

Comment on Bend proposal for homeless shelters

Siting camps and buildings for the homeless has proven to be volatile for the city of Bend. As much as some people want to help the homeless, others don't want that to happen near them.

Neighbors have been concerned about a hotel for the homeless the city purchased on NE Division Street. And the possibility that there might be a managed camp on NE Ninth Street near Bend High School has produced pronounced opposition.

Now the city is looking for public comment on a rule change to allow more freedom to accommodate the homeless. It raises some interesting issues for neighborhoods with covenants, codes and restrictions, or CC&Rs.

The biggest change is that various forms of shelters for the homeless — group shelters, multiroom shelters, outdoor shelters — could be located in all zones of the city with the exception of heavy industrial zones. Under the city's current rules, shelters are only allowed in commercial zones.

Another change is that homeowners would be able to have a person live on their properties in an RV or manufactured dwelling. Permits would be required for electricity, water and sanitation. And the permit for the home could only be for a year. It could be renewed twice. The city calls this "a hardship shelter." The city already allowed something similar temporarily as a reaction to the wildfires of 2020.

There are caps in how many people such a homeless facility could serve. For instance, building occupancy set by the state building code regulates how many people can stay in group shelters already. A group

shelter is like Shepherd's House on Division Street in Bend. It has a 30-bed capacity.

This city has gotten some questions already about what these code changes might mean for neighborhoods with CC&Rs. Presumably some neighborhood associations with CC&Rs in Bend would use those agreements to attempt to prevent hardship shelters and other shelters in their neighborhoods. Enforcement of CC&Rs is a private matter, not a matter for the city.

"CC&Rs are private covenants between private parties, not between a governmental entity and a homeowner," City Attorney Mary Winters, wrote in an email. "Thus, a homeowner's association or a single homeowner might enforce a covenant against a homeowner. CC&Rs are placed on title as a restriction by a seller, developer, HOA, or by consenting owners of a subdivision or community, and are recorded in private deeds. We do not address claims that a CC&R may restrict an otherwise valid use, as the City ... cannot legally interpret, enforce or otherwise address or resolve private covenant issues."

She also added, though, that a CC&R that conflicts with a statute or ordinance might not be enforceable.

There is more detail to these proposed code changes than we are listing here. Go to tinyurl.com/Bendcodechange for more information. You can email Susanna Julber at the city if you have questions sjulber@bendoregon.gov.

State gets better at answering the phone

When it came to paying jobless benefits during the pandemic, Oregon was one of the slowest in the country.

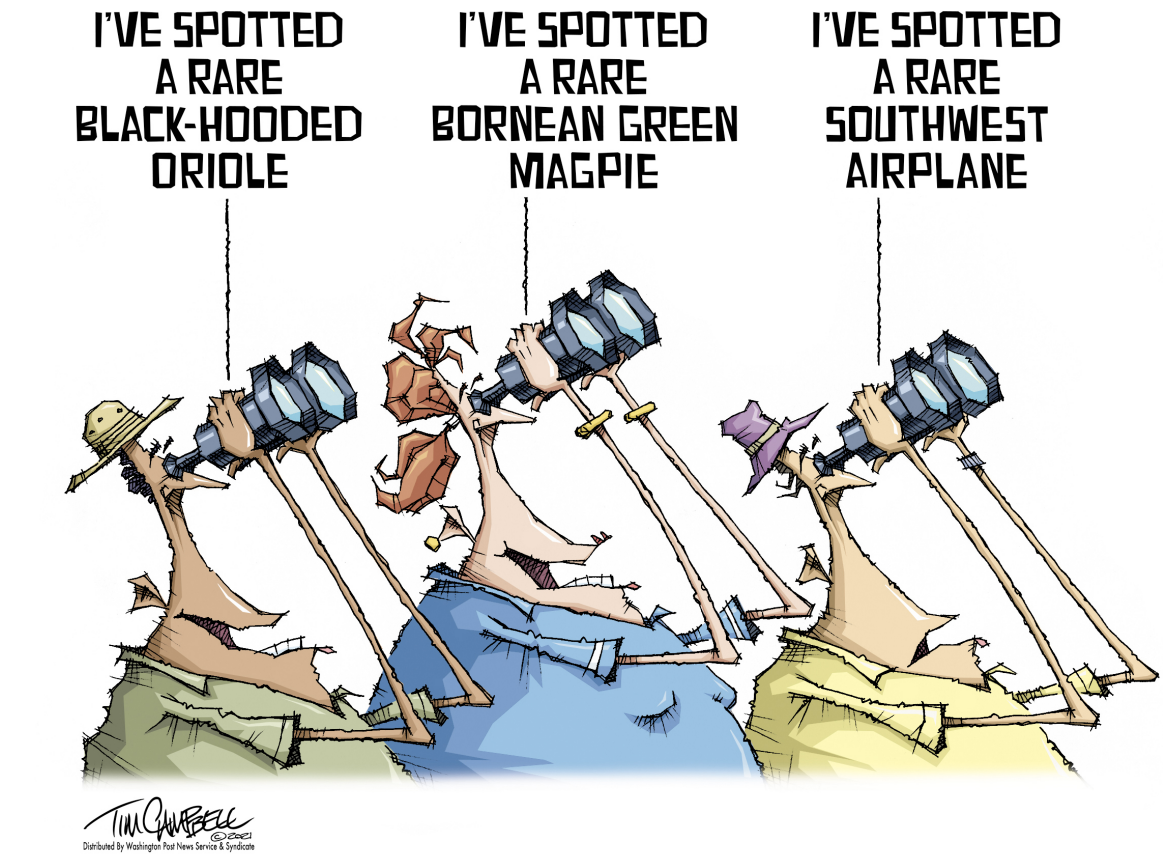
The Oregon Employment Department needed an upgraded computer system before the pandemic struck. And the sudden increase in claims created a terrible backlog. It was one of the worst backlogs in the country. Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden, a Democrat, took the unprecedented step of calling on the leader of the state's department to resign. Gov. Kate Brown called for her resignation soon after.

That didn't fix the problems. In October of 2020, the state still owed hundreds of millions to people who lost their jobs in March and August,

The Oregonian reported last year.

We have repeatedly criticized the department's performance. So it's only fair that we acknowledge that this week it was reported that it has made some real progress in, well, answering its phones. At its worst, people could be on hold for more than 3 hours. Now, the department is getting to 90% of its calls in 15 minutes. Almost 80% of calls are answered within 5 minutes, The Oregonian reported.

Of course, it's not all due to improvements at the department. The state is paying jobless benefits to many fewer people now — 32,000 a week down from 320,000 at the beginning of the pandemic.



My Nickel's Worth

Well done with roundabouts

Bend is in love with roundabouts. And why not. They move traffic in an efficient and safe manner. The opening of the Empire Avenue corridor was fantastic ... green space, sidewalk, canal crossing, ease of access. What's not to like? Soon the newest roundabout will open on Purcell Boulevard and Butler Market Road. I look forward to this and I expect it will live up to high standards set by the excellent engineering and construction crews. In short, The Roadmen! Well done.

— James R. Shores, Bend

Redmond School Board earns an "F"

The Redmond School Board has decided to use district funds to hire an attorney to fight the governor's mandate for masks and vaccinations. They want, "local control." The governor used epidemiologists, virologists, and infectious disease specialists in formulating plans to control the pandemic. Who does the Redmond School Board use — the board members?

The school board declined to fire a teacher who chose to put her personal comfort before the safety of her students when she refused to wear a mask for the few hours a day she is in class. In doing so, the school board sends the lesson to students that they do not have to follow rules if they don't like them. They could have taught students that they sometimes may be asked to do something they don't especially like for the common good. Lesson opportunity lost.

Rather than hiring an attorney, the school board could use those funds to provide more comfortable masks,

school supplies, school programs, etc., but instead, they choose to use school funds to attempt to subvert the governor's mandate and give themselves more power. Shameful and dangerous.

— Pamela Robbins, Bend

Need substance on homeless solutions

On Oct. 8, The Bulletin's editorial made a request to hear from people who support and oppose the city's homeless policies. I think this is hard to do because the city councilors have not put forth solid, unambiguous proposals. The Guest Column by the Bend City Council, in recent paper, was unsatisfying. It talked about creating facilities to house 500 people. Not only does that represent less than half the homeless population there was no detail provided. Sixty to 80% of the column was not much more than empty rhetoric that filled space.

I do not believe that camping, managed or otherwise, is a long-term solution. The campers are harming nobody is a lazy attitude that has resulted in the increase in campers that we have seen in the past two years.

A city of Bend document distributed at the Project TurnKey Open House held in July, expressed that homeless policy solutions should include rapid rehousing, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. I think that fleshing out the details for each of these items is a good place to start. We need some substance.

— Frances S. Miller, Bend

Keep parks green

One of the most important things

a community can offer everyone, in exchange for their tax dollars, is beautiful public spaces. Regardless of income or neighborhood, all can enjoy the parks, the rivers, fountains and other landscaped public areas.

Portland is a perfect example of what happens when you let your public spaces go.

Water for public use is more important than golf courses and, even hobby farms. If used wisely, water can support all. Just don't trash the city in the name of conservation.

— Bruce Brothers, Bend

Efforts to help the homeless are appreciated

Thanks for the nudge, Bulletin editors! I'd like to acknowledge our Bend City Council, Deschutes County Commission and especially their staffs for their investigations, conversations and creative responses to the needs of un-housed Central Oregonians. The Homeless Emergency Task Force and the Homeless Leadership Coalition (representing regional agencies, stakeholders and citizens working directly on homelessness) are also digging deep, targeting services, resource sharing and strategic initiatives.

The intersecting circumstances contributing to increased homelessness are complex. There is so much to be done. As a community member, I commit to educate myself on these causes and conditions; to not react, but reflect. Our region, which is growing rapidly, can grow with compassion. Let's keep working for our un-housed friends, together.

— Ruth Williamson, Bend

Editorials reflect the views of The Bulletin's editorial board, Publisher Heidi Wright, Editor Gerry O'Brien and Editorial Page Editor Richard Coe. They are written by Richard Coe.

Ex-CEO says she never asked for a raise; other women still should

BY HELAINE OLEN

Special to The Washington Post

Former PepsiCo chair and CEO Indra Nooyi is something of an icon for women's business empowerment. Nooyi, born in India, stands out for both her achievements and the context in which she rose: Women make up fewer than 10% of Fortune 500 CEOs, as do minorities. During and after her tenure at Pepsi, Nooyi has talked about her struggles as a mother, daughter and wife in a workplace designed for men. Her new book, "My Life in Full: Work, Family, and Our Future," intends in part to ease the way for other women to ascend the corporate ladder.

Too bad Nooyi marred the message. During a recent interview with the New York Times Magazine, Nooyi was asked about her salary, which topped \$31 million in her final year at Pepsi. Amazingly, Nooyi said she never re-

quested a raise. She found asking for a salary increase "cringeworthy," adding: "I cannot imagine working for somebody and saying my pay is not enough."

On the one hand, terrific! It's great to know at least one (former) CEO in our country is not outrageously greedy, and decided that \$31 million in annual salary and stock options was enough.

On the other hand, most of us are not CEOs. Women working full time earn only 83 cents for every dollar their male counterparts earn (and the discrepancies are worse for Black women and Latinas). Very few workers, male or female, are compensated as well as Nooyi was. If the head of a Fortune 500 company and one of the world's most iconic brands finds asking about her pay "cringeworthy," what hope is there for the rest of us?

This is a terrible model for women, and Nooyi knows it.

When I spoke with her on Friday,

Nooyi made clear that she had been speaking about herself specifically.

Nooyi also said that PepsiCo's board compensated her fairly and that it had outside help in doing so.

Compensation consultants are a noteworthy detail and were not mentioned in the Times interview. Good that she clarified. But still: Most workers don't get that level of outside assistance (if any). We've got to speak up for ourselves. And even when women are professionally successful, speaking up can be difficult.

Nooyi's comments hit a nerve because they reflect a broader pattern. Men are generally more upfront and less apologetic than women about their financial needs, whether in seeking information on colleagues' earnings or willingness to change jobs in search of greater pay.

And if female workers overcome the social hurdles to speaking up for them-

selves, they are likely to be financially punished for doing the exact same things men do. Research shows that women are less likely to receive raises when they request them and that they are often judged less likable for asking. Negotiating during job interviews has even been found to hurt women's chances of getting hired.

In her book, Nooyi talks up the financial need for women to work but also writes that at several points early in her career earnings were not her most important priority. "I got a small raise but I wasn't thinking about the money," she says of one early triumph. "Money was not my driver," she writes about her early years as a rising corporate star at PepsiCo. Only much later, she writes, did she discover that a number of male colleagues were receiving better compensation.

In her book, Nooyi stumps for national paid family leave and greater in-

vestments in child care. As for unequal pay, Nooyi writes, "HR should have been flagging these issues and systematically addressing them."

In recent years, of course, several big companies, including Salesforce, have moved in this direction — conducting pay audits in efforts to close gender and racial pay gaps. More employers should join them. Systemic action will be more effective at implementing and sustaining change than expecting vast numbers of people to address a potentially unfair situation one by one by one.

Nooyi's successes should be lauded. But workers should also keep in mind, even if we love our jobs — and life is better if we do — that most of us primarily work for money. We shouldn't apologize for or downplay that fact. The cost of doing so is too high.

■ Helaine Olen is the author of "Pound Foolish: Exposing the Dark Side of the Personal Finance Industry."