

CLASS

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the middle school experience," she said.

She added facing the big developmental difference between 14- and 19-year-olds is sometimes difficult for teachers, but students have had opportunities for advanced classes and those who have difficulty transitioning to a new building have six years in a familiar environment.

A positive Dougharity-Spencer saw this year was the senior class finishing with the same number they started with.

"A 100 percent graduation rate — all 35 graduated," she said.

Salutatorian Maggie Justice was one of them. She said the school blending was a positive experience.

"You have the same teachers throughout, so your seventh-grade math teacher might be your 10th-grade math teacher," she said.

She added the sixth-grade teachers worked hard to prepare them for the transition to ju-

nior-senior high school.

"I know there was a lot of fear that middle schoolers couldn't handle being around high schoolers — it's a maturity thing," she said. "It wasn't an issue for me."

Former Superintendent Curt Shelley said the

decision to merge schools was a good idea.

At the time, Shelley was Grant Union principal, and Mark Witty was superintendent.

There have been supervision challenges, but he said they created designated areas for seventh- and eighth-graders for recess time and games

during lunch time.

"It's put our district in a good position financially to not have to continue to make cuts, and it allowed us to have offerings that we wouldn't have been able to continue," he said at the end of the school year.



Contributed photo/Tanni Wenger Photography

Eight Grant Union seniors received recognition for competing in three sports a year for four years at the June 2 graduation ceremony. From left: Whitney McClellan, Mariah Moulton, Duane Stokes, Cauy Weaver, Wade Reimers, Hadley Boethin, Cameron Hallgarth and Zack Deiter. Principal Ryan Gerry is a far left in back, and Athletic Director/Dean of Students Jason Miller is at right.

GUNS

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passed, Webb said. Voters should be provided fair notice of that possibility under the "full text requirement" for prospective initiatives, he said.

In addition, requiring the sheriff to review federal, state and local laws affecting firearms would expand the sheriff's statutory responsibilities to include judicial review, Webb said.

It is Grant County Clerk Brenda Percy's responsibility to review submitted initiatives. In a May 31 declaration,

Percy explained how she determined that Rue's initiative met constitutional and statutory provisions.

While she found that the petition measure satisfied those requirements, her decision "was not, however, without doubt." She noted that the measure "lacked clarity and was subject to differing interpretations."

Percy said she sought legal advice from Grant County Counsel Ron Yockim about portions of the initiative and was told the Oregon Supreme Court had ruled "that when faced with such doubt, and the need to make assumptions, that any doubt should be resolved in

favor of the exercise of the right of initiative."

Judicial review

Noting that state law can preempt county ordinances, Judge Cramer cited the full text of state law prohibiting counties from regulating firearms, components and ammunition.

"This initiative is not vague," Cramer said. "The plain reading of Measure 12-72 violates this statute and by definition enters it into an area that by law is not of county concern."

Cramer also noted that the initiative contained provisions that were not legislative by nature and so were not proper for

an initiative. Assigning duties to a county sheriff is administrative in nature, he said.

The initiative also "violates numerous constitutional provisions and awards powers to the office of sheriff that are not authorized by statutes that define that office," he said.

Cramer said he recognized Percy's careful approach in consulting Yockim and explaining her reasoning in detail. But this was not a case of statutory ordinance interpretation where a law already exists, in which case it is assumed those passing the law "intended it to fit within the existing laws that are superior to it," Cramer said.

He was also concerned

about the impact on voters.

"In this instance, we are at the stage where voters are making a choice," Cramer said. "They have a right to have a reasonable opportunity to understand what they are voting on and what its legal effect will be."

No reasonable voter could read the initiative and understand that it only affected the ability of the county court to pass laws on this topic, Cramer said, or that it could only address the county's ability to regulate the possession of loaded firearms in public places.

"That appears to be the remaining area left to county action — and only outside in-

corporated towns within the county," Cramer said.

Instead, a voter reading the initiative "most likely would believe it would enable Grant County residents to interpret laws, establish new duties for the sheriff including constitutional interpretation of state and federal laws, control county budgets where gun use is involved, including the county jail and etc. None of which is accurate," Cramer said.

A voter deserves a reasonable opportunity to understand what they are voting on and its legal effect, and the initiative failed in that attempt, Cramer concluded in denying the initiative's placement on the ballot.

IP 43

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Opponents said the petition language didn't adequately describe the types of firearms banned by the measure or the extent of its proposed registration requirements.

The measure would have

required people who already own the firearms specified to register them with state police if they wish to keep them legally. Going forward, Oregonians wouldn't be able to buy those guns, and could only legally obtain them by way of inheritance.

Supporters may propose another petition, or multiple petitions, in 2020, says chief

petitioner Rev. W.J. Mark Knutson.

Knutson and other supporters say they made progress in the months since the initiative was first proposed.

"Every appeal process was used against us, a lot of money was used against us," Knutson said. "We have no apologies for our process. We heard the voices of the young

and we moved right in."

Supporters were already contending with a tight turnaround time to get enough signatures by July 6 to make it to the November ballot. They needed 88,184.

That timeline became more daunting after multiple legal challenges were filed to the ballot title language, and on Wednesday, when the Oregon Supreme Court said that the ballot title needed significant changes before the petition could be circulated.

At best, that gave petitioners one day to gather the signatures they needed to qualify for the ballot, since

the Attorney General needed time to change the ballot title and for a public comment period.

Supporters of another gun control initiative petition, IP 44, which would have imposed new storage requirements on gun owners, withdrew the petition last week because of time constraints and said they'd lobby for those changes in the 2019 session and try to get on the ballot in 2020.

Secretary of State Dennis Richardson advocated for changes that would allow supporters of a petition to gather signatures after a bal-

lot title has been approved for a petition, but before any legal challenges have been resolved.

He took the opportunity Thursday to tout his efforts to reduce barriers to petition circulation.

"Whether I agree or not with a particular cause, I strongly believe Oregonians should have the right to petition their government without the deck stacked against them," Richardson said in a statement. "I urge the Legislature to adopt the grassroots petition protections that I have consistently advocated."

SEWER

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Lumber Co. and noncontact heating or cooling at a hydroponic greenhouse growing produce for human consumption.

In addition to those uses, Class A effluent could be used for irrigating public parks and sports fields, as process water for a proposed torrefaction plant and for growing produce in the city's future greenhouse. Moore noted that Class A water could be consumed by humans in some states but not Oregon.

Reclaimed water

Eric Lohan from Sustainable Water said his company is constructing their fourth treatment plant. The 7,000-square-foot facility proposed for John Day would feature advanced controls and redundancy so parts of the process could be shut down temporarily for repairs.

For aesthetic reasons, reactor tanks with large green plants could be located along outside walls, with other equipment located further inside. Green noted that the John Day Waterhub facility might attract visitors and boost local ecotourism.

Moore pointed out that Anderson Perry's role was to ensure the facility will last 30 years or more, in addition to finding financing and obtaining permit approval for the project.

A "purple pipe" system would connect the new treatment plant to locations where the reclaimed water could be put to use. The cost of the system's 13,000 feet of 8-inch pipe, along with pumps and controls, was estimated at about \$1 million.

While summertime usage was estimated to range from 120,000-420,000 gallons per day, usage from October through March would be negligible. Winter time discharge could be dumped in the river,



The Eagle/Richard Hanners

From left, Eric Lohan from Sustainable Water and Brett Moore and Mike Lee from Anderson Perry presented preliminary results from a feasibility study for a new wastewater treatment plant during the John Day City Council's June 26 meeting.

but that would entail a complicated permit process involving state and federal regulators, Moore said.

An alternative would be to inject the clean discharge into 600-foot-deep wells. That choice also would involve regulators, but Green noted that the city could draw an equal amount of water back out of the deep aquifer for use in summer-time.

In either case, it could be years before regulators approve a wintertime discharge option. In the meantime, the city simply could dump wintertime discharge in the existing percolation ponds under an administrative extension.

Finding financing

A recent income survey of John Day and Canyon City residents found the city could qualify for certain grants or funds, but also that the city was unable to fund the project on its own. Anderson Perry's report described numerous state and federal grants and low-interest loans that could be used to finance the project.

"It appears that more than one funding source is available to the city," the engineers said. "However, most agencies require a sewer rate that will support a loan for wastewater system improvements, both as a condition of receiving monies and prior

to being considered for grant funds."

The report, based on traditional funding methods, concluded user rates would need to increase to \$50-70 per month — but also noted a \$24 rate hike over the current rate of \$46 was not feasible.

Green said discussion about rates was premature until the city has evaluated all of its funding options, including the nontraditional methods, which will take several months. He said the city would qualify for the alternative funding methods at its current rates.

Anderson Perry also noted that Canyon City historically contributed about 15 percent of the revenue for the current treatment plant.

"Participation from Canyon City is vital for the city of John Day to be able to fund the selected alternative," the engineers said.

Councilor Paul Smith expressed his support for the project, calling it an "innovative showcase" and "the wave of the future."

Recognizing the challenges ahead, Mayor Ron Lundbom said the city didn't want to fail just because of high costs.

The council directed Anderson Perry and Sustainable Water to move ahead with plans for the selected alternative and to present ideas to the appropriate agencies.

Celebrate Freedom



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This 4th of July, take a moment to remember the brave men and women who served and sacrificed for our freedom.

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