

John Day continues push for study session with county

City proposes repaying county with interest for investment in system development to encourage growth

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

John Day City Council members decided to continue the pursuit of holding a study session with the Grant County Court.

Council members shared their thoughts on the court meeting from Feb. 24 and the reception the county court gave City Manager Nick Green when he presented a proposal for a study session to discuss a partnership with the city and their urban renewal agency to help offset land development costs within John Day.

Under the city's proposal to be further discussed during a work session, the county would pay to install roads up front, and the URA would repay the county with interest when new developments increase the taxes paid to the renewal agency, according to Green.

Council member Elliot Sky said he was disappointed in the reception because he felt that the plan was well presented, but the court did not seem to have much interest.

"I didn't expect the county court to be jumping in with, 'Yeah, we're 100% in,' but I also didn't expect them to be so opposed and adversarial right off the bat," Sky said. "It seemed like they didn't have much trust in the program or something because it didn't sound like they wanted to pursue more information."



The Eagle/Rudy Diaz

The John Day City Council listens to a request from Stephanie LeQueieu, catalyst for Oregon RAIN, on March 9.

Council member Paul Smith, who was at the court meeting with Councilor Shannon Adair and Green, said he was also disappointed in the reaction from the court.

"I feel like we're looking for reasons to get to no rather than a path to get to yes," Green said regarding a possible study session in the future. "We need to change that."

Adair said she sent an email to the county court sometime after the court session and asked if the meeting would happen. She added that she did not expect to get a response, but wants to keep pushing and keep saying that action is needed.

Grant County Commissioner Jim Hamsher declined to answer questions on working with the city until the court received legal counsel on the matter.

Smith said a concern he heard from community members is that they don't want to change John Day.

"We're not asking to change; we're asking to thrive," Smith said. "If we increase the tax base and get people housing, there's more employment. Then everybody benefits, and the tax base benefits."

A concern that came up from some of the audience members at the county court session was on taxes being raised, according to Smith.

Green clarified that when he said taxes go up, it does not mean the rates will rise. It means that the tax base would go up because of the increase of people and investors in the area.

The John Day City Council also discussed the importance of other stakeholders and community members in John Day to reach out to

the county and make their opinions known.

"I think it would be beneficial if we request the meeting again and not just from the city council, but from developers, the school district, the hospital and the county, and all of us are asking the county to participate (in a study session)," Adair said.

Sky said it is important that community members who want to see the work session happen voice their opinion to the court and show the interest goes beyond the city.

"My ask to the community is that, if you value the quality of life and you want to see this community thrive, reach out and make that known to the county court," Sky said. "Write a letter or email. Voice your opinion so it doesn't just sound like it's the city of John Day, and it sounds like we as a community want it."



Eagle file photo

Canyon City Fire Chief Matt Turner

Multiple storage units lost in Canyon City fire

No injuries or homes lost

Blue Mountain Eagle

A fire Sunday morning claimed multiple storage units in Canyon City.

Canyon City Fire Chief Matt Turner said the fire was on the property line of 309 and 311 S. Humbolt St. He said both residences had storage units on the property line, and all their storage buildings burned up.

"Neither house was affected, but they lost a bit of personal property and their storage buildings," Turner said.

Turner said each resident lost two vehicles, four-wheelers, motorcycles and whatever else was stored in the units that burned down.

Canyon City fire, John Day fire and several firefighters from Mt. Vernon reported to the scene. Turner said nobody was injured in the fire.

"The residents got burned out of their house, and unfortunately they lost a lot of property, but there was no injury and they didn't lose their houses on the plus side of things," Turner said.

The cause is currently under investigation.

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 charge of felon in possession of a firearm against Nathan M. Elledge, 29, allegedly committed on June 17, was dismissed on March 10 based on a motion by Grant County District Attorney Jim Carpenter because it is in the best interests of justice. Elledge pleaded guilty on March 4 to a count of resisting arrest committed on May 17. He was sentenced to two days in jail, 18 months of bench probation, 100 hours of community service and pay \$300 in fees and a fine. Elledge violated his probation due to a new crime he committed, resisting arrest. The defendant's sentence will continue based on the same terms and conditions previously imposed and his probation was extended by 12 months.

Jeremiah J. Alsop, 39, pleaded guilty March 9 to a count of criminal driving while suspended or revoked committed on Feb. 3. He also pleaded guilty March 9 to a

count of driving under the influence of intoxicants committed on July 2. He was sentenced to 15 days in jail, 18 months of bench probation and ordered to pay \$2,000 in fines. His license was also suspended for one year.

Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week of March 10:

Concealed handgun licenses: 16
Average inmates: 7
Bookings: 4
Releases: 7
Arrests: 0
Citations: 1
Fingerprints: 2
Civil papers: 9
Warrants processed: 5
Assistance/Welfare check: 0

Search and Rescue: 0
Leann Musgrove, 41, of John Day, was cited for having no operator's license.

Oregon State Police

March 7: Information was received of a group of hunters trespassing on a neighboring property and field dressing an elk. Wheeler County deputies arrived and obtained the property owner's information and made initial contact with the hunters. An Oregon State Police Fish and Wild-

life trooper arrived on scene and interviewed the offending party as well as contacted the complaining party. At the conclusion of the contact, the owner of the property, which had been trespassed on, wanted the offending hunters charged. The hunter who shot the elk was criminally cited for hunting while in violation of criminal trespass, and failure to immediately validate a big game tag. His hunting partners were charged with second-degree criminal trespass. The elk and unvalidated tag were seized. The elk was taken to Russell's Custom meats in Canyon City for processing.

March 8: A John Day Fish and Wildlife trooper was provided information that there was an in-progress violation of the winter range closure on the Phillip Schneider Wildlife Area. The trooper responded and located two individuals who had driven an ATV into the winter range closure. Ryan G. Chapman, 46, was cited for the offense and arrested for an outstanding warrant. The other subject, Ty J. Round, 41, was cited in lieu of custody for unlawful entry into the wildlife area.

March 9: A state trooper contacted Valerie N. Hendrix, 44, of Seneca who was parked

in the lane of travel on Southwest Brent Street in John Day for illegal standing and stopping. She exhibited indicators of impairment and was asked to participate in field sobriety tests. Further indicators of impairment were observed during the tests. She was arrested and transported to the Grant County Jail, where she provided a breath sample with a result of 0.00% blood alcohol content. She 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. She was issued a citation for DUI/Drug and released.

March 9: A Fish and Wildlife trooper recognized a pickup truck parked along Highway 26 from a photo taken by a trail camera placed in the Phillip Schneider Wildlife Area during the closure. The driver, Austin Walker, 20, was contacted and identified. During the roadside interview the individual admitted to driving on the closed road in the wildlife area. Arrangements were made to meet at a later date for citation issuance.

Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 177 calls during the week of March 8-14, including:

John Day Police Department

March 10: Responded to a report of elder abuse on South Humbolt Street.

March 11: Along with Oregon State Police, responded to a report of a restraining order violation on East Main Street.

March 13: Keith A. Mark, 49, of Hillsboro was arrested on an Oregon State Parole Board Warrant and domestic assault.

March 13: Cited David J. Darling, 46, of John Day for driving while suspended and no insurance.

Grant County Sheriff's Office

March 8: Received a report of fraud on Highway 402.

March 9: Received a report of fraud on Vista Lane.

March 9: Conducted a traffic stop and warned for failure to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk on South Canyon Street and Second Street.

March 11: Received a report of fraud in Long Creek.

March 11: Conducted a traffic stop and warned for speeding on Highway 26 near milepost 153.

March 12: Along with OSP, advised of the location of a subject who fled from enforcement on Highway 26.

March 13: Kenneth Kincaide, 70, was arrested for vio-

lation of conditional release.

March 13: Cited Christopher M. Van Cleave, 78, of Bend for no Oregon driver's license on East Main Street.

John Day ambulance

March 8: Responded for a 74-year-old woman with difficulty breathing on North McHaley Avenue.

March 9: Along with Prairie City ambulance, dispatched for a woman with difficulty breathing and shortness of breath at Blue Mountain Care Center.

March 12: Responded to a Prairie City woman with difficulty breathing.

March 12: Dispatched for a man with chest pain and nausea on Southwest First Avenue.

March 12: Dispatched for a 75-year-old woman who fell.


March 12: Responded for a 71-year-old man with fever and vomiting on Screech Alley.

March 13: Along with Grant County Sheriff's Office, responded for a 72-year-old man with abdominal pain on Adams Road.

March 14: An elderly man fell on his head on West Main Street.

Mt. Vernon fire

March 14: Received a call for a grass/bush fire on Highway 26 near milepost 142.5.



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