

# Plans progressing for new Joseph City Library

When moved, City Council will have new chambers

By **BILL BRADSHAW**  
Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — Plans are well underway for a new Joseph City Library that will be located in the old Blackburn Building and out of its cramped quarters in City Hall, the City Council learned at its meeting Thursday, Jan. 20.

Pro-Tem Administrator Brock Eckstein said Jan. 24 that the plans will be ready for the city's library board to look over by April, as will the city's work to refurbish the building by installing new plumbing and electrical works, he said.

The Blackburn Building — a former medical office building at 100 N. East St. — was donated to the city and is located just a block from Joseph Charter School.

Eckstein said the refurbishment work should cost the city about \$50,000 to get it ready for the library board to move in.

He said that although the library is open only in the afternoon, it sees plenty of use.

"We've got a pretty good stream of traffic," he said. "I think it'll get more use over there because the school's only a block away."

Once the move is complete, the City Council will have new chambers in City Hall and cease meeting in the Joseph Community Events Center, he said. He said the



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

**Work is underway to upgrade electrical and plumbing fixtures in the old Blackburn Building at N. 100 East St. in Joseph. The building will become the new Joseph City Library. It is hoped it will get greater use, being just down the hill from Joseph Charter School, seen here in the background.**

old library space will be expanded for the larger council chambers.

"It'll make it better so we

In other business, the council:

- Approved an ordinance to accept the city's method of determining system development charges for utilities. The next step, Eckstein said, is to determine the amount of those charges.

- Heard an update from Grant Matlock of the Oregon Department of Transportation on this year's project to upgrade sidewalks and ramps to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Matlock explained — and fielded questions — largely about how the project will avoid conflicting with tourism events regularly held in Joseph. He said the target date to start the project is in June.

- Approved a lot-line adjustment requested by Tom and Jennifer Klimsza.

- Passed a resolution appointing Eckstein as budget officer for the city for the coming year.

- Passed a resolution naming the Wallowa County Chieftain as the official newspaper of record.

The next council meeting will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 3. The agenda for

the meeting was to be posted on the city's website by noon Tuesday.

The agenda will include:

- Consideration of dissolving the Zoning Ordinance Task Force.

- An ordinance to establish a planning commission.
- The creation of a plant operator position.

- A contract to rent the community center to a church.

- A 10-year contract with Rahn's Sanitary Service for solid waste disposal.

- A presentation by Brad Baird of Anderson Perry on ongoing public works projects.

- A presentation by Grant Matlock and Bryan Bostenero of the Oregon Department of Transportation on this year's planned work to upgrade sidewalks and ramps to conform with Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

City Administrative Assistant Jamie Collier said the meeting will be held virtually via Zoom only and the council hopes to resume in-person meetings in March. To view the agenda or to obtain the Zoom link, visit <https://www.josephoregon.org>.

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### IN BRIEF

#### Young ranchers receive scholarships

ENTERPRISE — Two \$1,400 scholarships were awarded Thursday, Jan. 27, by the Wallowa County Stockgrowers to youths in the process of building their own cattle herds.

Devin Schreiber, who attends Joseph Charter School, and Alisha Melville, who attends Enterprise High School, each received the scholarships, according

to Stockgrowers Vice President Deanna DeMelo.

The scholarships are to purchase bred heifers to either begin or add to the youths' herds.

DeMelo said they also each received \$350 from the Wallowa County Haygrowers to help feed the animals during their first year.

The presentations were made during the annual dinner put on by the Stockgrowers and the Wallowa County Agricultural Resource Foundation. The foundation regularly awards scholarships to youths in agriculture-related college classes.

Last year, DeMelo said, the group awarded two

scholarships, although she did not have the recipients' names or the amounts.

She said nearly 100 people attended the dinner enjoying prime rib and a dessert auction. The COVID-19 pandemic appeared to have cut attendance at the annual function, she said.

"There were probably a few less people than usual," DeMelo said. "We had a lot of pies to get rid of. There's usually a couple more tables there."

John Williams of the Stockgrowers said they raised more than \$8,000 to go toward scholarships over the course of the evening.

— Chieftain staff

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