

Joseph leaves marijuana legalization to voters

By Steve Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain

The Joseph City Council said no to both a recreational and legal marijuana dispensary in the city limits Dec. 7. The council also voted to accept the resignation of Rodd Clark, who cited personal reasons for stepping down.

Sean Flanagan and Michelle Kramer, partners and owners of The Peace Pipe, a Joseph store that sells smoking accessories and art, made their second request this year to allow them to sell pot. Their first appearance resulted in an indefinite

tabling of the issue, as the city already has an ordinance on the books that prohibits selling of marijuana within 1,000 feet of areas children are known to congregate, which effectively includes the entire city limits.

Kramer did most of the talking. Mayor Dennis Sands asked her for projections of possible revenue for the city. She said that the city of Huntington's demographics offered the closest match, and that city had received \$150,000 in revenue from the state.

She offered that even a conservative estimate of Joseph's potential would

be \$100,000 if it instituted the three percent sales tax allowed by law plus a percentage from the state tax.

Kramer also reiterated an offer the couple made previously: The proposed dispensary would pay the city the three percent tax on a monthly

basis, so the city wouldn't be forced to wait for quarterly distribution from the state.

She added what the couple saw as an opportunity for job growth, which included 15-20 growers and manufacturers of edible, extractions and such. "We're going to need

bud tenders, security staff, contractors and we'll need outside sources for computer systems," she said. "There's a lot of job creation that's not within the industry."

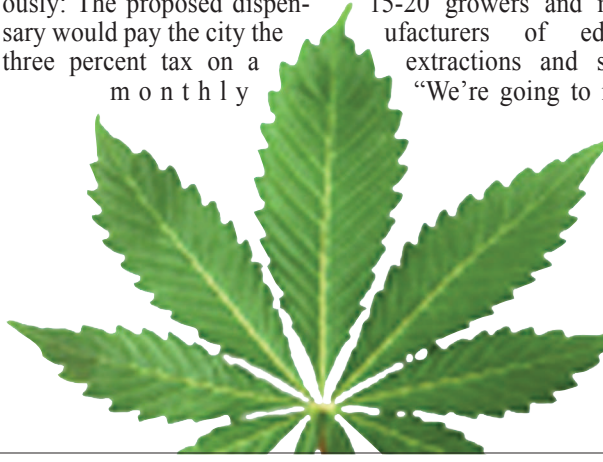
Kramer also addressed concerns the council might have, noting she has a child of her own and does not want marijuana in the hands of children and the proposed dispensary would have ample security to prevent that. She also said that crime statistics were ambiguous at best and that Oregon would need more time to accurately assess criminal activity associated with

marijuana legalization.

The petitioner asked the council to consider a medical dispensary for the sake of its citizens who otherwise have to make a long painful drive to obtain marijuana. Kramer also said it's been shown it can be useful for people trying to wean themselves from opiates.

Sands thanked the couple for the presentation but recommended taking no action. He did suggest gathering signatures and putting a measure on the ballot to let the citizens of Joseph decide.

"We really believe in this," Kramer said. "We're going to keep fighting."



Crash kills Molalla man

A two-vehicle crash Dec. 7 claimed the life of a Molalla man on Highway 351 at Milepost 5.5.

Around 2:20 p.m., Oregon State Police and emergency personnel responded to the report of a crash at Wallowa Lake.

Preliminary investigation revealed that a 2000 Silver Dodge Caravan, operated by Michael Paul Sprissler, 63, of Molalla, was southbound when he veered across the highway into the path of a white 1996 Ford F250 pickup, operated by James Anthony Burton, 59, of Joseph. The Ford hit the driver's side of

the Dodge. Sprissler was fatally injured and pronounced deceased at the scene. Burton was not injured.

The highway was closed for about four hours while Troopers investigated the crash scene. State patrol was assisted by the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office, Joseph Fire and Rescue and Oregon Department of Transportation.

Speed and icy road conditions are being investigated as possible contributing factors in the crash. Investigation continues and more information will be released when available.

State patrol reminds drivers that winter conditions are now upon us and to travel with extreme care. Slow down and watch for ice in shaded areas. Check the emergency equipment in your vehicles including the safety equipment needed such as chains and snow tires to travel into Oregon's snow zones.

County snares ATV with wolf deterrent grant

By Steve Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa County has received a \$29,000 grant to help its ranchers with nonlethal wolf deterrents in their struggle against livestock depredations.

The grant was a result of a \$30,000 contribution from the federal government to the Oregon Department of Agriculture, which was required to provide matching funds before distribution.

The county's commissioners received a call from the state asking them to request a piece of the pie, as two of the four eligible counties did not apply. County commissioner Susan Roberts didn't hesitate to make sure the county got its seat at the table.

Roberts said that fladry, best described as a red flag fence, only works as a temporary deterrent. The commissioner went the more permanent route of buying range rider Greg Jennings a new Yamaha Wolverine ATV and a trailer to ride the range.

The new ATV has a cab,



Steve Tool/Chieftain

The county's latest non-lethal wolf deterrent. This Yamaha Wolverine is Wallowa County's answer to wolf depredations. The county's range rider, Greg Jennings, will put this to use as he roams the county's cattle country searching for signs of wolf presence.

winch and heater to make the riding more comfortable for Greg Jennings, who was happy with his upgrade.

"I'm sure it will be nice and handy, a lot nicer than the four-wheeler. I can throw stuff in the bed and still have lots of room," he said. "It has another seat so I can take someone with me if I need to."

Commissioner and rancher Todd Nash, whose herd has

suffered more than one confirmed depredation, approved the purchase as well.

"It was for nonlethal and had to be used," Nash said. "Greg had just about worn out his four-wheeler, and he's been exposed to the weather on it. I think it's a good use of funds."

The county spent around \$17,000 on the Wolverine and plans to buy a couple of more radio receivers so range riders can more effectively communicate with ranchers about wolf locations. Keeping the funds in the county was important. The ATV was purchased from Outlaw Motor Sports in Enterprise, who appreciated the business.

"It's really great that the county supports local businesses, and we're glad Greg's job will be more comfortable," said co-owner Dustin James.

Roberts said that the remaining \$12,000 will need to be spent before Jan. 31 of next year or the funds will be forfeited. She added that a Jan. 12 meeting of the wolf compensation committee will determine how the remainder of the funds are used.

FOR THE RECORD

Dec. 4

5:46 a.m. — A 911 caller reported a traffic crash in rural Lostine.

9:13 a.m. — Wallowa County Sheriff's Office investigated a theft complaint in Wallowa.

11:03 a.m. — Wallowa County Sheriff's Office investigated a criminal mischief report in Wallowa.

4:52 p.m. — An injured deer on Hwy. 82 in rural Enterprise was reported via 911.

6:05 p.m. — A report of an injured deer on Hwy. 82 near Lostine was received.

Dec. 6

10:52 a.m. — A phone scam was reported in Enterprise.

1:20 p.m. — Credit card fraud was reported to Enterprise Police Department.

8:12 p.m. — Wallowa County Circuit Court issued a warrant for the arrest of Dalton Daniel McKay, 24, of Adams, Ore., on a charge of probation violation. Original charge was furnishing alcohol to a minor.

Dec. 8

2:45 a.m. — Enterprise PD investigated a report of a missing juvenile. The subject was located.

9:57 p.m. — Joseph FD responded to a report of the smell of fuel in a home in Joseph. No leaks or spills were found.

Dec. 9

4:24 p.m. — Complaint of an abandoned vehicle in rural Lostine.

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FIRE

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firemen and then ran back to get the 757-9 Hyundai wheel loader to pull the Hyster out of the building. On the way over I told BJ the brakes on the Hyster could be locked up, but BJ had a plan all figured out. He's a good worker."

Firemen attached chains to the mast of the Hyster, and Arbogast lifted it and dragged it out with the wheel loader.

Campbell reported the fork lift fire appeared to be electrical. There was no water dam-

age to the building, and no visible fire damage to the structure though thick smoke filled the business and smoke damage had yet to be assessed.

The Deals said they are lucky. The building has a huge exhaust fan that was put to work and other fans were stationed throughout the building.

Starmer said she spotted the fire as she turned off of Truck Route Road onto Douglas Street, approaching her second stop of the morning with the Head Start bus.

"Sitting clear up in my bus I could see gray smoke pouring out of every place smoke could

come out of that building," she said. "I told teacher's assistant Julie Spang, who rides with me and buckles the little kids in, to call 911."

Spang had to leave the bus at that moment to meet a child, so Starmer made the calls.

"I hadn't even pulled away from that stop and Mason Hafer and Travis Goebel were already at the site," Starmer said. "I knew the response was going to be really fast."

All citizens involved shrugged off the notion of any heroics.

"We were just doing what we do in Wallowa County," Tanzey said.

WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN GRIDIRON CONTEST

Week 13 football contest winner is Kristi Wade with 12 correct picks!

Congratulations to LYLE JENSEN
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