

Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
Florence, OR 97439

Opinion

The First Amendment
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend." —Thomas Jefferson (1800)



USPS# 497-660 Copyright 2021 © Siuslaw News

Siuslaw News

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 148 Maple St. in Florence, Lane County, Oregon. A member of the National Newspaper Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. Periodicals postage paid at Florence, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com.

Jenna Bartlett
Ned Hickson
Cathy Dietz
Ron Annis
For Advertising: ext. 318

Publisher, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
Production Supervisor
For Classifieds: ext. 320

DEADLINES:

Wednesday Issue—General news, Monday noon; Budgets, four days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Monday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Monday noon; Display classified ads, Friday 5 p.m.

Saturday Issue—General news, Thursday noon; Budgets, two days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Thursday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Thursday noon; Display classified ads, Wednesday 5 p.m. Soundings, Tuesday 5 p.m.

NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$79; 6-month in-county, \$56; 10-week subscription, \$25; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$102; 6-month out-of-county, \$69; 10-week subscription, \$35; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$134; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.
Website and E-Edition: TheSiuslawNews.com

Siuslaw News

Office: 148 Maple St./PO Box 10 Florence, OR 97439
Office Hours: Monday to Thursday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday: 8 a.m. to noon

LETTERS

VOTING FOR MARTINDALE FOR SCHOOL BOARD

I am thrilled that Larry Martindale announced his running for the Siuslaw School District Board of Directors.

I have had the pleasure of working beside Larry for approximately four years as a member of the Board of Directors of the Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County.

He holds outstanding leadership skills, is a great listener, outstanding problem solver and a very respectful man.

Larry has no doubt seen a lot over his 38 years as a teacher, educational consultant and administrator for elementary, middle and high school.

I honestly feel he would be a great advocate for our district both for our students, teachers and staff — especially during today's challenging times.

I will be voting for Larry Martindale for Siuslaw School District Board of Directors position #6.

—Pixie Center
Florence

CHANGE COURSE AT WLAD

According to a Guest Viewpoint in the *Siuslaw News* March 17 ("Ambulance District Is At Financial Crossroads") and in a paid advertisement in that same edition titled: "What are you willing to pay for?" the Western Lane Ambulance District (WLAD) has constructed a goldplated special district, compliments of what some see as an unsatisfactory union negotiations.

I do not cast dispersion at any employee at WLAD; all of whom I have seen or worked with have top-notch intentions and sincerity.

However, in this day and age sincerity is a much overrated virtue!

Having served on 13 budget committees through the years, including four elected positions, never has any budget been operating in a deficit in the way that WLAD is and has been. This is a great disservice to the citizens of Florence and the surrounding service area and those benefiting from the exorbitant salaries and benefits of the district will fight to keep "the good times rolling."

—Joel Marks
WLAD Budget Committee

Why is the taxpayer being gouged for paramedics' sick leave, vacation, training at overtime rates as dictated by the union and three supervisors getting a possible \$122,586 — even much more than our Fire and EMS Chief?

I feel the WLAD board in some cases still for union wishes and are really not trained in the all important skill set of negotiation; after all, they are citizen volunteers and labor is well aware of those shortfalls.

My recommendation is this: The citizens of Florence should vote a resounding "Nay" to any tax levy proposed by WLAD. Furthermore, it is now time to privatise ambulance service, possibly with the same employees at a much lower benefit package and more cost-efficient service.

I never imagined that Florence would repeat the irresponsible behavior of the federal government's spending spree.

It's time to reverse course drastically or suffer the consequences.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are un-sourced or documented will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside the Siuslaw News readership area will only be published at the discretion of the editor.

POLITICAL/ELECTION LETTERS:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) Explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

Email letters to:
nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com

WHERE TO WRITE

PRESIDENT JOSEPH BIDEN

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
Comments: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414
TTY/TDD: 202-456-6213
www.whitehouse.gov

STATE SEN. DICK

ANDERSON (DIST. 5)
900 Court St. NE - S-417
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1705
Email: Sen.DickAnderson@oregonlegislature.gov

OREGON GOV.

KATE BROWN
160 State Capitol 900 Court St.
Salem, Ore. 97301-4047
Message Line:
503-378-4582
www.oregon.gov/gov

STATE REP.

BOOMER WRIGHT (DIST. 9)
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1409
Email: Rep.BoomerWright@oregonlegislature.gov

U.S. SEN. RON WYDEN

221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-5244 | 541-431-0229
www.wyden.senate.gov

LANE COUNTY DIST. 1

COMMISSIONER JAY BOZIEVICH
125 E. Eighth St.
Eugene, OR 97401
541-682-4203
Email: Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us

U.S. SEN. JEFF MERKLEY

313 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-3753 | 541-465-6750
www.merkley.senate.gov

U.S. REP. PETER DEFazio

(4TH DIST.)
2134 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6416
541-269-2609 | 541-465-6732
www.defazio.house.gov

FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL

& MAYOR JOE HENRY
Florence City Hall, 250
Highway 101, Florence, 97439
541-997-3437
ci.florence.or.us
Email comments to Florence
City Recorder Kelli Weese at
kelli.weese@ci.florence.or.us

Annexation coverage, presentations are misleading

(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on this and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)

The April 7 article in the *Siuslaw News* regarding the Benedick Holding LLC (BH LLC) annexation is misleading for a number of reasons.

It unwittingly serves the purposes of the COF Planning Department — and ultimately the city council. This is mainly because there has conveniently and consistently been a selective presentation of this issue by Planning Department head Wendy FarleyCampbell (WFC), which has been skewed in favor of the annexation/zone change, as well as the openly proposed stated reason by BH LLC, which is for the future development of the property by them.

The public has effectively been cut off from presenting its side. Remember: people in the county can't vote on city matters such as for mayor and council members. As a result, limitations are placed upon them the public. There is only limited 3- and 5-minute speaking times allowed by individuals or their lawyer, even though a 15-minute total time is allowed but can't be utilized by any "single" speaker.

Commenting individuals against the annexation have been repeatedly cut off mid-sentence in their presentations. When last counted, there were well over 1,000 letters sent in protest over the annexation

and future development, including some sent by Lane County Commissioner Jay Bozievich that recommended that no annexation be permitted until many problematic

stated that FarleyCampbell "walked the council through a very detailed letter by BH LLC's attorney Michael Farthing."

No "very detailed letter objections" were ever allowed against the annexation/zone change proposal, though. This goes against the City's own by-laws (the state's also) that must include public involvement.

Consider this: In a court of law, there is a presentation by one side or the other in which one side (A) presents its evidence to a jury on an unlimited continual basis but the other side (B) is not only limited in the amount of time of its presentation but also whether its evidence is even deemed relevant by the other side (A), not even if that original side (A) brought up the matter in the first place.

Simply in legal terms, that's called "opening the door" for further discussion, admissible evidence or cross examination.

In effect, FarleyCampbell's side or presentation had the power of judge, jury and executioner because there was not a comprehensive presentation of all the facts and aspects of this issue to the city council — or actually to the public — as a whole.

I submit that the City of Florence most certainly can be held legally accountable for future liability problems (unlike City attorney Ross Williamson suggested) arising out of this annexation because it has "in the record" knowledge of such problems and has been warned by a government official of such.

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By Jeff Talbot
Florence

issues are resolved.

These issues include legal liability ramifications and financial and jurisdictional responsibilities, among many others.

Commissioner Bozievich is well versed in this matter being directly involved for over 10 years when it was on Lane County's plate — this is a direct quote from a letter he wrote to the Mayor and City Council:

"I believe the City should act with caution as it moves forward with any development of this property and require the developer to complete the process of upgrading the storm drain system in the previous phases of the development prior to annexation of lands that discharge to that system."

City of Florence Public Works Director Mike Miller is aware and has also raised similar concerns but his testimony has been truncated in WFC's presentations.

The *Siuslaw News* article stated that many of the concerns raised by the public were either irrelevant or exceeded the scope of the city council. However, the *Siuslaw News*