on a letter of intent to start the process for Paradigm Compass to begin doing due diligence, which could eventually lead to the land transfer. The land would revert to the city if the company did not build the promised project in an agreed upon time frame.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Man arrested for attempted murder in Hermiston

HERMISTON — A Hermiston man is being held in the Umatilla County Jail on a charge of attempted murder after police responded to a disturbance at a residence.

Steven Maurice Tompkins, 54, was arrested on Tuesday, April 6, after officers from Hermiston Police Department responded to the 200 block of West Beech Avenue at about 8:30 p.m. to a report of a disturbance involving a knife and a gun, according to Police Chief Jason Edmiston.

Edmiston said when officers arrived they found Tompkins, who lived at the address, "actively engaged in a dispute" with a 34-year-old male who also lived at the location. He said both parties were initially detained, and through subsequent investigation officers determined Tompkins "was the primary aggressor and had been acting extremely erratic," and the other party had what appeared to be defensive wounds.

As the case is ongoing, Edmiston declined to answer some questions, including whether the firearm that was confiscated from the scene had been discharged during the dispute. The police department consulted with the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office and Tompkins was lodged at the Umatilla County Jail.

According to the jail roster, Tompkins has been charged with three felonies: attempted murder, second degree assault and unlawful use of a weapon. His bail is set at \$60,000.

BMCC to receive state funding

SALEM — The Oregon Senate passed a budget reconciliation bill on Thursday, April 8, that included funding for Blue Mountain Community College's Corrections Education Program, a partnership with the Department of Corrections to give incarcerated individuals job training and education.

House Bill 5042 provides more than \$542,000 for the Pendleton school.

"BMCC is doing fantastic work to help those in our correctional institutions gain the life skills they need to reduce recidivism and transition back into the workforce," said Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena. "BMCC is a value to our community and this is yet another example of an important program they provide. Working with Sen. Michael Dembrow I am very pleased to have secured funding for their Correc-

tions Education Program." HB 5042 passed the Senate on a 23-5 vote and now heads to the Gov. Kate Brown's desk to be signed.

Pacific Power offering utility bill assistance

PENDLETON — Pacific Power is offering customers in Umatilla County and elsewhere in the state options for recovering after falling behind on their power bills due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

New programs went into effect on April 1 to help with bills, according to a news release. The company plans to reach out to customers in general with the information, as well as working with specific communities hit particularly hard by job loss and illness during the pandemic.

Eligible customers may receive help from one of the Assistance Plus options for their primary residence. For the instant gran option, customers can receive a one-time bill credit of up to \$500. For the extended payment match option, customers can enroll in a payment arrangement to get caught up and Pacific Power will match the monthly installment until the money owed is paid in full, 12 months pass or the customer reaches the \$1,000 limit.

For more information or to apply, visit pacificpower.net/assistanceplus or call 888-221-7070.

— EO Media Group

Last two arrested for motel incident

By **BRYCE DOLE**
East Oregonian

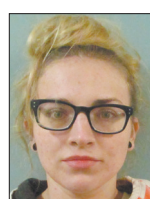
PENDLETON — Police have arrested the remaining two suspects in an alleged robbery, assault and kidnapping that began in a motel room in Pendleton on March 29, according to a press release from the Pendleton Police Department.

Anthony Len Haigh, 26, is facing charges of robbery, kidnapping, assault, the unlawful use of a weapon, theft, the unauthorized use of a vehicle and menacing. Deva Lorraine Marthaller, 25, is also facing charges of robbery, kidnapping, assault, theft, the unauthorized use of a vehicle and menacing, according to the press release.

The two were the remaining suspects after a local SWAT team arrested Tyler James Schachtsick, 32, and



Haigh



Marthaller

Whitney Ann Anderson, 26, on March 30, according to police.

Police arrested Anderson and Schachtsick after a man reported that four people had assaulted and robbed him in a motel room at the Rugged Country Lodge on March 29. The victim told police the alleged perpetrators then took him to an area on Highway 37 where he was dropped off. He then walked to a nearby house where he contacted emergency services, according to police.

A Umatilla County Grand Jury indicted the four suspects

on April 1, and arrest warrants were issued against Haigh and Marthaller. Pendleton police then informed law enforcement county-wide to be on the lookout as they searched for Haigh and Marthaller, the press release said.

Police in Walla Walla, Washington, identified Haigh and Marthaller at the Travelodge motel on Wednesday, April 7. The two were arrested that afternoon and booked in the Walla Walla County Jail. Now, they await extradition to Umatilla County, the press release said.

The case is ongoing in the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office, the press release said.

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4/9-4/15
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Theater seating will adhere to social distancing protocols
 Every showing \$7.50 per person (ages 0-3 still free)

Voyagers (PG13)
 1:40p 4:40p 7:40p

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Godzilla vs. Kong (PG13)
 1:20p 2:00p 4:20p
 5:00p 7:20p 8:00p

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Nobody (R)
 12:40p 3:40p 6:40p

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Raya and the Last Dragon (PG)
 1:00p 4:00p 7:00p

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