

# City council approves annual utility rate hike

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

The John Day City Council approved increasing the base rates for water and sewer for single-family residences by \$1 at their Jan. 22 meeting.

The combined base rate for water and sewer for single-family homes is \$85. The rates increase by \$1 each year in order to build up a capital improvement fund for the city's water and sewer systems.

The resolution for the water rate increase also clarifies language describ-



**Nick Green**

ing the city's billing practices for past-due notices and shut-off procedures to more accurately reflect current practices, City Manager Nick Green told the council in his agenda report.

Water service could be discontinued if an account is not paid within 30 days following the statement due date. Two late-payment notices will be mailed, with the final notice at least 24



**Steve Schuette**

hours prior to disconnection. Customers will be charged a \$25 posting fee for the mailed notices. Water will not be turned back on until all charges are paid in full, including a \$20 turn-on fee for connection during normal business hours or a \$35 fee during other hours.

The resolution for the sewer rate increase also updates Canyon City's monthly payments in 2019

from \$5,612 per month to \$5,873.

Green told the council that preliminary cost analysis for the proposed sewer treatment project found that overall costs increase by about 6 percent per year while the sewer rate increases by about 2 percent.

The city's plan is to make up for that difference by increasing the number of sewer customers by attracting new residents — through the home-building incentive program and other economic development projects — and by

increasing city revenue through its greenhouse project.

Construction of the greenhouses at the former Oregon Pine mill site was delayed by state construction plan reviewers, but work on foundation forms had started just before the recent snowfall. Plans call for developing the former mill site into the Innovation Gateway project.

In other city council news, Green noted that the consoles for the 911 dispatch center at the John Day Fire Hall were expected soon, and the dis-

patchers will move from the John Day City Hall to the fire hall in February or early March.

Councilor Steve Schuette reported that, during a recent meeting, the Intergovernmental Council that oversees the new Grant County Emergency Communications Agency agreed to donate a 20-year-old heat pump at the city hall to the city.

The IGC will retain ownership of the emergency generator at city hall but allow the city to use it if they will do the necessary maintenance, Schuette said.

# South Fork watershed council updates court

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

It's been more than three decades since the South Fork John Day River Watershed Council was established by private landowners and government agencies in the tributary's upper drainage.

Today the nonprofit has two full-time employees, one temporary employee, an office in downtown John Day and \$800,000 lined up for 18 watershed projects this year.

The watershed council's coordinator, Amy Stiner, and its project manager, Elise Delgado, updated the Grant County Court about the group's activities at the court's Jan. 23 meeting.

Stiner grew up on a family ranch near Mt. Vernon and has a college degree in biology. She also serves on the Grant School District 3 board of directors.

The watershed council attained nonprofit status and completed 17 voluntary watershed restoration projects last year.

In addition, the council has 26 open projects, including 15 with private landowners, five with the Malheur National Forest, five with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and one shared with the Ochoco National Forest and Prineville Bureau of Land Management.

Projects involve water



Grant County Judge Scott Myers works with an iPad Jan. 23 during the first county court meeting since the court went paperless.

quality and quantity enhancement, fish and wildlife habitat improvements, education and outreach and partnership development.

Continuing projects include monitoring and controlling noxious weeds,

upland water developments, juniper removal, aspen enhancement and riparian treatments.

The watershed council also is involved in rehabilitation monitoring for burned areas in the Phillip

W. Schneider Wildlife Area and nearby private land and watershed assessments in the Wind and Tex creeks area.

Delgado leads a Farm to School program with Grant School District 3 and Day-

ville School's fifth- through seventh-grade students. She also runs the Outdoor School for sixth graders, organized the cowboy breakfast event at the Izee Ranch for the BMW Riders of Oregon rally in John Day and coor-

inated last year's beaver dam analogue workshop.

The South Fork John Day River Watershed Council was established in 1980 by private landowners in the upper drainage who were interested in improving land conditions.

Over time the council expanded its coverage to 537,708 acres, including the main stem of the John Day River from Rattlesnake Creek on the west to east of Picnic Creek and creeks on the north side of the river.

The watershed council meets at the Izee Schoolhouse on the second Monday of each month. For more information, visit southforkjohnday.com.

In other county court news:

- The court held its first meeting since going "paperless," with the court members following the agenda and related documents on iPads.

- The court nominated Tilli Bjornberg, Charissa Moulton, Marcia Wasiluk, Hannah Hinman and Kristin Lubell to the Local Community Advisory Council.

- Grant County Judge Scott Myers reported that three of four tax-foreclosed properties sold at auction on Jan. 17. The redemption period for the properties had been reduced by the court because of hazardous conditions at the properties.

**Robbins Farm Equipment**

3850 10th St. Baker City 541-523-6377  
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 1160 S Egan Burns 541-573-6377  
 86812 Christmas Valley Hwy. Christmas Valley 541-576-2160

**JUNIPER ARTS COUNCIL/GRANT COUNTY CULTURAL COALITION IS SEEKING GRANT PROPOSALS FOR OREGON CULTURAL TRUST GRANT AWARDS**

The coalition has \$7,000 from the Oregon Cultural Trust to distribute in Grant County to organizations for projects relating to culture. Projects may be related to the visual or performing arts, heritage, and/or humanities.

Applications are available from Karin Barntish, 131 W. Main Street, John Day or call Kris Beal at 541-932-4892 for more information or an application.

Grant applications will be accepted until February 8, 2019 at 5:00 pm.

REGISTERED ANGUS CATTLE

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JOHN DAY, OREGON

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Klamath County Fairgrounds  
Klamath Falls, OR

**Selling Sons Of:**  
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 Deer Valley Patriot 3222  
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 S Chisum 255  
 S Whitlock 179  
 G A R Sunrise  
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9 p.m. - 1 a.m.

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Celebrating Avery's 21st birthday!