



# Cottage Grove Sentinel

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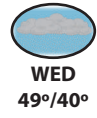
Head football coach Gary Roberts announces his departure from team. B1

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2019

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## City's finances get green light, minus wastewater

By Damien Sherwood  
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Cottage Grove's 2018-19 Financial Grade Report has listed all funds as meeting or exceeding expectations with the exception of the wastewater reserve fund, which received an "under supervision" grade.

The report, released earlier this month by the city's finance department, details revenues and expenditures contrasted to the year's adopted budget. Now midway through the fiscal year, the wastewater reserve fund has a reported deficit of \$228,161 because the city has yet to borrow the funds it had mapped out in the budget.

The funds, which are expected to help pay for a string of projects to improve Cottage Grove's wastewater system may not be borrowed by the end of the fiscal year as planned, thus creating the 'deficit.'

"It's under supervision because we did a number of projects already this year and we made the expenditures and we have the money and the funds, but we were also supposed to borrow some money to continue to do more projects and we haven't borrowed yet," said City Manager Richard Meyers.

To make up for the shortfall, loans are being sought to bring the budget back in the green.

This year's wastewater reserve budget has inflated compared to previous years, caused most notably by projects to rebuild sewer lines and fund the designing of a wastewater storage unit.

Most sizable among the projects, Meyers said, is engineering the new design for effluent storage.

The city's effluent, which has been treated to remove contaminants, currently has no long-term storage space and must be used for irrigation or discharged into the Coast Fork Willamette River.

The city purchased Middlefield Golf Course in 2006 for irrigation purposes, easing the burden on the temperature-sensitive river. Lack of storage has been a strategic challenge for the city. A large part of meeting that challenge involves managing temperature.

For treated effluent to be released into the river, it must first be cooled in order to reduce its impact on the ecosystem. Irrigating the plant life on the golf course, however, requires no cooling and saves the city an extra step.

Despite this solution, last year the Department of

See FINANCES 8A

## A night of celebration for Cottage Grove

By Damien Sherwood  
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Students and community members were recognized for their contributions during banquet

Saturday marked the 70th Annual Awards Banquet of the Chamber of Commerce.

The night consisted of dinner, desserts, honors and awards for standout individuals and organizations in Cottage Grove.

To start the evening, Junior First Citizen Scholarships were awarded to two local high school students, Gwenth Fisk and Dayna Jo Harris.

Chelsea Armstrong, a recipient of last year's scholarship, praised the students for their balance of volunteerism, school and work.

"Being a high school student and working a part-time job is no small feat," Armstrong said.

Larry Sullivan, Interim Superintendent for South Lane School District then presented awards to employees of the school district. South Lane School District Classified Employee of the Year went to custodian Brian Anderson, honoring his commitment to connecting with students.



PHOTOS BY GREG LEE

Russ McGuire, Anna Maria Dudley, Nadine Kelley, Mike Fleck and Richard Meyers are joined by students Gwenth Fisk and Dayna Jo Harris during the 70th Annual Chamber Awards Banquet. Inset, chamber director Travis Palmer and Kelley.

"Brian Anderson was hired in 2005 and has been the heart of Cottage Grove High School," Sullivan said. "He arrives before everyone and creates a homelike environment for staff and students. ... It's not necessarily the job of a custodian to connect with students and make them

feel valued, but that is what he does."

Also of the South Lane School District, high school teacher Michele Hilton received the Teacher of the Year award for her devoted aid to English language-learning

See BANQUET 6A



## Cottage Village project now 80 percent funded

By Caitlyn May  
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The houses may be tiny but the dream never was and on Tuesday, Jan. 15, the Lane County Commission helped Cottage Village Coalition (CVC) make a giant leap in seeing that dream become a reality.

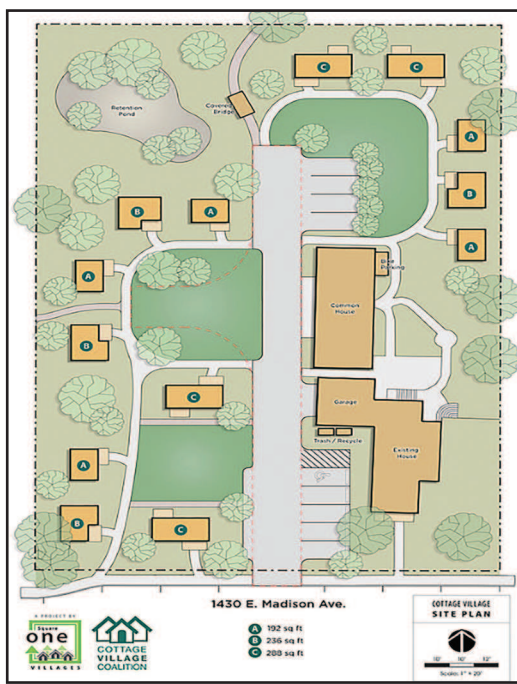
"Our group has been working long and hard to achieve this vision. We couldn't be more excited by this affirmation of our work by our county leaders," said CVC President Bruce Kelsh about the decision by the commission to award the group \$500,000 through a Housing Improvement Plan grant.

The award was part of a larger \$2 million grant award for Lane County housing projects.

"Approving SquareOne Villages' grant application for Cottage Village will make a tremendous impact by providing the much-needed housing for low to extremely low income individuals in Cottage Grove," Mayor Jeff Gowing wrote in support of the group's grant application.

CVC partnered with SquareOne Villages — a nonprofit based in Eugene — nearly two years ago to explore the possibility of building a community made up of tiny houses that closely followed the neighborhood models developed by SquareOne in Eugene for low-income and homeless individuals. The community located on Madison Ave. in Cottage Grove will consist of 13 tiny homes, a caretaker's home and a community space located in an existing storage shelter on the property.

Last month, construction at the site began under the new county provisions that allow access-



ry dwellings on property where a house already exists. Because the caretaker's house was already on the Madison property when CVC and SquareOne Villages purchased it, the first tiny home would qualify as an accessory dwelling. According to Kelsh, that house will serve as a model to help garner additional donors to the project.

"We are not only pleased with the tremendous support shown by the Cottage Grove community for this project," said SquareOne President Dan Bryant, "but also that Lane County is partnering with us to demonstrate a model for how to do

See TINY 8A

## Mayor gives State of the City Address

By Caitlyn May  
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Things are going well.

This is according to Cottage Grove Mayor Jeff Gowing who gave the traditional state of the city address during the regularly scheduled city council meeting on Monday, Jan. 14.

Gowing, who was elected in 2016, gave a detailed report of nearly every city department and a look at what's ahead for the city — including infrastructure projects and changes sparked by the official population boost to 10,000 residents.

### Population:

"For the last few years our population has been creeping to the 10,000 mark," Gowing said in opening his statement. "It almost felt like many were scared of this happening or it would be a bad thing. I'm relieved we finally made it and now we can move on." Cities with populations of 10,000 or more are required to meet certain standards regarding water and wastewater systems in addition to providing a certain number of trash services. Population numbers are also used to calculate municipalities' share of state revenues.

### Public works:

During his 20-minute address, Gowing updated the public on the city's public works department which underwent a change in 2017 when former Lane County Commissioner Faye Stewart stepped down from his seat to lead the newly formed Cottage Grove Public Works and Planning Department. Stewart oversaw the creation of the city's internal building permit inspection division which, according to Gowing, approved 76 plans and performed 793 inspections in 2018.

### Water:

Over the summer, water was the hot topic as larger

See MAYOR 8A

**LOTTERY WINNER**  
Mega Millions claimed  
A Cottage Grove lottery ticket \$3 million prize was won by a Springfield woman  
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**EDUCATION**  
EPUD Scholarship  
Area students can apply for 11th annual EPUD Scholarship  
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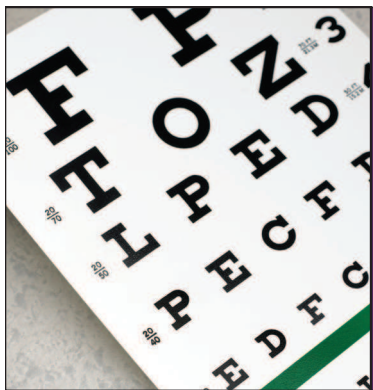
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