

**ANNEX from page 1A**

Neighbors of the property are not only opposed to the annexation itself but have taken the position that the request has been designed to circumvent county land use rulings made in the past.

Over the past year, there have been many issues raised by those against annexation, ranging from environmental to safety concerns. However, many of the concerns exceeded the scope of the city council's decision criteria at this particular stage in the development process.

From the initial introduction of the Benedick annexation request, the decision point for the council has been to determine if the request meets city guidelines for providing services and infrastructure support to the property if the annexation was approved.

There has been considerable public confusion surrounding this topic, with many arguments against the annexation citing concerns related to stormwater drainage, sewer systems, property loss and other issues — none of

which factor into the process at this point.

In the future, any development and construction of actual residences will require navigating through the City of Florence's applicable construction and permitting processes, which have a multi-phased public feedback component.

It would be at that point in the process that many of the concerns raised by opponents would factor into any decisions made by the planning commission and — ultimately — the city council.

On Monday, FarleyCampbell reviewed the timeline of the application, recapping the numerous reports and statements from city entities in the meeting informational pack.

The council was presented with the text of Ordinance No. 1, Series 2021, an ordinance approving the annexation of 48.82 acres of property and right-of-way, including Assessor's Map 18-21-10-40 Tax Lots 400 & 401, 18-12-10-34 Tax Lot 801, as well as Oceana Drive, from the City Limits in Rhododendron Drive East to Tax

Lot 400.

Councilors were also asked to approve Ordinance No. 2, Series 2021, an ordinance establishing Low Density Residential with a Prime Wildlife Shorelands Management Unit Overlay zoning district to the properties applied for by Benedick Holdings as part of the proposed annexation.

The applications for both were applied for by Michael Farthing, on behalf of Benedick Holdings. FarleyCampbell then walked the council through a very detailed letter from Farthing, which addressed point-by-point many of the complaints and concerns forwarded to the city by those opposed to the annexation.

There were few questions after FarleyCampbell's review, which was followed by a brief clarification regarding the irrelevance of covenants, conditions and restrictions, commonly called "CC&Rs," in relation to the city's actions, as provided by City Attorney Ross Williamson.

Both ordinances were then approved, with Councilor Margaret Wisniewski answering as "decline" and later clarified by City Recorder Kelli Weese as an official "no" vote.

Ultimately, the Florence City Council passed both ordinances, 4-1.

The issue of extending the COVID-19 State of Emergency was next discussed, with Wisniewski questioning the need to extend the declaration. Her comments prompted Henry to move the item from the consent agenda to a discussion point.

City Manager Erin Reynolds joined the discussion and reviewed the necessary time periods required for vaccinations to become effective.

Reynolds also mentioned that the Siuslaw School District schedule would not be impacted by the extension — a concern Wisniewski raised in regard to the extension impacting the ability of students to return full time to the classroom.

As she continued, the city manager touched on the need to adhere to Lane County Public Health guidance in order to maintain countywide standards of vaccination and reopening of schools.

Following Reynolds' clarifications, the council voted unanimously to extend the declaration.

Next, the councilors' report and comments included discussion about the scheduled — but cancelled — March 30 special meeting of the Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC). The committee had been

scheduled to meet in order to discuss the potential addition of a climate change subcommittee to the city workplan recommendations being submitted to the Florence City Council. But the meeting was never gavelled to order due to the lack of a quorum.

Local environmental activist Mike Allen spoke to this issue during the public comments portion of Monday's council meeting, leveling criticism against the five EMAC members who were not in attendance for the March 30 special session.

Councilor Sally Wantz, who serves as the council ex-officio representative to EMAC, said she also was concerned with the way the committee process had played out.

"I want to share a few concerns I have, starting with the fact we have not received a monthly summary, so I am going to do my best to give you that," said Wantz. "A special meeting was called for on March 30. However, the co-chair and others decided to remove themselves from that meeting, thus preventing the committee from having a quorum in order to function. This is concerning to me in that our volunteers are finding it necessary to take extreme measures to boycott a meeting so that no busi-

ness can take place.

"If you don't like the topic on the agenda at least show up, express your views, hear the other side and vote."

Wantz then mentioned the ongoing controversy over climate change recognition and possible action resulting from that discussion. Her observations included the lack of desire on the council to address the issue of climate change and she suggested the topic should still be addressed, perhaps at a later work session.

Henry responded briefly, mentioning the past deliberations of EMAC and suggested the lack of interest and attendance reflected the earlier deliberations of the committee — which had rejected the idea of both a special meeting and creation of a climate change subcommittee.

The meeting ended with Reynolds' report, which updated the council on the county vaccine status and her hope that an additional vaccine distribution event could be scheduled for Florence residents in the future.

The next meeting of the Florence City Council will take place Monday, April 19, at 5:30 p.m. A work session is scheduled earlier that day at 10:30 a.m.

For more information, visit [ci.florence.or.us](http://ci.florence.or.us).

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## Food boxes still available Saturdays

Knights of Columbus Council 15773 is continuing its Free Food Box Program through the month of April. The food giveaway takes place every Saturday in April from 10 to 11 a.m. at St. Mary Our Lady of the Dunes Catholic Church, 85060 Highway 101, south of the Siuslaw River Bridge.

The event is first come, first served as long as the baskets last and usually includes produce, milk, fruit and a main course.

People are encouraged to come out.

If anyone has any questions, contact Knights of Columbus representative Pat Beckham at 541-590-5501.

## Yachats Arts Guild turns 'A New Leaf' with month-long show

The Yachats Arts Guild is having a Spring Online Show this year from now until April 18. The theme is "A New Leaf."

View the gallery online and shop for local art at [shop.yachatsarts-guild.org](http://shop.yachatsarts-guild.org). People will have plenty of time to shop from their very own home.

The participating artists are: Donna Bader, photographer; Nancy Bolton-Rawles, mixed media

Carol Cassidy, watercolors; Melinda Fellini, oil; Sandra Gangle, acrylics and watercolors; Beth Kattleman, mixed media; Jeanette K. Hodges,



photographer; Sherry Secreast, jewelry; Carol Summers, watercolor; Eugene Whitley, pen and ink; Kathy Whitson, oil, acrylic and watercolor; and Doug Yunker, watercolors.

The Yachats Arts Guild first started in 2007 and still has some of the original artist members. It has now grown to 33 local artists and consists of painters in different media, stained glass, mixed media and jew-

elry. This guild is a nonprofit and is sponsored by Polly Plumb Productions.

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## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



**DESIREE TUPUA**  
SOPHOMORE  
**VOLLEYBALL**



**HIGHLIGHT:**

The Sports Club, the Siuslaw News and Coast Radio Sports congratulate Siuslaw Viking Volleyball stand-out sophomore Desiree Tupua. Desiree had two great back to back matches leading to Siuslaw victories with 21 kills and 5 blocks against Marshfield and 24 kills and 4 blocks against Cottage Grove.

**Honorable Mention: Chad Hughes - Siuslaw Cross Country**

**Highlight:**

Honorable mention goes to Viking junior Chad Hughes. Chad led the Viking Cross Country team to a Sky-EM Championship and was the boys individual Champion

with a time of 17:10.60

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