

Elections: Lathrop, Moeller voted to Wallowa School Board

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for the seismic work could be used for the new bond, and in that way, the assessment wouldn't need to be done twice.

"You don't have to duplicate things," she said. "There will be some nice ways" that helps out.

The next part of the process, Jones said, is to work with the bond counsel.

The following step would be "requesting architect, engineering and design services," she said. "Getting that on board, you can start looking at the schematic and design. It'll be a community team that will be a part of that process — community members and school members, as well. Once you have a design and a plan, then it's working on getting a contractor on board."

Jones said that, with all those elements to still be taken care of, "We're probably a year out from construction."

Wallowa School District was also the site of two of the three contested school board elections Tuesday night, with the third



Wallowa School District maintenance head Jake MacDonald stands next to pipes that carry hot water through the school buildings for heating. The heating and cooling systems are among those in the district in need of improvement, and that improvement is on the way thanks to Wallowa voters passing a \$7 million bond during the Tuesday, May 18, 2021, district election. The bond passage also means the district will get a \$4 million grant from the Oregon Department of Education.

Ellen Morris Bishop/For the Wallowa County Chieftain, File

being in Joseph.

In a three-way race, Zach Lathrop edged out incumbent Mike Lowe and fellow challenger Joseph Miles for Position 2 on the Wallowa School Board. Lathrop won with nearly 45% of the vote, edging Lowe, who had just over 41.5%, by 20 votes, 278-258. Miles ran in third with just over 13% of the

vote, or 82 votes.

The other race in Wallowa, which was for Position 5 on the school board, went to Mark Moeller, who eked out a nine-vote victory over Bill Robb, 318-309, or 50.48% to 49.05%.

Jones said she had not had much previous interaction with the two new members of the board.

"And I don't know Mr. Lathrop really well. I know Mr. Moeller," she said. "I've interacted with him some. ... It's exciting to have people ready to serve."

In Joseph, Kathy Zacharias topped incumbent Rachel Sykora to win a four-year term in Position 4 with a 339-136 victory, garnering more than 71% of the vote.

Other winners

All other election winners, in uncontested races, were:

- In the Enterprise School District, Heather Melville (Position 1), Kate Fent (Position 4) and Mandy Decker (Position 5).
- In the Joseph School District, Olivia Losby (Position 6).
- In the Troy School District, Rene Crawford (Position 2) and Dustin DeHaan (Position 5).
- In the Lower Valley Water District, Kim Werst (Position 4) and Rick Schaeffer (Position 5).
- In the Evergreen Water District, Rob Burns, Jason Crenshaw and Gary Willett.
- In the Wallowa Rural Fire District, Larry Wightman and Bobbie Baker.
- In the Wallowa Lake Rural Fire District, Bob Young (Position 3), Dave Hurley (Position 4) and Greg Johnson (Position 5).
- In the Wallowa Cemetery District, Bonnie Henderson.
- In the Lostine Cemetery District, Muriel Jones, Les Carlsen and Shirley Doud.
- In the Enterprise Cemetery District, Tim Kiesecker (Position 5).
- In the Alder Slope Cemetery District, Reid Kooch.
- In the Joseph Cemetery District, Tom Schaafsma.
- On the Wallowa Memorial Hospital Board, Nick Lunde (Position 3) and Kate Loftus (Position 4).
- At the ESD, David Flynn and Bre Austin.

Joseph:

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session, Eckstein anticipates discussion of particular council members — or the mayor — and their actions in relation to the alleged harassment. He and Baum expect to make recommendations as to punishment that the council must take action on in open session.

Possible punishments

"Obviously, we can't force anyone to resign, but we can make a strong recommendation," Eckstein said. "There can be things like censuring, restrict their right to vote, pull them off committees, you could lock them out of City Hall —

there's a couple different options, and I've seen about every one under the sun get exercised. ... (The council is) going to have to decide on those recommendations."

Eckstein said he hopes the May 27 actions resolve — or begin to resolve — some of the issues that have

me over the past 10 years or so that have had a lot of success," he said. "Sometimes they're not always met with open optimism; it can be really hard for people accept change, and I get that. Sometimes I try to change things too fast, so I'm going to be patient and slowly integrate

affects the public as much as it does the employees, so we want to be as clear and transparent as we can," Eckstein said. "At the same time, we want to maintain people's rights and privacy."

Thursday's executive session agenda includes the options to:

- Consider the employment of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent.
- Consider the dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent who does not request an open hearing.
- Consider information or records that are exempt by law from public inspection.
- The open session agenda includes:
 - Consideration of a severance agreement.
 - Council decision on alleged violation of council rules.
 - Public comment.

"WE UNDERSTAND THIS AFFECTS THE PUBLIC AS MUCH AS IT DOES THE EMPLOYEES, SO WE WANT TO BE AS CLEAR AND TRANSPARENT AS WE CAN."

— Brock Eckstein, interim city administrator

plagued Joseph city government. He said he was pleased that Welch felt his situation was resolved and that a heavy burden had been lifted from city Administrative Assistant Jamie Collier, as well as city residents.

"I'm just implementing some tried-and-true systems that have worked for

me in the past."

Among those methods will be educational work sessions he hopes to hold with the council that will inform them about how they are allowed to interact with each other and with city employees.

"We understand this

Drought:

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input from county residents.

"We determine here as to whether we're in drought," she said. "Our producers and people here help us

determine that."

Hillock agreed, saying he and the other commissioners have sought that input.

"You drive around and you talk to the producers, the grass (for grazing) isn't growing," he said.

But the drought extends

beyond traditional agricultural areas up into the timberlands. Nash told of one resident who conducted a controlled burn recently and was amazed how dry it was.

"Those were fires like we'd see in late July," he said. "They burned some trees they didn't intend to."