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Former EOU student runs for Oregon governor

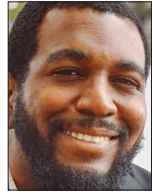
By ALEX WITTMER
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — One of the last Oregon Republican gubernatorial candidates filed his paperwork for the soon-to-be open seat, and in doing so, became the first Black GOP candidate in the state's history to run for governor.

Tim McCloud, who grew up in Tucson, Arizona, and now lives in Linn County, is a former Eastern Oregon University student who works for an aerospace and defense manufacturer as a business analyst. During his time at EOU, he was homeless and supporting his

family, which includes his wife and three daughters — an experience he said gave him a unique perspective into Oregon's approach to addressing homelessness.

"I've listened to people offer solutions to homelessness that wouldn't have worked for my situation during a time when I was running a small business, going to school online at Eastern Oregon University for public administration, and raising three children from a campground in Sunriver," he said. "Those solutions wouldn't have worked for me."



McCloud

While challenging, McCloud said his experience supporting his family while homeless made him stronger and cemented the relationship he had with his wife. He said one of the reasons that led him to homelessness was the lack of affordable housing in Oregon.

Sunriver, in Deschutes County, has experienced an unprecedented increase in housing demand, which has sent prices skyrocketing. The median home value for Deschutes County is \$693,000, according to Redfin real estate reports. Meanwhile, Multnomah County's median

home value is approximately \$493,000, according to Redfin.

"I think that was an issue that pushed me into homelessness was, you know, having not enough opportunities for affordable housing," McCloud said. "We have to be looking at how we can increase access to affordable housing for all kinds of Oregonians, but especially those that don't prefer to be homeless, because I think there's a distinction to be made."

McCloud said one of his priorities as governor would be to focus on developing affordable housing — including multifamily and single-family homes by tapping into

Oregon's massive timber industry, and building new communities in Oregon in order to address the housing crisis.

"It must be a priority. We, right away, need to be working with the timber industry to end homelessness in Oregon," he said. "We have the renewable resources to do that, and so, with the localized resource that's renewable, within our borders, we should be working with the developers to set up new communities of all types, from multi unit housing to single family housing and in between."

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NATION

Study of Snake River dams raises questions

By MATTHEW WEAVER
Capital Press

WASHINGTON — The White House Council on Environmental Quality says in a post on its website that it is studying the fate of four lower Snake River dams — and the rest of the Columbia Basin.

In the March 28 post, the council outlined its efforts to study breaching the dams, including a March 21 "Nation to Nation" meeting between federal agencies and leaders of the tribes of the Columbia River Basin.

"We heard calls to support breaching the four dams on the lower Snake River to restore a more natural flow, also about the need to replace the services provided by those dams, and recognition that such a step would require congressional action," the blog post reads. "We were asked to consider the Basin holistically because of its inherent interconnectedness."

A representative of the council declined to comment.

According to the blog, the council last fall convened leaders from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Army Corps of Engineers and the Bonneville Power Administration.

The group will "build on existing analyses to identify a durable path forward that ensures a clean energy future, supports local and regional economies and restores ecosystem function, while honoring longstanding commitments to Tribal Nations," the blog states.

"We cannot continue business as usual. Doing the right thing for salmon, Tribal Nations and communities can bring us together. It is time for effective, creative solutions," the blog states.

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Passengers board a Boutique Airlines flight to Portland, Thursday, April 14, 2022, at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport, Pendleton.

Charly Hotchkiss/East Oregonian

Ridership in Pendleton on the rise as small airline gives notice to end service, then changes direction

By JOHN TILLMAN
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Boutique Air gave notice in February that it wants to pull out of Pendleton, but the U.S. Department of Transportation grounded that request. And now the airline is seeking a new contract.

Oregon Regional Airport Manager John Honemann said Boutique's notice came as the number of passengers flying the small airline in Pendleton began to increase after falling during the pandemic.

Boutique Air relies on the federal Essential Air Service program to stay in business in Pendleton. The U.S. Department of Transportation oversees the EAS program, which subsidizes airlines to connect communities across the country that otherwise would not receive scheduled air service.

Boutique in 2016 won an EAS contract for 21 round-trips a week between Pendleton and Portland, with the option to operate one service a day to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport instead of Port-

land. The Pendleton City Council in 2018 awarded a four-year, \$10.4 million EAS extension to Boutique. While the U.S. Department of Transportation foots the bill, the federal agency follows the local community's direction.

The transportation department's February list of communities receiving the subsidy, shows only one place in Oregon: Pendleton.

Honemann explained the EAS contract with Boutique was due to expire Dec. 31, 2022, and Boutique submitted a Notice of Termination of Service to the DOT.

Honemann said the reason for the notice was economic, with Boutique citing "wages, fuel costs, Inflation, supply chain issues with aircraft parts." Additionally, he said, there is a "pilot shortage and downward pressure on industry as pilots move up to larger aircraft, and carriers that offer higher salaries."

The federal transportation department on Feb. 24 accepted the notice, Honemann said, and on March 21 issued an order prohibiting termination of service and requesting proposals.

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New ordinance clears way for ride-hails in Pendleton

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Ride-hail services such as Uber could become legal in Pendleton as soon as Tuesday, April 19.

That's the day the Pendleton City Council considers a new "Ride for Hire" ordinance that will repeal and replace the city's taxi ordinance and create a five-month trial period to find out whether ride-hails and taxis can economically coexist.

The debate over ride-hails and their place in Pendleton began at the city council level in January, when a group of aspiring Uber drivers went to a meeting to request the council to amend its taxi ordinance, which sets rules for taxi operation that ride-hails can't meet. The owners of Elite Taxi, the city's only taxi company, quickly



Phil Wright/East Oregonian

Pendleton City Council at its meeting Tuesday, April 19, 2022, in city hall creates a new ordinance that will replace the city's taxi ordinance and create a five-month trial period to find out whether ride-hail companies, such as Uber, and taxis can coexist economically.

objected to the request, arguing that increased competition from ride-hails would lead to the end of their business.

The city attempted to appease both sides by assembling a plan that would allow ride-hails to operate mostly

at night while Elite got the daytime hours. But the Uber corporation got involved late in the process to oppose the concept, leading city staff to nix the idea before it reached the council for consideration.

The new ordinance will require ride-hail drivers to obtain licenses with the city and meet certain insurance and operational requirements, but both ride-hails and taxis will have no restrictions on hours of operation or fares. While the city is looking to open the gates to Uber, staff still is sensitive to Elite's survival. Elite not only operates taxis that run on cash fare, but also serves as the contractor for several public transportation programs for senior, disabled and low-income residents. In a report to the city council, city attorney Nancy

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