

VETERAN

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veterans through word of mouth, and sometimes by just striking up a conversation with them — “just not being afraid to say, when you see somebody’s hat or shirt, to say, ‘When did you serve?’”

“In order to help vets, you have to have a good network,” she said. “You have to know who to call for transportation or call the local hospital to sign up for the Choice Card.”

She plans to attend two meetings to further her ability to help other veterans, including a conference in Florence in mid-October and a training meeting in Salem later that month.

Hoffman said she enjoys helping other vets because it’s the right thing to do.

“It’s my passion,” she said. “I’m a disabled vet, and nobody helped me. I won my (claims) through trial and error.”

The new office hours are Mondays and Tuesdays 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wednesdays noon to 6 p.m. and Thursdays and Fridays 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Her office number is 541-575-1631, and her work cellphone number is 541-620-8057.

“If the flag is out, I’m in,” she said, adding, “If a vet cannot come in, I will go to them.”

PLAN

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planer shed that could be used for farmers markets and other community or tourist-related events, and a large shop building that the city plans to use as a replacement for its existing shop. The city has requested a \$519,000 loan from Business Oregon, a state agency, to reimburse it for the initial payment for the site.

A driving need behind the project is to replace John Day’s wastewater treatment plant on the 30-acre city property north of the river. The plant’s operating permit, issued by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, expired in 2007 and will not be re-issued because of the plant’s age and proximity to the river.

Wastewater plant

The new wastewater treatment plant will be modeled after the Water Hub facility in Atlanta, Georgia, and use hydroponics to produce Class A water that can be used for greenhouses and botanical gardens. John Day’s municipal wells produce about 80 million gallons of water per year, much of which could be reclaimed and re-used after treatment.

“Water is a scarce commodity here,” Green told the Eagle.

A feasibility study for the treatment facility began in September, with contracts awarded to Anderson Perry Associates of La Grande and Sustainable Water of Glen Allen, Virginia.

Company representatives



The Eagle/Richard Hanners

The city of John Day acquired the sawmill, in the back, and the planer shed when it bought the former Oregon Pine mill for the Innovation Gateway project.

will attend the Nov. 14 city council meeting, and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality will review permitting requirements for the new treatment plan on Nov. 15. Preliminary engineering is slated to begin in 2018, and the project is targeted to be completed in 2021.

Reclaimed wastewater will be used by a commercial greenhouse to be built near the former planer shed. A 5,000- to 6,000-square-foot greenhouse operating year-round could produce 31 tons of vegetables, which is what the local community consumes in a year, Green said.

Additional greenhouses and botanical gardens using reclaimed wastewater could be built for research purposes once the city’s current treatment plant is cleared away, making land available for an academic campus.

OSU partnership

Green recently traveled to Oregon State University to explore potential partnerships for an academic campus and learned the institution is inter-

ested in expanding its operations into rural Eastern Oregon.

“Oregon State doesn’t have this type of facility,” Green said. “This will draw attention to John Day.”

The city could qualify for up to \$2 million in Community Development Block Grant funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to help finance the new wastewater treatment plant. The council has budgeted \$8,000 for an income survey that Portland State University will conduct in February or sooner to determine if the city is eligible for the grant.

According to the last federal census, about 40 percent of the city’s residents fell under the low- or moderate-income brackets, but the figure needs to be at least 51 percent to qualify for the block grant, Green said. The new survey will provide a more accurate income measurement, he noted.

“It’s going to be tight,” Green said. “It’s one of those weird situations where you hope to do poorly.”

Funding for the new wastewater treatment plant could include grants and low interest

loans. Green said he will provide more details on project financing at the Oct. 10 council meeting.

Other facets

Land development for the overall 83-acre project will include construction of a riverside trail system, extending Seventh Street west along the north side of the John Day River to Patterson Bridge Road, building parking lots and installing underground utilities, Green said.

The project will affect neighboring properties, but the city is not ready to handle land exchanges and annexations, he said. Planning under a state Transportation and Growth Management grant the city received in September might not be completed until March 2019, according to a time line Green presented to the city council.

“It’s hard to gauge impacts to neighboring properties right now,” Green told the council, noting that some owners currently pay higher water bills and may want to volunteer for annexation.

In addition to land exchanges, the city has asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency to amend the floodplain map for the project area. According to Grant County Assistant Planner Shannon Springer, the existing map was created in the mid-1980s using data from the 1970s, but the area has been re-mapped since then using more accurate LIDAR, a remote-sensing system carried by aircraft.

The deadline for removing

equipment from the sawmill was extended to Oct. 23. If the deadline isn’t met, the city can keep the contents, and DR Johnson Lumber will forfeit \$58,000 from the purchase agreement.

Mayor Ron Lundbom said he doubted the equipment could be removed in time, and Councilor Paul Smith asked if any of the equipment had historical value for tourists. Green told the Eagle that a private investor would likely be more interested in the former sawmill if the equipment was gone.

Other components of the project include marketing and branding the launch of the Innovation Gateway project.

“Areas to explore include regional agritourism, recreational tourism and marketing our locations as a destination for corporate retreats,” Green said in a memo to the council.

Green said he’d like to see harvesting at the greenhouse by August 2018. He said he’d bring the council a proposal for a kick-off event that could include music and a barbecue contest.

Monte Legg, the city’s public works director, recently traveled to Central Point for the Battle of the Bones barbecue contest and brewfest. The sanctioned contest drew 17 teams and 89 sponsors, the parking lot was full, and on-line tickets were sold out for the event.

Legg said the event’s organizer believed a similar event could be held in John Day next year with six to eight teams and double that the following year.

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ADAIR

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space for the digital network would be “the cleanest way to finish this building.”

“Sounds like a great marriage to me,” Smith said.

In addition to improving

internet access for county residents, the new optical fiber cable could provide redundancy for the area’s two telecommunication providers, CenturyLink and Oregon Telephone Corp., Green said. A damaged CenturyLink optical fiber line about 10 miles from Bates

caused extensive landline and internet outages in Grant County for much of the day on Sept. 20, including 911 dispatch in John Day.

The council also learned the Oregon Department of Transportation’s position on a proposal to place a crosswalk on South Canyon Boulevard at the fire hall and to extend the 25 mph speed limit zone south to Third Avenue.

John Eden, ODOT’s permitting specialist, told the city that ODOT in general discourages marking crosswalks at uncontrolled intersections, such as the mid-block location by the fire hall. Encouraging pedestrians to cross where emergency vehicles may emerge at any time was also a concern.

“Marking a crosswalk at an inappropriate location may in fact put a pedestrian more at risk than if it were not marked at all, as it may give the pedestrian a false sense of security,” Eden said.

Green suggested the city wait until sidewalk construction along South Canyon Boulevard is completed before following up on the proposals. Councilor Dave Holland said he wasn’t surprised at ODOT’s response.

“We could push back,” Green said.

Intermountain Law, PC
Welcomes
Krischele Whitnah, Attorney at Law

Krischele Whitnah has joined our firm effective October 1, 2017. She is licensed in Oregon and has been practicing law since 2006. Her practice will emphasize family law (divorce/custody/support), guardianship and third-party custody, and estate planning.

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National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

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OCTOBER IS National Breast Cancer AWARENESS MONTH
and a time to think about your health.

For breast cancer prevention and detection, Dr. Keith Thomas suggests:

- Have a yearly mammogram at 40 years of age and every year after.
- Participate in self breast awareness and talk with your doctor if you notice any changes.
- See your family doctor for a yearly check or even sooner if you haven’t been feeling well.

Keith J. Thomas, MD, FACS
Board-Certified General Surgeon
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