

# Walczyk ordered to pay thousands in restitution

By Rudy Diaz  
Blue Mountain Eagle

A Mt. Vernon man will spend time behind bars and owes thousands of dollars in restitution after a string of thefts.

Tanner E. Walczyk, 21, was sentenced to six months in jail and one year of post-prison supervision and ordered to pay \$17,128 in restitution for crimes committed between September 2019 and March 2020.



Tanner Walczyk

On Jan. 21, Walczyk pleaded guilty to a count of menacing and two counts of conspiracy to commit a class C felony—first-degree theft, according to court documents.

Twenty-one counts of first-degree theft, 12 counts of second-degree theft, two counts of third-degree theft, 27 counts of criminal conspiracy, 19 counts of unlawful entry into vehicle, 10 counts of second-degree criminal trespass, one count of first-degree criminal mischief, five counts of third-degree criminal mischief, three counts of second-degree burglary and one count of menacing were dismissed in a plea agreement.

# Canyon City councilors upset city COVID-19 allocation was given to county

By Steven Mitchell  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Canyon City's first city council meeting of the year got off to a lively start on Jan. 19.

Councilors Lisa Weigum and Russ Comer fended off criticism for each writing a letter to Grant County commissioners about revisiting Canyon City Mayor Steve Fischer's decision to sign over the city's \$25,000 in COVID-19 relief funds to the county outside of a public meeting.

Fischer said each of the county commissioners reached out to him individually about signing over the city's relief funds, which had to be obligated by Dec. 30.

He said the city had no "mechanism" to spend the money and request the state for reimbursement.

"So, the circumstances were leading up to the fact that we were going to lose that money," he said.

He said Commissioner Sam Palmer was the first to suggest that he sign the money over to the county to finish the floors at the Grant County

Fairgrounds pavilion.

He said he told Palmer that he would talk to the council when he had a chance, but the court members noted that he had to decide by Dec. 30.

Additionally, Fischer told the council that there was no guarantee that the city would get reimbursed for any money that they spent.

He said the city, at first, thought they were going to receive a check for \$25,000 from the state.

"That didn't happen," he said. "That isn't how they allocated that."

He said Grant County Economic Development Director Tory Stinnett told the city they could turn the money over to Community Lending Works to set up a grant program for Canyon City businesses as Prairie City had. He said that did not work out because the city did not have an account they could write the money out of that they did not have budgeted.

"We weren't going to take any of it for the city," he said. "We didn't need reimbursement. We didn't need computers. We didn't need more

internet. We already had a consensus that it was going to go to the businesses. The check never came."

## Comer and Weigum's letters

Fischer said that he had "fires" to put out with Grant County Court because of letters that Councilors Comer and Weigum sent to the court.

He said letters sent by Comer and Weigum asking the court to consider using the funds to assist businesses and nonprofits in Canyon City created a liability for the town.

He said a county commissioner would be "coming up" with a letter from the county and city's insurance company explaining why councilors must not send letters to other government agencies making "requests or demands."

For her part, Weigum said she bumped into a county commissioner at a dinner party, and he told her to submit a letter to the court as a counselor-elect to request the county spend the money in Canyon City.

She told Fischer he had said that he would submit a request

at the December meeting to the county to see if they could spend the money in Canyon City. Weigum said the commissioner had told her that Canyon City had not requested the court spend the money in the town.

Fischer said the commissioner had since told him that he is "new" and "unaware of his boundaries." Fischer said, when he had brought up the funds to County Judge Scott Myers, Myers told him the court had allocated the funds.

Weigum said the city committed the money to the county on Dec. 9 and then had a meeting on Dec. 15. She said the county could have adjusted when they submitted for reimbursement before Dec. 30, the deadline to submit for reimbursement.

She said there should have been a consensus, to begin with, on how the city would spend the money that came from the city council.

Fischer asked the council to come up with a plan in case the state allocates the city additional relief funds.

## Letter from the city's insurance company

County Commissioner Jim Hamscher said he suggested Canyon City talk to their insurance company regarding how and when councilors speak out on issues with other government agencies.

He said in Prairie City, where he is the mayor, the city's charter states the following when speaking to another government agency:

"If a council member appears before another government agency or organization to give a statement on an issue, the council member must state (a) whether the statement reflects personal opinion or is the official position of the city, and (b) whether the statement is supported by a majority of the council. If the council member is representing the city, the council member must support and advocate for the official city position on the issue rather than a personal viewpoint."

Canyon City's charter makes no such rule for its city councilors.

# Grant County vaccinated 166 people last week

By Steven Mitchell  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County administered 166 vaccines last week.

"It was a busy week," Kimberly Lindsay, Grant County public health administrator, said in an email Monday.

Lindsay said the county received an additional 100 vaccines and that a bulk of those doses will go to people in Phase 1a of the state's vaccine sequencing plan.

Additionally, Lindsay said, some educators did not get vaccinated in the previous vaccination event.

She said the county has

determined that they need to set some doses aside for people who received their first dose in one county but move to Grant County and need to get their second dose in the county.

She said the remaining doses would go to those who are 80 years old and over, per the sequencing.

She said the county intends to have shots in that group's arms by the end of this week or early next week.

As the county inoculates 100 more residents, Lindsay said her staff is also focusing on receiving and getting the booster shots to those who

received their first dose.

"I do not know when we will receive additional doses," she said.

## Wait list established

The Blue Mountain Hospital District and the Grant County Health Department have established a COVID-19 vaccine wait list.

A joint press release from the health department and hospital Thursday announced that those interested in the vaccine could email vaccine@ccsemail.org.

The press release said to include name, date of birth, phone number, mailing

address, and interest in receiving the vaccine, and that they will send a confirmation email back within 48 hours.

The hospital and health department said they would work off the list to get people in for the vaccine until they received additional shipments.

"We will need to continue to do this for the near future until the vaccine is more widely available," the press release said.

If someone is unable to email, they may call the health department at 541-575-0429 or Strawberry Wilderness Clinic at 541-575-0404 and be added to the master list,

according to the press release.

However, email is the preferred method of contact as heavy call volume has made it challenging to handle their daily duties.

The hospital and health department said they must follow Oregon Health Authority and the Vaccine Advisory Committee guidelines.

"At this time, the prior groups are health care workers, Long Term Care Facility residents, education systems, first responders, and individuals aged 65 and older (with the highest priority given to those who are oldest in this group)," the release states.

## 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

A count of driving under the influence of intoxicants against Patricia C. Sharp committed on Nov. 19, 2019, was dismissed on Jan. 25, 2021, because she completed a diversion program.

A count of second-degree theft against Taylor M. Myers committed on Sept. 19, 2019, was dismissed on Jan. 21, 2021, because he completed the conditions of his deferred sentence.

### Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week of Jan. 20:

Concealed handgun licenses: 9

Average inmates: 11  
Bookings: 1  
Releases: 4  
Arrests: 0  
Citations: 3  
Fingerprints: 2  
Civil papers: 13  
Warrants processed: 0  
Assistance/Welfare check: 0  
Search and Rescue: 0  
Matthew Upton, 18, of St. Helens was cited for minor in possession of alcohol.

Miranda Cook, 19, of Monument was cited for minor in possession of alcohol.

A juvenile was cited for minor in possession of alcohol.

### Oregon State Police

Jan. 18: Oregon State Police received a complaint of an individual who posted photographs on social media depicting a large bull elk being spotlighted. The individual was contacted and warned for the potential violation.

Jan. 21: A trooper stopped a known suspended driver on Highway 26 near milepost 181. The driver, Keatley M. Wyant, 29, of John Day is a chronic suspended and uninsured driver. Wyant has been cited by the John Day Police Department numerous times. OSP cited Wyant Jan. 4 for a driving while

suspended and uninsured violations. The state trooper issued Wyant citations for driving while suspended and uninsured. Doug's Motor Vehicle Repair responded and impounded the vehicle.

Jan. 22: A state trooper responded to a reported non-injury, single-vehicle crash at milepost 157.5 on Highway 26. Investigation revealed a vehicle was heading eastbound when the driver swerved to avoid a chunk of ice on the roadway. The vehicle started to slide, and the driver was unable to recover. The vehicle left the roadway on the eastbound side of the road into a ditch on its wheels. The driver was able to drive the vehicle from the scene.

### Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 99 calls during the week of Jan. 18-24, including:

• **John Day Police Department**

Jan. 19: Advised of a hit and run on West Main Street.

Jan. 21: Received a report of theft at a business on West Main Street.

Jan. 23: Responded to a report of a person sliding across the Seventh Street pond on the ice.

• **Oregon State Police**

Jan. 22: Along with the sheriff's office and John Day ambulance, requested for a crash on Highway 26.

• **Grant County Sheriff's Office**

Jan. 22: Responded for a driving complaint and civil issue regarding ownership of a vehicle on South Aslin Avenue.

### • John Day ambulance

Jan. 18: Dispatched for a woman with chest pain on Southwest First Street.

Jan. 22: Responded for a 79-year-old woman who became unresponsive on Southwest Moore Street.

Jan. 23: Responded of a 60-year-old with trouble breathing on West Main Street.

Jan. 20: Along with GCSO, responded to a woman not breathing on West Izee Street.

Jan. 24: Responded for a 64-year-old woman with a fractured foot on Valley View Drive.

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