

Blue Mountain Community College selects next president

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Blue Mountain Community College selected Mark Browning as its next president.

The college announced the selection Wednesday, June 23. Browning, the vice president of college relations at the College of Western Idaho in Nampa, emerged from a four-person field of finalists, beating out two other candidates with presidential experience.

"I am so honored and excited for this opportunity," Browning said in a press release from BMCC. "My wife and I are anxious to jump in and become a part of the Blue Mountain family and the greater eastern Oregon community. BMCC is a wonderful place that has and will change lives for all who come through our doors. I am ready to get to work."

A self-described "farm boy from western Montana," Browning started his career in TV news working as an anchor and news director in Idaho.

At 39, Browning decided to switch career tracks and enrolled at Idaho State University, where he majored in mass communications. He began a second career in educational administration, first as the chief communications and legislative officer for the Idaho State Board of Education and then as vice president of communications and government relations at North Idaho College.

In the meantime, he continued his college education by receiving a master's degree in public administration from the University of Idaho and enrolling in an education

doctoral program at Idaho State, where he plans to graduate in the fall after defending his dissertation on dual credits and the relationship between community colleges and the K-12 system. He's been administrator at the College of Western Idaho since 2016.

"Mark's experience and passion for community colleges and students is very evident and exciting for BMCC," said Jane Hill, chair of the BMCC Board of Education. "He has a unique ability to form, cultivate and

enhance relationships that will serve the College very well both internally and within our regional communities. The board looks forward to working with Mark."

Browning replaces former President Dennis Bailey-Fougner, who resigned abruptly in February after less than two years on the job, citing his health.

Connie Green, a former president of Tillamook Bay Community College, filled in as president in the interim, presiding over a period of change for the college.

Years of declining enrollment led to multiple rounds of

layoffs in the past year, including members of the college faculty. With the COVID-19 pandemic eroding enrollment further, BMCC is attempting to reverse the trend as potential students are poached by other institutions, including Walla Walla Community College, Columbia Basin College and Baker Technical Institute.

BMCC also reported it will determine Browning's start date during contract negotiations, but likely it will be this fall.

Browning and his wife, Kym, have three adult sons, three grandchildren and two dogs named Lewis and Clark.



Browning

Return from remote work provides some energy-saving opportunities

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — As businesses reopen, extend their hours or bring workers back to the office for the first time since the pandemic began, Energy Trust of Oregon is reminding them it is a good opportunity to examine their energy usage.

"Smaller changes that wouldn't be noticeable to employees working in the space or customers can make a big difference," said Susan Jowaiszas, marketing lead for Energy Trust of Oregon.

She said businesses can think about how they're using their buildings, and pull back on heating or cooling areas that aren't being used, for example.

That practice has been a focus for Blue Mountain Community College.

Dwayne Williams, facilities director for BMCC, said his department has asked all staff to provide a schedule of when they will be in their offices or classrooms so that they can plan heating, cooling and lighting accordingly. If no one is going to be in a certain room or section of the building, the temperature will be allowed to drop or climb, depending on the season.

"We're doing our best to try and conserve as much energy as we can while still keeping everyone comfortable," he said.

The HVAC systems across BMCC's campuses can be controlled remotely from Pendleton, as can much of the lighting, which is also attached to motion sensors.

The college is part of Energy Trust of Oregon's Strategic Energy Management program, which provides a free year-long training and cash incentives for businesses and other organizations looking to save money on energy. Williams said BMCC has saved thousands of dollars through simple management practices, and been able to funnel that money back into things like new equipment for



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Jason Hogge, a maintenance mechanic at Blue Mountain Community College, uses a multimeter to check an electrical panel on Wednesday, June 23, 2021, while working on the automated lighting system at BMCC in Pendleton.

groundskeeping staff.

In 2019 they had a contest between buildings owned by the college. The building that saw the most energy savings over the course of a month got \$1,000 for staff in that building to use on something that would help them save energy, such as lap blankets. Williams said that small activity provided a good reminder for people to get in the habit of thinking about their energy consumption.

"People would walk by and turn the lights off if no one was in the room," he said. "We did actually see some pretty good savings."

In addition to being strategic about heating, cooling and lighting schedules, Energy Trust of Oregon recommends businesses think about the air they're using. Jowaiszas said with the focus on airflow in preventing the spread of COVID-19, many businesses are following recommendations to pull in 100% of the air coming through the HVAC system from outdoors instead of recirculating the same air inside the building.

While that is a good practice to help protect people from airborne viruses, she said, pulling hot air in from outside takes more energy to heat, so businesses keeping their HVAC system on to some extent in their off hours could consider recirculating air during times no one is in the building.

Keeping blinds closed

when hot sunlight is pouring in during the summer and opening them to let sunshine in during the winter can also help, she said. So can keeping thermostats at a more moderate level, sealing up cracks with caulk and using weatherstripping under doors.

If a business is opening up their building after a long period of employees working from home, she said, they should be especially careful to check that filters, heat pumps, vents and other parts of their HVAC systems are clean.

"It's not uncommon to find birds' nests, raccoon leavings, beehives, and things like that inside, which can hinder airflow," she said.

When it comes to equipment, starting up large items on a staggered timetable instead of all at once can help prevent a surge to the system. Jowaiszas recommend people also do their research on energy ratings and available incentives when purchasing new appliances or other equipment for their business.

"When people are looking at purchasing equipment, they need to look at not just what the equipment costs upfront but also what it will cost to run over time," she said.

The cheapest energy is the energy we as a society never have to produce, she said, so Energy Trust of Oregon is here to help people save as much power as they want to.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Crews to start pavement upgrade on June 24

MEACHAM — Motorists on Interstate 84 can expect delays starting Thursday, June 24, as work crews begin a pavement asphalt overlay in the Meacham area, according to an Oregon Department of Transportation press release.

Crews will start applying the pavement asphalt overlay on Kamela Road and Old U.S. Highway 30 starting at I-84 exit 243, going through Kamela and ending at the I-84 Interchange at Meacham.

Flaggers and pilot cars will control traffic during work hours, and travelers can expect up to 20-minute delays, according to the release. The work, which will not affect I-84 traffic, is expected to be complete no later than June 30.

Bower announces candidacy for commissioner

PENDLETON — A Pendleton businesswoman is throwing her hat in the ring for county commissioner.

Susan Bower, president of Eastern Oregon Business Source, announced Tuesday, June 22, she plans to run for the seat on the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners that board Chair George Murdock will vacate when he retires in January 2023, according to a press release.



Bower

Bower plans to officially file to run in September of this year, the release said. Bower leads strategic planning efforts for nonprofit and for-profit organizations and works with decision makers to customize leadership development and workforce training. She

has worked for Umatilla County providing a variety of contract services — something EOBC continues to do. Her firm has been in operation since 2005 and has served hundreds of clients on a variety of community and board development initiatives.

Bower also has local teaching experience, working for both Blue Mountain Community College and Walla Walla Community College. At the same time, she has served as chief financial officer of Northeast Oregon Surgical Clinic.

From March 2000 until July 2002, Bower was a project management consultant for Charter One Bank and before that she spent nearly a decade as a senior vice president of Bank One Corporation, where she had 42 direct reports and was responsible for the work of 400 people and a \$25 million budget.

Murdock has held his seat since a special election in 2013 to replace Bill Hansell.

Hermiston resident dies after smoking in bed

HERMISTON — Firefighters late Saturday, June 19, in Hermiston knocked down a residential blaze but inside found one occupant dead.

Umatilla County Fire District No. 1 reported two of its firefighters responded at approximately 9:26 p.m. to a fire at a mobile home on the 200 block of East Newport Avenue.

"On arrival, firefighters had flames coming out of a bedroom window at the rear of the residence," according to the district's post on Facebook.

The pair were the only ones available because other members of the crew were on a medical call. They knocked down the flames from the exterior, the district reported, then made "an aggressive inte-

rior search for the occupant of the residence."

They found one occupant dead in the bedroom where the fire originated.

Other fire district personnel and equipment soon arrived, and the Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District also assisted.

Umatilla County Fire District No. 1 reported it had installed two smoke alarms in the residence earlier this year, however, when one of those devices was located the battery had been removed.

The district also determined the occupant was smoking in bed prior to the start of the fire.

Working smoke alarms provide early notification to occupants there is a fire, the district emphasized. The early notification also is an indication for the occupants to leave the residence immediately, then call 911.

"Please check your alarms on a regular basis," the district urged.

And smokers should be cautious with their actions.

"We see many times throughout the year smoking materials that are disposed in household trash and on the ground," according to the fire district. "Do not use plastic containers to discard your smoking materials into. Empty your collection containers on a regular basis, do not discard packaging or used lighters or other trash in these same containers; this just provides additional fuel that could be ignited. Do not use smoking materials when you are tired or intoxicated."

Even Fire Standard Compliant cigarettes available in Oregon do not completely guarantee the cigarette will go out. The acceptable failure rate in the product testing of FSC cigarettes is approximately 25%, according to Umatilla County Fire District No. 1, meaning about 1 in 4 of the cigarettes burns completely.

—EO Media Group

City council agrees to make the first payment for Pendleton Comes Alive

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Backed by \$500,000 from the city of Pendleton, a new tourism effort is getting its first infusion of cash.

During a special meeting Tuesday, June 22, the council unanimously voted to approve a \$100,000 budget transfer so that the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce could get its first payment for Pendleton Comes Alive ahead of the end of the fiscal year.

City Manager Robb Corbett explained that the council needed to approve the budget transfer before the start of the new fiscal year in July because of the expenses the chamber has already incurred promoting the initiative.

"It's heavily front loaded with marketing money because we need to get ahead of people's summer planning," he said.

When the council adopted the 2021-22 budget June 1, the city included a portion of the COVID-19 relief money it received in federal stimulus to contribute to Pendle-

ton Comes Alive, a project meant to boost tourism by launching a number of Western-themed activities on the weekends during the summer months, including concerts on South Main Street, tours of the Round-Up Grounds and horse carriage rides.

As a part of a formal agreement between, the city promised to pay the chamber \$500,000 over two years to get the effort started. In both years of the deal, the city is supposed to pay the chamber \$100,000 in May and \$75,000 in July and August.

Although Pendleton Economic Development Director Steve Chrisman has assured the council that Pendleton Comes Alive would bring new visitors to Pendleton, the only record the agreement requires is for the chamber to send to the city a full accounting of the project's finances at the end of each year.

However, at a previous meeting, Councilor Sally Branden requested the chamber deliver a report to the council on any visitor records it collects.

At the Tuesday meeting, Carole Innes shared some anecdotes from her experience as an event volunteer, saying she chatted with several tourists who traveled to Pendleton specifically because they heard of Pendleton Comes Alive.

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Cineplex Show Times

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

F9: The Fast Saga (PG-13)
12:40p 1:20p 4:00p
4:40p 7:20p 8:00p

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Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard (R)
1:40p 5:00p 8:20p

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Peter Rabbit 2: The Runaway (PG)
1:50p 5:10p 8:20p

.....

Cruella (PG-13)
1:00p 4:20p 7:40p

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HEALTH

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