

'Swinging Bridge' ribbon cutting ceremony to be held Nov. 30

The City of Cottage Grove will be holding a ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly constructed J. Polk Currin Swinging Bridge on Saturday, Nov. 30, at 10 a.m.

The new suspension bridge replaces the previous bridge at that location which was closed in September 2016 after engineer inspections indicated the bridge was unsafe.

The previous bridge, commonly known as "The Swinging Bridge," but officially named the Currin Bridge, was built in 1965. The bridge was named after J. Polk Currin, an early resident of Cottage Grove and one of the first three graduates from Oregon State University. He was also a long-standing teacher and pioneer druggist.



DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

The J. Polk Currin Swinging Bridge was closed in September 2016 due to structural concerns. Following its final repairs, it will officially be dedicated Nov. 30.

The bridge built in 1965 was built to replace previous bridges constructed

over the years at the approximate location, the first of which was constructed

by Currin to allow members of the community to have access to both sides of

the Coast Fork Willamette River. The Cottage Grove City Council expanded the official name of the bridge to "J. Polk Currin Swinging Bridge" to differentiate the bridge from other bridges that shared the Currin name.

Hamilton Construction and the Ausland Group designed and constructed the new bridge. Construction was completed Oct. 18, for a cost of about \$804,000. The city received a grant from the Oregon Parks and

Recreation Department's Local Government Grant Program for \$200,000, with community members raising nearly \$18,000 through Friends of the Swinging Bridge fundraisers and the Roundup for the Bridge program on City Utility bills.

For more information about the ribbon cutting or J. Polk Currin Swinging Bridge project, contact the City of Cottage Grove at 541-942-5501.

SLSD from A1

The superintendent search had originally looked at a deadline of March to find a permanent replacement for Sullivan, who had initially taken the position in an interim capacity May 2018.

Following Sullivan's resignation, the board consulted Steve Kelley, director of board development and executive searches for the Oregon School Boards Association, who was already present at the meeting.

Kelley provided the board with several options in how to proceed, including two timeline choices for the search for Sullivan's replacement.

In choosing a temporary replacement, Kelley produced the list of desired qualities and qualifica-

tions developed during the search for an interim superintendent last year, which resulted in the selection of Sullivan.

Kelley made a distinction from the previous interim superintendent search, which looked for a candidate who could establish a solid foundation for moving forward in the wake of scandal.

"As I see it, [this candidate] is, 'I bring you my superintendent experience and I'm going to rely on staff ... and help the board get through the next six months,'" he said.

The next interim superintendent will serve until July 1, 2020, which is when the permanent superintendent begins work.

Board members agreed that anyone taking the interim position should be ineligible from applying for the permanent position.

The board was hesitant to choose a candidate from inside the already short-staffed district and Kelley told the board he could provide a list of retired superintendents.

Kelley and the board agreed that community input would be needed before adopting a list of qualities and qualifications desired in the new interim superintendent, one of the requirements before the board can conduct interviews in executive session.

"You could do it tonight. I think it meets the letter of the law, but I don't think it meets the spirit of the law," said Kelley.

After deliberation, the board voted to declare

vacancy of Sullivan's position and adopt the more expedient of the timeline choices, which would see a new interim superintendent hired on Dec. 2, and modify the date of adopting a list of interim superintendent qualities and qualifications to Nov. 11.

The special session in which the board adopted the qualities and qualifications occurred past *The Sentinel's* press deadline.

Following the adoption of a list of qualities and qualifications, the adopted timeline calls for interviews to begin as early as Nov. 17 and a "top choice" candidate to be established by Nov. 25.

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