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Social media causes waves at Council meeting

BY MATT HOLLANDER
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

For nearly two hours on Monday night, discussions at the Cottage Grove City Council meeting steered clear of the controversial May 26 budget meeting and subsequent social media fallout.

But while the proverbial elephant in the room was not officially on the agenda, several councilors alluded to the topic during their open-comment session, and a heated exchange between Councilor Kate Price and Mayor Tom Munroe erupted over their differing views on the role of social media in city government.

Councilor Price said that while people are more inclined to be hostile on social media due to its anonymous nature, it's a place where the City needs to have a presence.

"The ways that people communicate are changing," she said. "And we can do a better job of reaching out and drawing people into our conversations."

Mayor Munroe then reiterated his longstanding position against using social media as a city communication tool and took a shot at Councilor Price for the disgruntled comments she posted to Facebook following the May 26 budget meeting.

"With all of half truths and misinformation, it creates more problems than it's worth, and I hope the city is never on Facebook. I also think that anybody who has been voted into a public office should have the sense to not call out staff that work for you," he said.

Other councilors redirected the discussion back to business items before the argument could become more hostile, but it seems as though social media will continue to be a hot-button issue. In her report to the City Council, City Attorney Carolyn Connelly said she had prepared a brief presentation on the use of social media by city governments, but for lack of time she suggested that a later

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CLASS OF '15



photo by Matt Hollander

Graduating seniors of Cottage Grove High School are congratulated by faculty as part of the graduation ceremonies held Saturday at Herald White Stadium. More coverage of local graduation ceremonies can be found on page 11A in this edition.

Budget approval vote ruled insufficient

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

A meeting of the City of Cottage Grove budget committee that ended before some of the committee's members thought it should have been scheduled for another round last week after it was discovered that the vote to approve the budget was insufficient.

The committee met at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, May 26, and began by establishing an 8 p.m. adjournment time that evening. City Manager Richard Meyers then led the committee through a summary of each fund included in the massive budget document. The 8 p.m. deadline approached before the committee had finished a line-by-line analysis of

the document, though a motion brought forth by former mayor Gary Williams and seconded by Councilor Garland Burback to approve the budget passed by a 6-5 margin.

City Councilors and budget committee members Jake Boone and Kate Price objected to the proceedings, and Boone's desire to place a discussion of the budget fiasco on the agenda for the Monday, June 8 City Council agenda unearthed a rule that proved the 6-5 vote was invalid.

"Jake (Boone) wanted an item placed on the agenda Monday to try and figure out for next year how to give people a better chance to speak," said Cottage Grove City Recorder Trudy Borrevik. "But when we looked at the rule, we

noticed that the budget has to be passed by a majority of the committee membership, not just a majority of those in attendance."

The budget approval vote took place without the participation of absent committee members Mike Fleck, Heather Murphy and Chris Holloman, and an approved budget would have required 'yes' votes from the majority of the entire 14-person committee — eight votes in all. And so the committee was scheduled to gather again on Tuesday, June 9. And with the buzz from the last meeting still fresh in the minds of many, it seems certain that a larger crowd of onlookers will be there to view the proceedings.

Change afoot for Bohemia principal, A Primary Connection

Jackie Lester will take new P-20 position, while A Primary Connection moves to local LCC campus

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The bustle of a school year nearly completed makes it seem like everyone at Bohemia Elementary School is on their way someplace else, and on Friday morning, Principal Jackie Lester makes her way toward an eclectic group gathered in the library.

Lester is checking in on Anna Maria Dudley and the English Language Learners, a group of 14 families whose children (and often, the parents themselves) are busy learning English as they adapt to a new community and a new school system. Spanish is the most comfortable language for many of the families, though South Lane School District has also worked to adapt recently to help provide a transition for an Indian family that speaks

primarily Punjabi, recent arrivals from Guatemala who speak Mam, an indigenous Mayan language, and Mixteco, a language spoken in the Oaxaca region of Mexico.

Many of these families access services through A Primary Connection, the South Lane Family Resource Center that offers programs including family support, child development and domestic abuse prevention from its headquarters in a room at Bohemia. On Friday, the group gathered to hear about many of these services, including the changes expected for A Primary Connection in the coming year.

Lester herself will also adjust to change next year; she'll be stepping down as Principal at Bohemia and taking the brand-new position of P-20 Coordinator. She'll be tasked with helping to improve the connections

between South Lane School District and the community partners that offer services to families in the District before they reach school age and after they leave South Lane, and Lester said she's thrilled that A Primary Connection will find a new home on Cottage Grove's Lane Community College campus next fall.

"The District has had the services of A Primary Connection for almost 25 years; it may be the longest-operating family resource center in Oregon," Lester said. "Its director, Peggy Lintula, has helped train and establish other family resource centers."

The center used to operate five days a week, offering services such as well-baby checkups and visits from nurses with the health department. Now, budget constraints mean the

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photo by Jon Stinnett

Anna Maria Dudley (standing on left), Lise Colgan (next to Dudley) and Bohemia Principal Jackie Lester visit with the English Language Learners at the school on Friday.

Also inside:



Homefront

National Guard pitching in on the playground, page 3A



Summer Sun

Cottage Grove boasts a packed schedule for 2015, page 6A

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CONTACT US

On the Internet
 By telephone
 By fax
 By e-mail
 By mail
 In person

www.cgsentinel.com
 (541) 942-3325
 (541) 942-3328
 cgsentinel@csentinel.com
 P.O. Box 35, Cottage Grove, OR 97424
 Corner of Sixth and Whiteaker, Cottage Grove

WEATHER

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Partly Cloudy

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