

LOCAL, STATE & NATION

LOCAL BRIEFING

Virtual open house for Wickiup Junction proposal

The public can now provide feedback on a draft plan to improve safety at Wickiup Junction in La Pine.

Last year, the Oregon Department of Transportation heard many ideas for improvements. The feedback that was provided and a technical highway analysis helped the department create a draft plan to make this area safer and easier to navigate, according to ODOT.

This plan, referred to as the refinement plan, is available to view at a virtual open house at www.wickiuprefinementplan.com.

Residents can use an interactive map to see proposed improvements and leave comments.

The La Pine City Council is anticipated to vote on the plan later this spring.

The online open house runs through April 16.

The original solution for Wickiup Junction, an overpass, would have allowed U.S. Highway 97 traffic to travel over the BNSF tracks but was scrapped in 2017. Officials discovered the overpass was being built on settling soil at the site. The soil was weakened by ancient microscopic creatures called diatoms. The department started dismantling the overpass in 2018.

4 nonprofits get nearly \$2.8M in federal funds

Four local nonprofits — Bethlehem Inn homeless shelter, J Bar J Youth Services, NeighborImpact and Thrive Central Oregon — have received a combined \$2.77 million in federal funds to address COVID-19.

Specifically, the funds are geared to help people and families who are either experiencing homelessness, or are at risk of experiencing homelessness, according to a press release

Monday from the Oregon Housing and Community Services department.

Thirty-six nonprofits from around Oregon received a total of \$42 million in federal relief funds, the release stated. The money comes from the federal coronavirus relief act.

“This funding is historic because it will help rebuild lives, and because we are partnering with an array of diverse service providers that have trusted relationships with Oregon’s communities of color, so we can reach people hardest hit by the crisis,” Margaret Salazar, executive director of Oregon Housing and Community Services, said in the press release.

Deschutes sergeant resigns while under investigation

Richard “Deke” DeMars, a Deschutes County Sheriff’s Office sergeant who was under investigation in an alleged sexual assault, resigned Thursday from his position, according to the sheriff’s department.

DeMars had been on paid leave since February 2020. The Redmond Police Department began a criminal investigation into DeMars more than a year ago, after a woman alleged he sexually abused her. Police recommended charging DeMars with a sex crime.

In early 2020, a woman in a romantic relationship with DeMars told Redmond Police his behavior was becoming increasingly frightening to her. She described various controlling behaviors and being awoken to rough sex in the middle of the night.

DeMars earned more than \$131,000 since being placed on leave. He remains the subject of an internal conduct investigation, in addition to the criminal investigation.

— Bulletin staff reports



A woman holds a picture of George Floyd while seated on a concrete barrier Monday outside the building where the second week of testimony in the trial of former Minneapolis officer Derek Chauvin continues.

Jim Mone/AP

Floyd’s death leads states to require police to intervene

Oregon works to strengthen its law

BY ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — When a police officer knelt on the neck of George Floyd in Minneapolis, other officers at the scene didn’t intervene, even while Floyd said he couldn’t breathe and stopped moving. That lack of action is leading a growing number of states to compel police to stop misconduct by a fellow officer.

Since Floyd’s death, Colorado, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Nevada and New Jersey have passed laws requiring police to intervene when they see a fellow officer engaged in misconduct, said Katie Ryan of Campaign Zero, a group that encourages reforms to reduce police violence.

Previously, many laws were aimed at compelling police to only report misconduct. But activists say Floyd’s death makes clear that alone is not enough.

Oregon’s Legislature also passed a bill in a special session last year requiring intervention by an officer witnessing police misconduct. It also requires officers to report abuses to “a supervisor.”

This year, lawmakers are tweaking the new law to strengthen how the complaints are handled. It is sponsored by Rep. Janelle Bynum, a Democrat who chairs the House subcommittee on equitable policing.

“For me, the original trigger was the George Floyd case,” said Bynum, who is Black and from a Portland suburb.

Portland was an epicenter of Black Lives Matter protests that erupted nationwide after Floyd’s

Minneapolis police chief: Kneeling on Floyd’s neck violated policy

Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo testified Monday that now-fired officer Derek Chauvin violated departmental policy in pinning his knee on George Floyd’s neck and keeping him down after Floyd had stopped resisting and was in distress.

Also Monday, Dr. Bradford Langenfeld, who tried to resuscitate Floyd at the hospital he was taken to, took the stand to say it was “more likely than the other possibilities” that Floyd’s cardiac arrest — the stopping of his heart — was caused by asphyxia, or insufficient oxygen.

— Associated Press

death. On the night of Sept. 5, a Black resident came to police officers to inform them their tear gas was seeping into his house, affecting his son and dog. One officer hit the man on the head with his baton, causing a concussion.

Other officers told their colleague the man was an area homeowner, not a protester.

Police said back then that the incident was being investigated, but a half-year later they remain mum on the outcome or status.

Bynum’s new bill aims to address such cases. It requires complaints to be filed with a direct supervisor of the reporting officer, their chain of command or with the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, which licenses law enforcement officers across the state. The bill sets a three-month deadline for investigations to be completed.

TODAY

Today is Tuesday, April 6, the 96th day of 2021. There are 269 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On April 6, 1909, American explorers Robert E. Peary and Matthew A. Henson and four Inuits became the first men to reach the North Pole.

In 1886, the Canadian city of Vancouver, British Columbia, was incorporated.

In 1896, the first modern Olympics formally opened in Greece.

In 1917, the United States entered World War I.

In 1954, Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, R-Wis., responding to CBS newsman Edward R. Murrow’s roadside against him on “See It Now,” said in remarks filmed for the program that Murrow had, in the past, “engaged in propaganda for Communist causes.”

In 1974, Swedish pop group ABBA won the Eurovision Song Contest held in Brighton, England, with a performance of the song “Waterloo.”

In 1974, Don Rickles, the grandmaster of insult comedy, died at his Beverly Hills home at age 90.

Ten years ago: Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi appealed to President Barack Obama in a letter to end what Gadhafi called “an unjust war. Portugal became the third debt-stressed European country to need a bailout.

Five years ago: A federal judge in Charleston, West Virginia, sentenced former coal executive Don Blankenship to a year in prison for his role in the 2010 Upper Big Branch Mine explosion that killed 29 men in America’s deadliest mining disaster in four decades. Country giant Merle Haggard died in Palo Cedro, California, on his 79th birthday.

One year ago: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced a complete lockdown over the upcoming Passover holiday to control the country’s coronavirus outbreak.

Today’s Birthdays: Actor Billy Dee Williams is 84. Actor Roy Thinnes is 83. Actor John Ratzenberger is 74. Actor Patrika Darbo is 73. Former Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., is 65. Rock singer-musician Black Francis is 56. Actor Paul Rudd is 52. Actor Zach Braff is 46. Actor Candace Cameron Bure is 45.

— Associated Press



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