



John Day City Manager Nick Green, left, and Mayor Ron Lundbom

Eagle file photo

John Day secures EDA grant for Cyber Mill locations

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

The city of John Day announced they are getting closer to receiving a \$2 million grant to bring additional broadband internet to Grant County.

According to John Day City Manager Nick Green, the \$2 million grant from the Economic Development Administration would help bankroll the opening of the John Day and Seneca Cyber Mill locations.

Green said the city started its final 30-day notice for the project last week.

He said the United States Department of Agriculture also awarded \$6 million to construct the lines to build out a fiber-optic network.

Green said the city closed on its purchase of 241 W. Main Street, the future location of the John Day Cyber Mill. He said the city is working on a tenant agreement with the Cyber Mill to operate the site once the tenant improvements are complete and the building is ready for

them to move in.

Green said the Grant County Digital Board moved to purchase the Cyber Mill's Seneca location, and it will serve as the planned point-of-presence for the fiber-optic network and house servers, routers and network switches. He said the board selected the site because it was available and had reasonable proximity to the highway and the existing fiber-optic network at Seneca City Hall and Seneca School. In addition, he noted that it has sufficient space to scale the fiber optic network while also allowing for the Cyber Mill to operate a shared office space as a nonprofit.

Green responded to criticism from a newly-formed Political Action Committee, Grant County Conservatives, who said it was inappropriate that Josh Walker, the digital board's chairman, was the owner of the building sold for the Cyber Mill's Seneca location.

Green said that Walker is one of several building owners of the group Mahogany Ridge Properties and had been "dili-

gent" about recusing himself from those discussions. Moreover, Green said, the other board members made those decisions. He told the Eagle that the real estate market in Seneca is not "exactly robust."

"They chose this location strategically because it was recently remodeled and was move-in ready," he said.

Walker, who was on the email thread, told the Eagle that Green answered the questions and did not add anything else.

Green said the Grant County Digital Board is an intergovernmental group formed under ORS 190. The three standing members, he said, are Grant County and the cities of John Day and Seneca.

Green said Seneca appointed Walker, while the county tapped Prairie City resident Dan Becker, who also serves as the board's co-chair. John Day, he said, chose Elliot Sky, a John Day city councilor. He said the board has two at-large board members, Denise Porter from Long Creek and Harsh Patel of John Day. He told the Eagle the standing members appoint the at-large positions to serve two-year terms.



Eagle file photo

Blue Mountain Hospital has set up a tent in case it is needed for an increase in COVID-19 patients. The hospital still has capacity.

Hospital offers new services as COVID-19 cases continue

Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County has reported 80 new COVID-19 cases since Sept. 8.

Since the recent uptick began Aug. 16, the county has reported 235 cases.

Strawberry Wilderness Community Clinic at Blue Mountain Hospital is now offering a viral clinic for patients experiencing mild to moderate viral or COVID-19 symptoms including: fever or chills, cough, mild respiratory or breathing issues, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headaches, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.

The clinic's hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. Patients may check in at the COVID-19 information tent in the upper hospital parking lot or call 541-575-0404.

The hospital advises patients not to enter the hospital with symptoms.

Strawberry Wilderness Community Clinic is also now offering COVID-19 monoclonal antibody

administration to high-risk individuals who qualify. People who have mild to moderate symptoms, have tested positive for COVID-19, are presumptively positive, or have a known exposure and are high-risk can contact their primary care provider's office to discuss the treatment.

Monoclonal antibodies are only authorized for non-hospitalized, high-risk individuals, with mild to moderate symptoms. These antibodies can help prevent progression to severe COVID-19 symptoms and complications. It is best to receive treatment as soon as possible after onset of illness.

Qualifications for monoclonal antibody treatment include: age 65 or older, elevated body mass index, pregnant, chronic kidney disease, diabetes, immunosuppression, cardiovascular disease, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease such as COPD or asthma, sickle cell disease, neurodevelopment disorders and having a permanent medical device in place.

Charolais Heights and Valley View intersection making progress

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

John Day City Manager Nick Green said work at the Charolais Heights and Valley View intersection is ongoing, and he expected the city would soon complete paving.

Monte Legg, John Day's public works director, said the project, which, according to past agenda documents, began in early spring, was slated to be completed in the fall.

Legg said the city had "set-backs" that included moving phone lines and other utilities, digging up a maintenance hole and replacing a cone.

He told the council that crews have put in storm drain systems, put down base rock, and would be starting curbing.

He said the community should start seeing some "real progress" in the coming weeks.

Legg said the radiuses and all of the intersections had been finalized and surveyed.

Nonetheless, John Day City Councilor Elliott Sky said he did not hear an actual



Monte Legg, John Day's Public Works director.

Eagle file photo

completion date from Legg. According to Sky, people within the area had complained about not receiving any updates from the city on the project's progress. Sky said he would like to give people a place to read about progress on street improvement projects in the future.

City Councilor Gregg Haberly told Sky that the city could not give people definitive timelines on street improvement projects like Charolais Heights.

Green said perhaps they could on the website, but in Charolais Heights, they kept taking down the neighborhood's internet.

Legg said keeping the public informed had already been discussed and that they plan to update the city's website after talking to the engineer and the contractor.

A community member in the audience told the council that they need to keep emergency service agencies aware of the project's progress if

they get a call. He said if they have an ambulance call, fire call or police call, they need to know how to get in.

Legg said that he had been in touch with the John Day Fire Chief and Rebekah Rand, Blue Mountain Hospital's head of emergency services, about access and the project's progress.

City Councilor Heather Rookstool suggested the city make drivers aware that, with school back in session, many kids from Charolais Heights walk down the dirt road to catch the school bus at the Seventh Street Complex parking lot.



The family of Lolietta "Babe" Gregg would like to thank Blue Mountain Hospice, Blue Mountain Eagle, all that provided food, wine, flowers, cards, many phone calls, prayers, those who took time to stop by, and all of our amazing friends who gave support to us through this difficult time. Much love and appreciation to all.

Gary, Shannon, Mitch, Mindy and Families.

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Blue Mountain Hospital
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