

County names Deputy Dobler incident commander of coronavirus task force

Emergency management coordinator resigns over concerns about process

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant County Court, in an emergency planning meeting to address the new coronavirus March 6, named Deputy Dave Dobler, county search and rescue coordinator, as incident commander of a new task force.

A public meeting is planned at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 12, at the Grant County Fairgrounds in John Day to provide more information.

Although there are no known cases in Grant County, Dobler, along with his 30 search and rescue volunteers, will track people in the community who may have the virus using search and rescue software and will share the information with agencies such as police, fire and emergency medical services.

"We owe it to our commu-

nity to be proactive," Dobler said.

Dobler said the task force would also focus on prevention. He said there is more the county could do, such as hiring a part-time employee to circulate through the community to sanitize frequently used surfaces such as door handles, surfaces and keypads in public places.

"You can say, 'Well, those are the business' problem,'" Dobler said. "Actually, those are all of our problems."

Dobler said the area has limited police, fire and EMS.

"Our ability to respond is limited if we are sick, and our community deserves better," he said.

Dobler proposed the creation of an emergency operations center to be open during business hours. Dobler said he wants to set up phone lines, a website and an exclusive email addresses to track informa-



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell

Grant County Undersheriff Zach Mobley, left, and Deputy Dave Dobler address the Grant County Court Friday in an emergency meeting to plan for the coronavirus. While the court was careful not to create a panic with no known cases in Grant County, it still wants to "get ahead" of the virus.

tion about illnesses within the community.

He said, should there be any outbreaks within any neighboring communities, the hours could be increased, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. And should there be any confirmed cases in the county, the center could operate around the clock.

Dobler said the task force would work with the schools,

health care providers and senior centers to ensure people are following "good hygiene."

"We are a small community, and the nice thing about being small is that we can be agile and do things that bigger communities are not going to do because politically they are afraid to take those steps," Dobler said. "I don't think we are in a community that is

afraid to take those steps."

Dobler said he would like to have a plan in place should any emergency dispatchers get sick. Dobler said he does not know what that plan would look like, but would like to have it tested within seven days. He said he would like to coordinate with Condon and Baker City on the testing. He said there is a process in place, but he needs to test it.

County Judge Scott Myers said the county currently has an Office of Emergency Management. Myers asked if Dobler's intent was to change emergency management or include it in the process.

Dobler said it was to include emergency management.

Ted Williams, the county's emergency management coordinator, said he had been monitoring the coronavirus and that the county health department should be the lead agency.

Dobler said the health department was invited to work within the structure his organization has created.

"They will decide how much they will be in," Dobler said. "Hopefully it will be all in."

Williams said he wanted to work together and not create redundancy by duplicating efforts. He said he worked on an emergency plan for four years.

The court suggested that Williams and Dobler work together and said now, given the seriousness of the virus, is not the time for infighting.

On Monday, Williams resigned, citing concerns about the task force and the lack of an emergency plan being followed.

Williams said the emergency plan he submitted in 2019 covered pandemics, viruses and other biohazards, and listed the health department as the lead agency. He said he was blindsided by the creation of the task force by the sheriff's office at Friday's meeting.

"We have a vulnerable population in Grant County," Williams said. "For county court and the sheriff's office to go off on their own puts people at risk."

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.

Grant County Circuit Court

One count of felon in possession of a restricted weapon against Robert A. Malloy allegedly committed Dec. 6 was dismissed March 5 based on a motion by District Attorney Jim Carpenter stating it was in the best interests of justice.

Two counts of recklessly endangering another person against Nadia Runkle allegedly committed Dec. 6 were dismissed March 5 based on a motion by District Attorney Jim Carpenter stating it was in the best interests of justice.

David W. Burke, 25, pleaded guilty March 5 to criminal driving while suspended or revoked on Aug. 17. He was sentenced to serve 18 months of bench probation and pay \$1,100 in fines.

Casey J. Miller, 38, pleaded guilty March 5 to driving under the influence of intoxicants on Jan. 1. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail and 24 months of bench probation and ordered to pay \$1,855 in fines. His license was suspended for a year, and he was ordered to complete 60 hours of community service.

Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the

following for the week of March 4:

- Concealed handgun licenses: 7
- Average inmates: 17
- Bookings: 11
- Releases: 14
- Arrests: 0
- Citations: 1
- Fingerprints: 4
- Civil papers: 17
- Warrants processed: 2
- Assistance/Welfare check: 0
- Search and Rescue: 0
- Shaun Hill, 28, of Canyon City was cited for offensive littering on March 2.

Justice Court

Violation of the basic rule: Josh J. Hanson, 24, Redmond, Feb. 20, 74/65 zone, fined \$165; Jacob M. Dupuis, 22, La Grande, Feb. 16, 72/65 zone, fined \$165.

Exceeding speed limit: John P. Patton, 34, Kennewick, Washington, Feb. 14, 71/65 zone, fined \$165; Marco J. Harrell, 38, Alexander City, Alabama, Jan. 31, 74/45 zone, fined \$265; Taylor P. Castle, 25, John Day, May 10, 95/65 zone, fined \$465; Daniel G. Kelly, 58, Bend, Feb. 12, 84/55 zone, fined \$265; Anthony R. Urioste, 54, Bend, Jan. 8, 50/30 zone, fined \$165.

Driving uninsured: Michelle R. Daniels, 55, La Grande, Dec. 24, fined \$265; David J. Darling, 45, Canyon City, Aug. 7, fined \$265; Travis J. Freniere, 33, John Day, Aug. 15, fined \$265; Alexander P. Da Silva, 40, East Wenatchee, Washington, Aug. 1, fined \$265; Mayra E. Ontiveros Carreon, 25, Mitchell, Jan. 23, fined \$265;

Keatley M. Wyant, 29, Baker City, Aug. 9, fined \$265; Amy M. Gilbert, 37, Valley, Washington, Aug. 7, fined \$265.

Driving while suspended: David J. Darling, 45, Canyon City, Aug. 7, fined \$440, Sept. 5, fined \$440; Travis J. Freniere, 33, John Day, Aug. 15, fined \$440; Mayra E. Ontiveros Carreon, 25, Mitchell, Jan. 27, fined \$440, Jan. 23, fined \$440; James W. Moss, 41, John Day, Dec. 28, fined \$440; Keatley M. Wyant, 29, Baker City, Aug. 9, fined \$440; Ernest W. Dawson III, 45, John Day, Aug. 6, fined \$440.

Registration sticker expired: David J. Darling, 45, Canyon City, Aug. 7, fined \$115; Brian P. Stillman, 52, Vale, Jan. 20, fined \$115.

Driving without a license: Alexander P. Da Silva, 40, East Wenatchee, Washington, Aug. 7, fined \$265; Amy M. Gilbert, 37, Valley, Washington, Aug. 7, fined \$265

Failure to drive within lane: Graham W. Gebhardt, 21, Bend, Nov. 17, fined \$265; Ethan J. DeLong, 29, Baker City, Dec. 24, fined \$265.

Operating without required light: David J. Darling, 45, Canyon City, Sept. 5, fined \$165.

Unsafe passing on the left: Thomas J. Fisher, 24, John Day, Feb. 13, fined \$265.

Careless driving: Graham W. Gebhardt, 21, Bend, Nov. 17, fined \$440.

Oregon State Police

March 4: Stopped a gray 2004 Chrysler minivan for a traffic violation near milepost

86 on Highway 395B. The driver, Thomas R. Taylor, 53, stopped halfway in the southbound lane of travel. OSP had probable cause to arrest the man on a previous domestic violence investigation. OSP arrived, interviewed Taylor and arrested him without incident. A consent search was conducted, and a vial of suspected methamphetamine was seized. Taylor's vehicle was left where it constituted a hazard. Doug's Towing responded and towed the vehicle as a hazard.

March 4: OSP conducted a traffic stop at milepost 117 on Highway 395B for speed. OSP contacted Jennifer L. Desjardins, 59, of Diamond and noticed signs of impairment. Conducted standardized field sobriety test, and Desjardins was placed under arrest for DUI. OSP transported Desjardins to the Grant County Jail. Her vehicle was towed by Frontier Towing.

March 6: OSP officers assisted in the investigation of a resident of John Day for burglarizing four businesses in John Day. Bobby L. Ruston, 42, was contacted at his residence and arrested. A search warrant was served on his residence, and stolen items from all four businesses were recovered. The female occupant in the residence, Ronnie Gunter, 21, was arrested as an accomplice.

March 6: The driver of a 2004 Cadillac was stopped for violation of the basic rule, 70/55 zone. He exhibited indicators of impairment and was asked to participate

in field sobriety tests. Further indicators of impairment were observed during the tests. Sylvester Mahone, 47, of Spokane, Washington, was arrested and transported to the Grant County Jail, where he provided a breath sample that showed no alcohol. He cooperated with a drug recognition expert exam. At the conclusion of the DRE exam, the driver was found to be under the influence of cannabis. He was booked and later released to a sober driver.

Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 122 calls during the week of March 1-8, including:

John Day Police Department

March 2: Advised of a theft of services at a John Day business.

March 4: Received a report of a drunk driver on West Highway 26.

March 5: Received a report of a minor in possession of marijuana.

March 5: Called for a dispute at a business on West Main Street.

March 6: Responded to a burglary call. Bobby Ruston, 42, of John Day was arrested on multiple burglary charges. Ronnie Gunter, 21, of John Day was booked and released for theft by receiving.

March 6: Responded to a report of theft on Northwest Bridge Street.

March 7: Arrested Tyler D. Dehiya on West Main Street.

Oregon State Police

March 3: OSP was advised of a vehicle versus

deer accident on Highway 26 near milepost 94.

Grant County Sheriff's Office

March 4: Advised of a fight at a business on Highway 26.

John Day fire

March 4: Received a report of a grass fire on Highway 26.

March 5: Responded to a grass fire on South Canyon Boulevard.

John Day ambulance

March 2: Responded for a 45-year-old woman with chest pains on Southwest First Avenue.

March 3: Responded for a 94-year-old woman with stomach problems on South McHaley Avenue.

March 4: Dispatched for a man with chest pain and difficulty breathing on West Main Street.

March 5: Dispatched for a woman with vomiting and stomach pain on Southwest First Avenue.

March 6: Called for a 63-year-old woman having a seizure.

March 6: Called for a 66-year-old man with difficulty breathing on Canyon Creek Lane.

March 7: Along with Seneca Ambulance, responded to a 60-year-old man with chest pain and difficulty breathing on East Avenue in Seneca.

March 7: Requested for an 80-year-old man with low oxygen on West Main Street.

United States Forest Service

March 3: Advised of a fire burning off of Highway 395B.

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John Day

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Invitation to Bid:
The Prairie City Senior Center

Scope of work: Replace windows, install wall cavity insulation, remove old stairway, and install 7,000 sq. ft. metal siding. The center is located at 204 N. McHaley Street Prairie City, Oregon.

Proposals accepted until March 25, 2020

Contact for information:
Rose Coombs 541-820-3780 or
Ginger Kendall 541-620-4224

Grant SWCD Weed Control Dept.

Working for You in 2020

Thanks to the Grant County Court and Northeast Oregon Forests Resource Advisory Committee, Grant Weed Control is able to offer a **25% Cost share program for Noxious Weed Control on Private Grazing Lands**, through a Title II funded Grant Project. This program will provide a maximum \$5,000 of noxious weed control services with a \$1,250 maximum landowner contribution to qualifying participants. To be eligible for participation, the treatment property must not be actively irrigated and must be primarily managed for livestock grazing, minimum of 20 acres in size, located within Grant County, and must contain priority noxious weed species. Applications for this limited weed control assistance opportunity will be ranked and funded according to a priority noxious weed list.

Contact the Grant Soil and Water Conservation District Office at (541) 575-1554 or visit 721 S. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845 for applications and additional information.

This application deadline for this program is April 10th, 2020.

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