

Local & State

Judge orders two clean-energy ballot measures to proceed

By Andrew Selsky
Associated Press

SALEM — A county judge in Oregon on Thursday ordered the secretary of state to process two clean energy ballot initiatives that environmentalists want to bring before voters in November, after the state official had rejected them.

Secretary of State Bev Clarno, a Republican, had earlier said the ballot initiatives violated a state requirement that legislative measures stick to one subject. Marion County Judge David Leith, ruling in favor of backers of the initiatives, said she was wrong.

“Under the current precedents, I’m satisfied that IP 48 and 49 do satisfy the single subject requirement,” Leith

said.

The judge’s permanent injunction means the process of earning a final ballot title from the attorney general will resume. Notably, Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum, a Democrat, refused to defend Clarno in the litigation and had challenged her legal basis for tossing the two proposals and a third one. Rosenblum authorized Clarno to find a private lawyer.

Once a final ballot title is established, the initiatives campaign will begin collecting the necessary signatures to put the measures before Oregon voters in the November election.

“We’re moving full steam ahead. Given how quickly we collected our first round of sig-

natures, we don’t foresee any problems making the ballot for November,” said Chrissy Reitz, a former nurse from Hood River, Oregon, who is a co-chief petitioner on the measures.

Eric Richardson, a co-chief petitioner for the initiatives, said: “Oregonians are demanding bold action to reduce pollution and protect the climate, and this November they will have that chance at the ballot box.”

Leith found the two measures encompass a single subject -- a transition to renewable energy power system, with labor and equity provisions included in the measures connected to that subject to guide the transition, said Brad Reed, a spokesman for the

clean energy coalition Renew Oregon.

“The judge’s ruling clears the way for strong climate action in Oregon this year, one way or another – whether at the ballot, in the legislature, with executive power, or some combination of all of them,” said Tera Hurst, executive director of Renew Oregon and one of the plaintiffs in the case.

IP’s 48 and 49 would require Oregon to produce all of its electricity using renewable energy and carbon-free sources by Jan. 1, 2045. They also require standards for labor practices to ensure that jobs created during construction and other projects resulting from the petitions are high-quality jobs.

Sanctity of Life Day set for Sunday

The Rachel Pregnancy Center is leading the way in Baker County to encourage residents to remember National Sanctity of Human Life Sunday.

The day, established in a proclamation by President Ronald Reagan, was first established on Jan. 22, 1973, said Vera Grove, Rachel Center director. The third Sunday in January has continued to be recognized as Sanctity of Human Life Sunday since that time. The day falls on Sunday, Jan. 19, this year.

To commemorate the day each year, churches take the opportunity to “celebrate God’s gift of life, commemorate the many lives lost to abortion and commit themselves to protecting human life at every stage,” Grove stated.

In conjunction with recognition of the day, the Rachel Center also has scheduled a diaper drive beginning Sunday, Jan. 19, and continuing through Sunday, Feb. 3, to meet the specific need for diapers. Grove said newborn-size diapers are not needed at this time. She asks that donations include diapers in Sizes 1-6.

Twelve churches in Baker City and 14 throughout the county are participating in the drive.

Other community members may contribute by dropping diapers off at the Rachel Center at 2192 Court Ave. during regular business hours.

The Center is open Wednesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is closed from noon to 1 p.m. on those days and closed on holidays.

More information is available by calling 541-523-5457.

Heavy snow cuts phone service to Crater Lake

MEDFORD (AP) — Heavy snow has temporarily cut communications with people at Crater Lake National Park.

The park’s website says telephone and internet service have been down since Monday and the cafe and gift shop at Rim Village are also closed. Authorities also closed the road from park headquarters to Rim Village due to heavy snow.

The Mail Tribune reported Wednesday that park officials are concentrating on keeping the southern access road to the park, from Klamath Falls, open to retain access for park staff who use it to get to work.

No one is sure exactly how much snow has fallen in recent days, but a snow gauge that can collect more than 2 feet of

snow in a day topped out on a recent day, Kirsten Harden, the park’s chief of management facilities, told the Mail Tribune.

It’s been snowing heavily for several days.

Because of the telephone and internet outages, potential visitors can’t call the park’s visitor center or check the park’s website for road conditions.

BOND

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- Safety and security upgrades, including secure entry addition
- Dedicated commons area for Grades 7-8
- Modernize existing locker rooms
- Grades 7-8 locker room addition
- Remodel science classrooms for Grades 7-8 use

Helen M. Stack Building, which currently serves Grades 7-8

- HMS would be transformed for Grades 5-6
- Safety and security upgrades, including secure entry and reconfigured parent/student drop-off area
- Refresh historic character of building with new windows, historic entry on Fourth Street and exterior upgrades
- 7,000 square-foot addition for multi-purpose room (serving as cafeteria/kitchen) and the addition of locker rooms

South Baker School

- Would serve Grades 3-4
- Safety and security upgrades, including secure entry
- New staff parking lot to increase parking and accessibility for parents
- New heating, ventilation and air conditioning system

Brooklyn School

- Would serve Grades K-2
- Safety and security upgrades, including secure entry
- Restroom addition

North Baker Building,

Haines and Keating Schools

- Safety and security upgrades

In other business Thursday night, the Board approved plans to establish the Oregon International School as a charter school to be housed at Baker High School. The school is designed to provide international study abroad experiences for Baker students and others in Eastern Oregon and to bring international students to Baker.

Superintendent Mark Witty will serve as director of operations and Thomas Joseph, the District’s director of specific secondary programs, will fill the role of building principal for the program.

Joseph told the Board Thursday night that he is working with schools in Thailand and Vienna, along with others, to bring students to Baker as well as to send BHS students to those countries for study.

Witty commended Joseph for the work he has done to establish the program.

“This is a really strong plan in my opinion,” Witty said. “He has put together the base and has put down some really great ideas that will help our local students immensely.”

Witty said staff will benefit from the program as well.

As part of the international program, six students and four adults, including Joseph, will be traveling to Vietnam in March.

Student recruitment has begun and will be followed by staff recruitment and curricu-

lum development this spring and summer, according to the program design presented for the Board’s consideration. Classes are expected to begin in September with the program following the District’s calendar.

The Board approved a 2020-21 school calendar during Thursday’s session. It sets Aug. 31 as the first day of school, Christmas break will begin Dec. 18 with classes resuming on Jan. 4. Spring break is set the week of March 22-26 and graduation will take place on June 6.

The Board approved a new organizational chart for 2020-21 that would eliminate the position of assistant superintendent when Betty Palmer ends her tenure with the District this year. Palmer is continuing to work on contract with the District although she officially retired this fall.

Under the new plan, Witty would expand his supervisory role and a federal programs director who also would oversee expanded school year programs would be hired.

Witty assured the Board that he is confident in the skills of his administrative team members and would delegate specific tasks to them as needed.

The Board agreed to try the plan for a year.

“There will be a huge hole Betty will leave by her not being here,” Witty said. “But oftentimes when you give people a challenge, they’ll step up. I think we’re in a reasonably good spot to do that.”

Witty said the plan would

include advertising for one leader to earn a stipend for taking on curriculum work.

In other business:

- Witty reported that the YMCA swimming pool will be closed for about 45 days. As a result, members of the BHS swim team will be bused to La Grande for practices. The City of La Grande has offered the team use of the pool for \$15 per session, he said.

“We have a program and we want to support the program,” he said. “I think we owe it to the kids.”

The Baker students will work around the schedule of the La Grande swimmers. The two teams cannot practice together under Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) rules, Witty said.

- Approved personnel changes:

Confidential employee changes — Erica Jaensch has resigned as marketing and administrative assistant at BTI and Sandy Mitchell was hired to fill the vacancy. Mitchell moved to that job from her position as administrative assistant to the Board and superintendent.

Certified resignation — Matt Power has resigned as high school and middle school band teacher. A substitute has been filling the position for most of the year.

Classified resignations — Tracie Smith has resigned from her role as student facilitator at Eagle Cap Innovative High School and Bri-

anna Peppers has resigned as the student family support coordinator at BMS.

Classified new hires — Jeremy Smock, maintenance; Boston Colton, paraprofessional at Eagle Cap; and Katelyn Kercheski, secretary, Eagle Cap.

Extra-duty new hire — Brianna Peppers, assistant BHS wrestling coach; Mitch Grove, BHS boys basketball coach; and Roland Hobson, BHS JV2 boys basketball coach.

Post-secondary instructors — Kala Linville, registered nurse instructor, BTI; Brody Chappilloz, heavy equipment and trucking school instructor, BTI.

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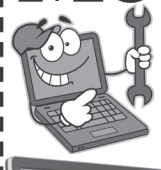
A household is defined for the purposes of the Lifeline program as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Lifeline service is not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in the program. Consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain Lifeline telephone or broadband service can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from the program.

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First Annual Groundhog Day Festival



Saturday, February 1st

Groundhog's Day Eve

5-7:30 p.m. at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
2177 1st Street, Baker City

Homemade biscuits and sausage gravy, hashbrown casserole & applesauce

All proceeds (by donation) will go to keep the St. Stephen's Episcopal Church food pantry stocked for the hungry and homeless and for emergency aid.

The world famous Episcopossums will be playing music!

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