

Council holds first meeting of the year, talks bridge repair

By Caitlyn May
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City approves company for repair work on Swinging Bridge

After more than a year of discussion, the Cottage Grove City Council held two votes Monday night to fix one bridge.

The city's civil engineer Ryan Sisson presented a resolution to the council that offered an alternative design/build procurement method for the repair of the bridge that has been closed since 2016. The method is defined as resulting in a public improvement contract meaning the contractor provides or obtains specified design services, participates on the project with the owner and assists with the management of both design and construction. The usage of the method required approval from the council.

"In March of 2017, OBEC—

an engineering firm—provided an estimate of \$786,345 to repair the bridge. Monday night, the board approved a guaranteed maximum price of \$688,457 and awarded the repair project to Hamilton Construction/Ausland Group. City Manager Richard Meyers noted that the city had worked with both companies on the Chambers Bridge in the past.

"We held a pre-proposal meeting before Christmas," Sisson told the council. "The company we chose was the only one to engage and spend time with the local group and their application reflected information from their conversations."

The local group—Friends of the Cottage Grove Swinging Bridge is led by resident Dana Merryday who received a mayor's appreciation award Monday night. To date, the group



Councilor-elect Candace Lamb-Solsbee is sworn in by the city recorder on Monday, Jan. 14.

has raised \$15,000 to repair the bridge.

"It was their light touch," Sisson said of the Hamilton, Ausland partnership. "They're going to include the community and they're aware of the environment out there."

Work on the bridge is expected to start June 1 and be completed by October of this

year.

The bridge's closure has been a source of several city council meetings and garnered a flood of concern from local residents who raised money through a round-up program offered by the city. Each month, residents

were given the opportunity to round-up their water bill to the nearest dollar amount. At last

count, the program had raised more than \$3,000. No member of the public gave comment during the meeting other than Merryday who expressed his excitement that work would be beginning on the project.

Late last year, repair efforts were outlined to cost approximately \$1 million with \$500,000 of that expected to be

absorbed by having in-house engineers complete some of the work. At the time, three options had been presented to the board with two providing some movement but showing a drastic decrease from the current structure. According to the latest plans, the "swinging" motion of the bridge will be kept intact by the new design.

"It's going to match the existing Swinging Bridge as closely as possible," Sisson told the council. "It will be a Swinging Bridge. There may be steel columns to replace the wood columns but it will closely resemble the existing bridge."

Monday night also saw the addition of a new council member after councilor-elect Candace Lamb-Solsbee was sworn in. Lamb-Solsbee beat out incumbent Garland Burbuck in the November election. Councilors Greg Ervin, Mike Fleck and Jake Boone—who were also victorious in November—were also sworn in.

Commissioners Sorenson, Buch chosen as chair, vice chair

The Lane County Board of Commissioners appointed a new chair and vice chair during the opening minutes of its first regular meeting of 2019.

Commissioner Pete Sorenson will serve as chair in 2019 and Commissioner Heather Buch will serve as

vice chair.

"It is an honor to serve as chair of the Board of County Commissioners," said Sorenson. "As the longest-standing commissioner on this board, I am looking forward to working alongside new commissioner Heather Buch to serve our colleagues and



Pete Sorenson



Heather Buch

community as chair and vice chair."

"It is exciting to have the opportunity to serve in a leadership role on the Board of County Commissioners," said Buch. "I am passionate about our community and look forward to addressing many of the most serious is-

ssues affecting our residents."

Commissioner Jay Bozievich was also recognized for his leadership as chair during 2018 and presented with a ceremonial gavel as a gesture of thanks from his fellow commissioners.

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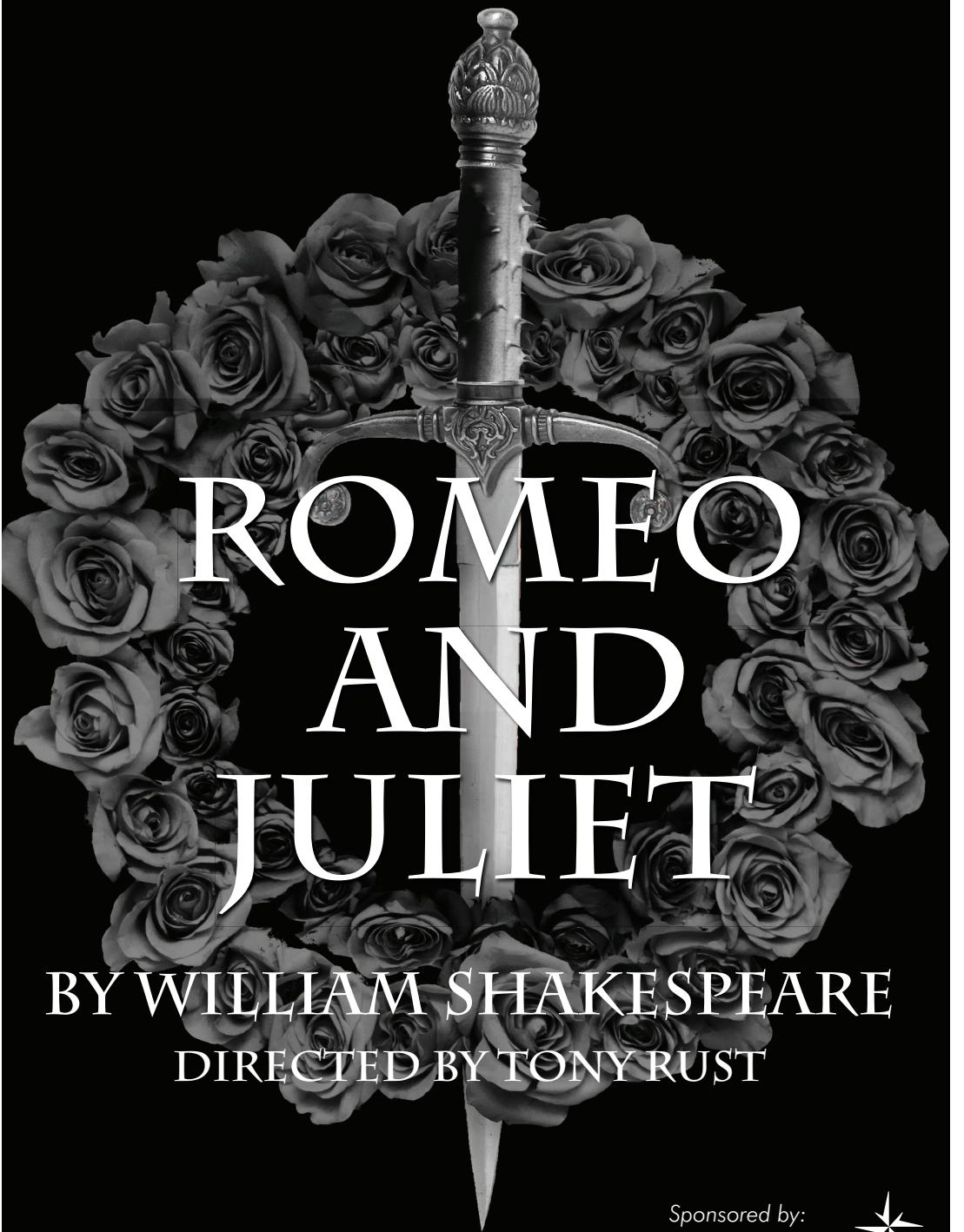
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