

City offers library land swap

Green's spending practices challenged at council meeting

By JUSTIN DAVIS
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — The John Day City Council deferred voting on a land swap deal with the Grant County Library Foundation for a month and heard a challenge to City Manager Nick Green's spending practices at its April 12 session.

Resolution No. 22-884-05 proposed land swap between the city of John Day and the library foundation for the purpose of providing more city parking and a new site for a county library. The proposed deal involves the city purchasing land owned by the library foundation and the city then donating a separate lot to the foundation to be use as a site for a future library.

The lot desired by the city is a single acre and is located near Kam Wah Chung State Heritage Site on North Canton Street. The city would purchase the property for \$125,000. The lot to be donated to the library foundation is a 2.1 acre parcel along the planned Seventh Street extension at the base of Davis Creek.

City Council member Dave Holland voiced concerns about the deal in the April 12 session, stressing that three separate entities would need to be on board with the swap in order for the deal to work. The Grant County Court funds the

library, and the Grant County Library has a board of its own that would have to weigh in on the deal in addition to the library foundation, which owns the land.

Currently the city has only been in talks with the Grant County Library Foundation regarding the purchase of the land and subsequent donation of a lot as the location of a new library. The library foundation has spent 10 years fundraising and attempting to secure funds for a new library building. The foundation will have enough money to fund that project if the deal goes through, according to Green. It is unknown if the Grant County Court or Grant County Library board have been in contact with the Library Foundation regarding this proposal, according to Holland.

The Grant County Library board is meeting next week to hold its own discussions about the proposal. The City Council voted to defer voting on the proposed land swap for a month to give the various entities that may be affected by the deal time to deliberate and discuss the proposal.

Green spending challenged

Later in the meeting, John Day Budget Commission member Sherrie Rininger raised questions regarding Green's spending practices. Specifically, she questioned a group of landscaping contracts awarded to Field's Tree Service.

Green is authorized to spend up to \$25,000 without having to consult the City Council for approval. The contracts in question were dated from Dec. 20, 2021, to Feb.

28, 2022, and totaled \$95,276.07. The issue is with the way the information was presented on the invoice and the fact that the work had already been done before the contract was approved, according to Rininger.

The spending is combined into a single line item on the invoice as opposed to separate, \$25,000 line items that Green would've had the authority to approve. Rininger said the way the contract was paid for and approved was "underhanded." Also a source of concern for Rininger was a single line item of \$67,400 for labor that she says was done before the contract was approved.

Green explained the budgetary issue by saying the \$95,000 price was four separate contracts combined into one line item. "In six years, I've never exceeded my contract authority, and I never would," Green said.

When asked if those contracts came up for bid, Green said finding willing bidders for a project of this type is a challenge. "That's the problem with living in a small county," Green says the city asked for quotes from The Tree Service in Harney County and Ray Field. The Tree Service declined to provide a quote, so the job went to Field.

"If we had a lot of people that did that type of work in the county, we could put a formal solicitation out," Green added. The city's formal solicitations for landscaping have been ignored in the past and "people have a tough time competing with someone who lives here and does that type of work," Green said.

Pulliam stumps in John Day

By BENNETT HALL
Blue Mountain Eagle



Bennett Hall/Blue Mountain Eagle
Sandy Mayor Stan Pulliam, who's running in the Republican primary for governor, visits with voters at the Squeeze-In Restaurant and Deck in John Day on Friday, April 15, 2022.

JOHN DAY — Touting his small-town roots and conservative values, Stan Pulliam made his case for becoming Oregon's next governor to a small group of voters over lunch at the Squeeze-In Restaurant and Deck in John Day on Friday, April 15.

Pulliam, a 40-year-old insurance executive in his second term as mayor of Sandy, is one of 19 Republicans seeking the GOP nomination for governor in the May 17 primary. He came through John Day on Friday as part of a campaign swing through a number of Eastern Oregon communities.

In a short stump speech, he reminded his audience that, with no incumbent in the race, the GOP has a better-than-usual chance of reclaiming the state's highest office.

"We're trying to do something that hasn't been done in 40 years, and that's get a Republican elected governor," he said.

Pulliam said he decided to jump into the race after hearing from small-business owners in Sandy who were harmed economically by Gov. Kate Brown's business restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. He cited his role in launching the "Open Oregon" movement, which encouraged businesses to buck those restrictions and reopen in January 2021.

"We decided to stand up and fight back," he said.

Pulliam promoted the idea of school choice and said he favored revamping and decentralizing the Oregon Board of Education.

"Our kids go to some of the worst schools in the country despite the fact that we're in the top tier of school spending," he said. "It's time for school choice. ... Decisions need to be made at the local level."

He railed against crime and homelessness in Portland and Eugene, which he called "rotten to the core," and said as governor he would back law enforcement to the hilt.

"I want to triple the size of the state police," he said. "I want to lift up our county sheriffs and our local police departments."

Pulliam also answered questions from the audience, offering his views on topics including:

- The Greater Idaho movement: He'd rather work to

make Oregon better. "If you're going to leave the state, where are you going to go?" he asked. "Have you been to Boise lately? Have you been to Missoula lately? Cancer spreads, and we've got to fight back."

- New taxes, such as the corporate activity tax: "We would look to overturn those," he said. Pulliam added he would also work to eliminate emergency clauses, which allow new taxes to go into effect without time for a ballot initiative in opposition, and rein in government fees. "They can't pass any new taxes, so they do it to you with fees."

- Reliance on grants to fund local government services: He thinks it's a problem but didn't have a ready-made answer. "We've got to find a way to build up our local tax base," he said. "I don't have a magic solution."

- Handing control of U.S. Forest Service land to counties: "It needs to be local control," he said. "Nobody else is going to care more ... than local folks."

- Social services: They should be provided by family members, faith organizations and community members as much as possible. "We need to get away from government being the solution to these problems."

- The Second Amendment: Pulliam cited the Russian invasion of Ukraine as an example of why Americans should have the right to bear arms. "It's for us to arm ourselves against tyrannical governments and defend ourselves," he said. "That's why I'm a big supporter of the Second Amendment."

John Day hosting April 26 open house

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — The city of John Day is hosting an open house on Tuesday, April 26, in the Trowbridge Pavilion at the Grant County Fairgrounds, 411 NW Bridge St.

The open house will showcase ongoing and upcoming city projects and answer questions the public may have about those projects.

The open house will run from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and is an informal event in lieu of the City Council meeting normally held on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Residents and visitors can come and see project boards, speak with council members and pick up snapshot descriptions of each project.

Frosty 5K race draws 40 runners

Blue Mountain Eagle

DAYVILLE — Despite chilly temps and unseasonable snow showers, 40 runners turned out to compete in Dayville's annual Bunny Hop 5K on Saturday, April 16, according to City Recorder Ruthie Moore.

Organized by Emma Winkelman, this was the seventh year for the benefit race. This year the proceeds went to help with landscaping for the Dayville Community Hall, which is in the final stages of a major renovation.

This year's winners, by age group, were:

- 13 and under: Preston Fretwell of Dayville, in a time of 31:13
- 14-26: Cheyanne Clark of Dayville, 27:40
- 27-49: Nick Swagger of Redmond, 24:55
- 50 and over: Cheri Cook of Kimberly, 35:28

As always, the event was followed by the annual Easter egg hunt at Dayville City Park.



Contributed Photo
Jessie Swagger crosses the finish line of the Bunny Hop 5K in Dayville on Saturday, April 16, 2022.

WHAT'S HAPPENING



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20 County commissioner candidate forum

- 6 p.m., main conference room, Grant County Regional Airport, 72000 Airport Road, John Day

The Blue Mountain Eagle will host a free public forum with the three candidates running for a seat on the Grant County Court. The candidates will talk about their campaigns and answer questions about issues facing the county. Coffee and cookies will be served.

THURSDAY, APRIL 21 Pool facility open house

- 6-7:30 p.m., Parks and Rec office, 845 NW Bridge St., John Day

The John Day/Canyon City Parks and Recreation District will host an open house to answer questions about plans for a new community pool at the Seventh Street Sports Complex in John Day.

FRIDAY, APRIL 22 Bingo night

- 6 p.m., John Day Elks Lodge, 140 NE Dayton St., John Day

A fundraiser for the Grant Union High School Class of 2026. Dinner provided by the Elks Club at 6 p.m., with bingo starting at 6:30. The cost to play is \$5 per card.

'62 Days planning meeting

- 7 p.m., Sel's Brewery,

113 Washington St., Canyon City

Regular weekly meeting of the Whiskey Gulch Gang to plan this year's '62 Days festivities. Anyone who wants to help is welcome. For more information, call Colby Farrel at 541-620-0874.

MONDAY, APRIL 25 County commissioner candidate night

- 7 p.m., Prairie City Public Works Department, Front Street, Prairie City

The Greater Prairie City Community Association will host a "meet and greet" reception for the three candidates running for a seat on the Grant County Court. Cookies, coffee and tea will be served.

FRIDAY, APRIL 29 '62 Days planning meeting

- 7 p.m., Sel's Brewery, 113 Washington St., Canyon City

Regular weekly meeting of the Whiskey Gulch Gang to plan this year's '62 Days festivities. Anyone who wants to help is welcome. For more information, call Colby Farrel at 541-620-0874.

THURSDAY, MAY 5 Prairie City School Kindergarten Roundup

- 3 p.m., Mrs. Sharp's room, Prairie City School, 740 Overholt St.

Parents can sign their child up for kindergarten. Children must turn 5 before Sept. 1 to be eligible. Bring a copy of your child's birth certificate and immunization record.

FRIDAY, MAY 6 '62 Days planning meeting

- 7 p.m., Sel's Brewery, 113 Washington St., Canyon City

Regular weekly meeting of the Whiskey Gulch Gang to plan this year's '62 Days festivities. Anyone who wants to help is welcome. For more information, call Colby Farrel at 541-620-0874.

SATURDAY, MAY 7 Jaclyn Clarry Transplant Fundraiser

- 5-8 p.m., John Day Elks Lodge, 140 NE Dayton St.

A benefit dinner of pulled pork or chicken with beans and coleslaw, plus a silent

auction, live dessert auction and raffle. Proceeds go toward medical expenses for Jaclyn Clarry of John Day, a mother of four awaiting a donor for a kidney transplant. To help with the event or donate auction items, call Bonnie Cearnas at 541-571-3284 or Patty Ross at 541-620-4841.

Do you have a community event in Grant County you'd like to publicize? Email information to editor@bmeagle.com. The deadline is noon Friday for publication the following Wednesday.

Your Rural Family Health Clinic

Services Provided:

- Primary Care
- Acute Care
- Women's Health Exams
- Men and Children Exams
- Immunizations
- Family Planning
- Contraception
- Pregnancy Testing & Referrals
- HIV Testing & Referrals
- Cacoon
- WIC
- High Risk Infants
- Maternity Case Management

Grant County HEALTH Department

528 E. Main, St. E., John Day

Monday - Thursday 7am - 6pm
Friday 8am - 5pm

Appointments available

Call and schedule your appointment today!

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888-443-9104
or 541-575-0429

Attend a Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Dinner and Benefit Auction

Where fun and fund-raising combine for a memorable evening.

Date: Saturday, April 23, 2022
Time: 4:00—Doors open 5:30—Dinner 7:30—Auction
Place: Pavilion—Grant County Fairgrounds

Ticket Information:
Gale Wall (541) 620-0455

A great time for a great cause. Proceeds benefit elk and other wildlife.

JOHN ROWELL

COUNTY COMMISSIONER

A TRUSTED MAN WORKING FOR YOU

Paid by John Rowell