



Pay college athletes? Oregon taking up the issue again

The Bulletin

EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY bendbulletin.com

SPORTS PULLOUT A5-8

SURVEY IN OREGON

Another rural-urban divide: Remote working

BY SUZANNE ROIG
The Bulletin

Residents of rural areas think working from home is temporary and as soon as the threat of the pandemic ends, everyone will return to the office.

What's more likely to occur is increased flex time, where work is split between the office and home, said Dan McCarthy, High Lakes Health Care regional administrator. Post-pandemic, McCarthy said, the company that employs about 350 people throughout Central Oregon will still have remote workers.

"We found that a hybrid approach that balances work from home with office hours is something that will be here to stay," McCarthy said. "I believe there is something lost when working virtually 100% of the time."

See **Survey** / A13

County withdraws proposal to rezone farm, forest land

Amendments would have made it easier, cheaper to build homes in 6 subdivisions

BY BRENNA VISSER
The Bulletin

A proposal to rezone six rural subdivisions that are zoned for farm and forestry is no longer on the table after years of debate.

On Monday, the Deschutes County Commission withdrew proposed amendments

that would have redesignated six areas in rural parts of the county as "nonprime resource lands." The proposal would have rezoned these already established subdivisions, which are technically on land zoned for farming and forestry, but were built before the state land use system was in place.

The county attests that these lands are incorrectly designated, since they are not actually suitable for farming or commercial forestry, and have essentially been residential in nature for decades. The new designation would have made it easier for property

owners to build housing on their land without going through a costly and time-consuming conditional use process.

While the issue has been discussed locally for years, these specific amendments were presented to the commission roughly two years ago. But after facing pushback from the state Department of Land Conservation and Development, as well as other land advocacy groups like Central Oregon LandWatch, the commission is no longer considering the amendments.

See **Zoning** / A13

NO FOOLING: IT'S NICE OUT

Valerie Winterholler works on planting gladiolus bulbs around a cluster of blooming daffodils while spending the sunny afternoon gardening around her home in Bend on Wednesday. The warm weather is forecast to continue through the week, with mostly sunny skies and temperatures reaching the high 60s. **Complete weekly forecast** » A12

Have a blast this month » In GO!

Local venues are preparing to reopen, plus more things to do

Plus: The Nature Conservancy reopens many of its sites today » A3



Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin

Library board makes decision on bond

100,000-square-foot library, upgrades expected by 2025; voters OK'd \$195 million bond in fall

BY KYLE SPURR
The Bulletin

The Deschutes Public Library Board decided Wednesday to sell the entire \$195 million bond, passed by voters in the fall, to fund construction of the new Central Library in Bend and update existing libraries in the region.

The 100,000-square-foot library and upgrades are expected to be completed by 2025.

Deschutes Public Library Director Todd Dunkelberg said it is not unusual to sell a bond all at once and it starts the process of honoring what voters approved.

"We are very limited on what we can do once the bond passes," Dunkelberg said. "We have to do what we told the voters we would do."

The board voted 4-1 at a special meeting Wednesday to sell the whole bond by April 13.

Ray Miao, a board member who was against the bond when it was on the ballot, voted no on Wednesday because he felt the board was rushing the process and wanted to wait before selling any part of the bond.

Ultimately, the board followed the recommendation of John Peterson, senior vice president at the Portland-based investment firm, Piper Sandler.

Peterson, who advised the board, said it was a good time to sell the entire bond because interest rates are low and could help pay off the bond in 21 years, a few years sooner than expected. Current interest rates

are at about 2%, according to financial data.

"From a taxpayer's perspective that is two or three fewer years of continuing to pay on the bond, which is fundamentally great news," Peterson told the board March 10.

At Wednesday's meeting, Peterson maintained the recommendation.

"I don't want to imply that we are warding off any kind of catastrophe by selling everything at once," Peterson said. "It's just what I see as the most prudent course."

See **Library** / A14

LEGISLATURE

Converting motels to housing a step closer

BY PETER WONG
Oregon Capital Bureau

The conversion of hotels and motels to emergency shelters and low-cost housing would be eased under a bill that is halfway through the Oregon Legislature.

The House voted 41-12 on Wednesday to send the bill to the Senate.

House Bill 3261 would exclude the conversion of hotels and motels purchased for emergency shelters or low-cost housing from land use challenges in cities and counties. Lawmakers made federal money available for such purchases last year under Project Turnkey, which is overseen by the Oregon Community Foundation.

See **Motels** / A14

TODAY'S WEATHER



Mostly sunny
High 69, Low 38
Page A12

INDEX

Business	A11-12	Dear Abby	A7	Horoscope	A7	Obituaries	A4
Classifieds	A14	Editorial	A8	Local/State	A2-3, A14	Puzzles	A10
Comics	A9-10	Events	GO!	Lottery	A6	Sports	A5-7

The Bulletin
An Independent Newspaper

Vol. 119, No. 78, 38 pages, 2 sections

We use recycled newsprint



SNVPHU

7