

## County refers dispatch center tax measure to voters

By Rylan Boggs  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Members of the Grant County Court voted unanimously to refer to voters a ballot measure for a local option tax to support the John Day Dispatch Center.

The measure, if approved by voters, would tax property owners an additional 36 cents per \$1,000 of property value. The measure will be on the Nov. 7 ballot.

This money would be used to help fund the John Day Dispatch Center, which provides dispatch services for all of Grant County, for up to five years or until the state increases the 911 tax.

The city of John Day recently received \$420,000 in state funding to help operate dispatch for the next two years. John Day City Manager Nick Green and State Sen. Ted Ferrioli's pushed the Legislature to safeguard the dispatch center for the next two years.

After that, if the 911 tax is not increased and the local option tax is not passed, the dispatch center would likely have to be outsourced. This could lead to local job loss and reduced quality of service.

The state taxes 75 cents a month for each phone line. This provides about \$250,000 to John Day each year. Operating the dispatch center 24/7, year-round costs about \$450,000. The 911 tax was last increased in 1995.

The court also:

- approved budget resolutions moving money from budget line to budget line in county departments.
- approved leasing a spot on Fall Mountain to the Burns/Paiute tribe for an antenna.
- approved a contract with Spitfire Cocktails to serve alcohol at the county fair and bullfights.
- signed a contract with Redmond Sign for reader boards at the fairgrounds.
- approved an intergovernmental agreement with the state to receive grant funding for juvenile crime prevention.
- approved the hire of a grant specialist and part-time assistant for the Grant County Economic Development Coordinator.
- approved the Extension and 4-H Service District to lease property at the old Blue Mountain Junior High.
- approved the rental of a 500-gallon fuel tank from Ed Staub and Sons for emergencies during the eclipse.
- approved a request from the sheriff's office to apply for grants.
- approved a request from a landowner near Monument to vacate an unused stockpile site.

# John Day council votes to purchase Weaver Complex

### Local business owners and residents supportive

By Rylan Boggs  
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The city of John Day is moving forward with the purchase of the Weaver Complex.

The city council voted to approve the \$100,000 purchase using a Main Street Revitalization Grant of the same amount during a Tuesday, Aug. 8 council meeting. The building is at 131 W. Main St. on the northwest corner of the intersection with Canyon Boulevard.

The city will make an offer to the building's owner and, if approved, pay the roughly \$6,000 in closing costs.

Local residents and business owners gave passionate testimony during the meeting to help convince the council that investing in the building was the right choice.

House to Home owner Kattie Piazza said John Day is a gem and worth preserving.

"This is so much bigger



The Eagle/Rylan Boggs

The Weaver Complex, at 131 W. Main St. in John Day, currently houses four business, Naturally Yours, Etc., Karen Bantish LTC and H & R Block.

than buying a building," she said.

Resident Nick Piazza said investment in the downtown area is necessary if the city is going to survive.

"The world keeps turning, you've got to turn with it," he said.

City council member Lisa Weigum echoed their sentiments on investment.

"It's our responsibility to invest in our community," she said.

To move forward with renovations, the city will have to bring the building up to code and make it fire-safe. From there, the city can choose to develop the space, or sell it to the private sector.

Also on the table is demolishing the structure to create a parking lot. John Day City Manager Nick Green said turning the building into a parking lot was unlikely at this point, but still a fall-back option.

Making the building fire-safe and bringing it up to code would cost approximately \$130,000, and an additional \$34,000 if asbestos was found in the building, according to Peter Baer of Pinnacle Architecture.

This would be paid for by an up-to-\$200,000 loan, which would be repaid with rental income from the businesses who rent space on the first floor over a period of 10 years. This option would give

the city a 10-year period to identify a funding strategy and raise capital to renovate the top floor.

The building currently houses four businesses, Naturally Yours, etc., Karen Bantish LTC and H & R Block.

After a walk-through, Baer said the 12,000-square-foot building was in fact three to four buildings with a facade placed over them. While the building has voids in the walls, which create fire danger, and will require electrical work, Baer said "it has character." He said the building had good floors and a solid roof he expected would last another 30 to 40 years.

Baer estimated it would cost roughly \$250 per square foot to create new apartments in the top floor for a total project cost of \$1.9 million, which includes the cost of the demolition.

Green said these estimates were on the higher end and had faith the number could be reduced. He said, while the project was challenging, he still saw it as a good investment and said employing local contractors and using local materials where possible would be a focus.

## COPS AND COURTS

*Arrests and citations in the Blue Mountain Eagle are taken from the logs of law enforcement agencies. Every effort is made to report the court disposition of arrest cases.*

### Oregon State Police

Dillon James Hawkins, 19, Austin, Indiana, was charged with minor in possession of alcohol after being stopped for expired registration, Aug. 6.

### Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week of Aug. 4-10:

- Concealed handgun licenses: 8
- Average inmates: 16
- Bookings: 8
- Releases: 7
- Arrests: 2
- Fingerprints: 5
- Civil papers: 9
- Warrants processed: 2
- Asst./welfare check: 3

### Justice Court

The Grant County Justice Court reported the following fines and judgments:

Carrying a child outside of a vehicle: Mallory Rose Thomas, 27, John Day, June 23, fined \$260.

Exceeding maximum width: Josh Winegar, 34, John Day, July 12, fined \$110.

Careless driving - accident: Raven Kristen Willard, 18, Scio, March 30, fined \$435.

Exceeding speed limit: John R. Brinkley, 35, Donnelly, Idaho, 73/65 zone, May 26, fined \$160; Graham Powell-

henry Sarasy, 23, Healdsburg, California, 50/30 zone, June 23, fined \$170.

Violation of the basic rule: Bruce Robert McClinton, 60, Mauretown, Virginia, 70/50 zone, Aug. 4, fined \$135.

### Small Claims

Ray Klein Inc. v. Gary E. Bolman. Money judgment awarded to Ray Klein Inc. for \$1,446.68.

Ray Klein Inc. v. Marie A. Hodge. Money judgment awarded to Ray Klein Inc. for \$5,102.77.

### Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 164 calls during the week of Aug. 7-13. Along with the various traffic warnings,

trespassing, injured animals, noise complaints and juvenile complaints, these calls included:

### John Day Police Department

Aug. 7: Arrested a 44-year-old Canyon City resident for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

Aug. 8: Arrested an Idaho man for driving under the influence after responding to suspicious circumstances at the fairgrounds.

Aug. 10: Took a report of a theft in Prairie City.

Aug. 11: Responded to a hit and run accident near the intersection of Highway 395 and Highway 26.

Aug. 13: Responded to a report of a theft in John Day.

### Grant County Sheriff's Office

Aug. 9: Received a report of a vehicle that hit a cow on Highway 26.

Aug. 11: Responded for an intoxicated subject at the fairgrounds.

Aug. 12: Responded to Dayville for an unwanted subject at a private residence.

### John Day ambulance

Aug. 7: Responded for a female patient who fell and hit her head.

Aug. 8: Performed a Life Flight transfer.

### Mt. Vernon Fire Department

Aug. 7: Responded with United States Forest Service and the Grant County Sheriff's Office for a fire on Lay-

cock Creek Road.

### United States Forest Service

Aug. 7: Advised of a fire in the Ritter Area.

Aug. 12: Advised of a possible fire on Highway 395B. Advised of a fire near the old Long Creek lookout site. Advised of a fire on the Izee/Paulina Highway. Advised of a possible fire on Cougar Ridge.

### Long Creek Ambulance

Aug. 11: Responded with the John Day ambulance and Grant County Sheriff's Office to a motorcycle crash on Middle Fork Lane.

### Prairie City Fire Department

Aug. 12: Paged for a grass fire near the city's sewage lagoons.

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Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner  
**Limited Menu**  
Friday - Saturday - Sunday  
18th, 19th & 20th

After the Eclipse Party - Monday 21st @ 4pm  
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LOOKING TO THE HEAVENS,  
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**Blue Mountain Eagle**  
**Early Deadline**  
**For the August 23rd Edition**

**Ad, Classified & Legal Deadline August 17th by 5pm**

**Office will be closed Monday August 21st.**

**Blue Mountain EAGLE**  
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