

# John Day revamps city government

By BENNETT HALL  
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — Municipal government in John Day has a new look.

At the Oct. 26 City Council meeting, City Manager Nick Green unveiled a revamped org chart that reflects a number of changes in local government, including the transitioning of the 911 dispatch center from city department to independent agency in 2019, the recent decision to disband the police department and an increased emphasis on community development and economic revitalization.

The new structure, which went into effect on Monday, Nov. 1, features four departments, each headed by a director and a deputy director or senior employee: the Administrative Department, led by the city manager; Community Development Department, led by the community development director and deputy city manager (a new position); Public Works Department, led by the public works director; and Public Safety Department, led by the fire chief.

The council voted to approve the new position of community development director and deputy city manager by a 6-0 vote, with Councilor David Holland absent.

The job is being advertised locally and at the state and regional levels, Green said. The pay range is between \$64,620 and \$86,856 per year.

In addition to being the city's second-highest-ranking manager, the position will have a wide range of responsibilities to include administering the Growing Rural Oregon Program and the Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network in John Day; managing the city's agribusiness co-op and its housing and development incentive programs; overseeing the John Day Planning Department and Urban Renewal Agency; and helping to manage the city's \$25 million grant portfolio.

City Council approval was not required for the change in organizational structure, which is under the city manager's direct control, but Green said he's confident he has the council's backing for the new model.

"There was general concurrence with the approach," he told the newspaper. "We've talked for some time about creating a planning and community development department because right now I do all that (in addition to other duties), and it's too much for one position."

Green said the new structure, with 13 full-

time city employees plus four part-timers and a contract city recorder, is considerably leaner than what was in place when he was hired in 2016. At that time, he said, the city had 24 full-time employees in five departments.

In other action, the council:

- Approved \$22,181.53 in rebate payments to participants in the John Day Urban Renewal Agency's 2020 housing incentive program. The five participating properties were eligible for 7% of the change in assessed value created by their housing developments.
- Signed off on a \$439,970 grant from the Oregon Business Development Department to help finance work on Southwest Fourth Avenue to repair damage from a 2019 flood. The total project cost is estimated at a little over \$1.8 million, with the city paying the design costs, the Oregon Department of Transportation contributing \$50,000 and the Federal Emergency Management Agency paying the rest.
- Approved a memorandum of understanding to create the Consortium for Public Improvement Programs, a partnership between the cities of John Day, Burns and Lakeview designed to facilitate new housing construction and other projects through a cost-sharing arrangement. A \$60,000 state grant to the consortium will pay for design work on plans for 3-D printed houses, including a dozen affordable units to be built as part of The Ridge development in John Day.
- Went into executive session to discuss negotiations surrounding a real property transaction.

Also on the agenda was a discussion and possible approval of the city's proposal for a fund exchange agreement with Grant County. The proposal — which will have to be approved by both the City Council and the Grant County Court — calls for the city to give the county roughly \$300,000 a year in general fund money for three years to help pay for law enforcement services through the Sheriff's Office in the wake of the dissolution of the John Day Police Department. In exchange, the city wants the county to turn over \$300,000 a year for three years from the county road fund to help pay for street improvements in John Day.

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# Warm Springs man tapped to replace Sams on Northwest Power and Conservation Council

By MICHAEL KOHN  
The Bulletin

Louis Pitt Jr., the director of government affairs and planning for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, has been nominated to join the Northwest Power and Conservation Council.

Gov. Kate Brown nominated Pitt to replace Chuck Sams, who is leaving the council to start a position as the head of the National Parks Service.

The nomination for Pitt, 73, is in recognition of a long career in the service of Native American tribes, as well as work in natural resources and fisheries.

The council is a regional organization that seeks to balance environmental and energy needs in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. The Portland-based council develops electric power plans that will provide energy for the region at low costs for the economy and the environment.

The council's most recent plan was approved in 2010, and while the plans are intended to guide policy for two decades, they are updated every five years.

Pitt has a long history of working and exploring in the Columbia Basin.

As a child, he used to visit Celilo Falls, the famed fishing area on the Columbia River for Native Americans. The Dalles Dam flooded Celilo Falls, which is now underwater. As an adult, he worked to protect fish habitats with the Warm Springs department for Natural Resources.

"My heart is in with fish. I don't want to compromise that in any way, but I want to be fair with the fish, the state, the tribe, and myself," said Pitt. "I have spent years volunteering with the state, and I am getting old and cranky, so I would like to spend my time wisely and effectively."

Pitt, who grew up on the reservation and in Madras, has also held positions with the state, working on advisory committees for three different Oregon governors. He said he hopes that he can do his part to help restore habitat to support fish in their struggle to get past dams built in the Columbia Basin.

"I need to find out exactly what the council can do," said Pitt. "I have known over the years that the industrial folks haven't been all that forthcoming with the facts, and dams do damage, so what more can we do?"

The nomination also allows



Louis Pitt

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 10  
**Marine Corps anniversary lunch**

- 11:30 a.m., the Outpost Pizza Pub & Grill, 201 W. Main St., John Day

All active-duty Marines and Marine Corps veterans are invited to a no-host lunch to celebrate the 246th anniversary of the U.S. Marine Corps. For more information, call Dave Traylor at 541-620-1949.

**Community coffee with Rep. Mark Owens**

- 4 to 5 p.m., Squeeze-In



Restaurant and Deck, 423 W. Main St., John Day

The Dist. 60 state representative will meet with constituents to discuss their concerns and answer questions about topics of interest.

# Aquatics center goes to planning board

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — Plans for a new aquatics center to replace the aging Gleason Pool will go before the John Day Planning Commission next week.

Gleason Pool, the only public swimming pool in Grant County, was built in the 1950s and has significant deferred maintenance issues. It has been closed for the last two summers.

In addition, the city of John Day has been negotiating to sell the pool property and surrounding park to the state for a new Kam Wah Chung interpretive center.

The John Day-Canyon City Parks and Recreation District proposes to replace the old pool with a new aquatics center near the west end of the Seventh Street Sports Complex in John Day. Plans call for a six-lane, 25-yard competitive pool with an adjoin-



Eagle file photo

Gleason Pool has been closed for two years.

ing building.

The budget for the project is about \$6 million. The Legislature has provided \$2 million toward the cost, leaving another \$4 million to be raised through other means. The Parks and Rec District has announced plans to put a bond measure on the ballot some-

time next year.

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on a conditional use permit for the project at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 9. The public can participate virtually via videoconference by going to <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/891173869>.

## Dennis Reynolds Memorial Scholarship

The Dennis Reynolds memorial scholarship is sponsored through the Grant County Family Heritage Foundation and the Reynolds Family and many friends who have contributed to Dennis' memory. Two scholarships will be awarded annually in the amounts of \$500.

### Requirements for applicants:

1. Must be a Grant County, Oregon-raised student.
2. Must have been an active 4-H member and/or FFA member in Grant County for at least 4 years while a youth.
3. Must be majoring in a degree or trade related to agriculture.
4. May be a freshman, sophomore, junior or senior attending a university, college, junior college, or trade school.
5. Proof of 4-H or FFA membership must be sent with application, and a letter of recommendation from a 4-H leader or FFA teacher.
6. Must be willing to give back to the 4-H / FFA program in the future in some positive way.
7. A 300-word essay that tells the applicant's aspirations for a career in an agriculture related field and what has brought him/her to the decision to select this field. Explain how you will give back to the 4-H or FFA programs or community in the future.

### Fill out the following forms:

Name \_\_\_\_\_, age \_\_\_\_\_,  
Agriculture related major \_\_\_\_\_,  
School attending \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Financial Aid Office \_\_\_\_\_  
Applicants will receive the scholarship for Winter term, 2022. Applications due by December 1, 2021. Please send three copies to:

**Dennis Reynolds Memorial Scholarship**  
c/o Grant County Family Heritage Foundation  
Box 6  
Seneca, Oregon 97873

If anyone has further questions, call Julie Reynolds, 541-450-2096.

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