

# Board rejects wrestling as school sport ; 'not feasible'

The Morrow County School Board turned down a request to begin the sport of wrestling in the district at the board meeting Monday night in Lexington.

Bill Hutchinson spoke on behalf of the wrestling enthusiasts. He said that wrestling is a unique sport which people of all sizes, height and weight can participate in. Many other sports are restrictive in that sense.

School board Chairman Ken Broadbent said although wrestling is a "good sport" and there was a lot of interest shown by many students in all of the Morrow County schools it just was not "economically feasible" right now to begin a wrestling program.

At the present time, only Wasco County and Sherman High School have wrestling programs in the Columbia Basin League. Those two schools travel across the mountains to the Willamette Valley to compete in wrestling.

The board members decided the travel would be too much for the gas allocation problem which now exists.

In defense of the board's lack of action, superintendent Matt Doherty said the athletic programs in the county in the last three years have increased by one-third (although he admitted it has been in the area of women's sports.) Doherty said if wrestling was added then another women's sport, possible gymnastics, would have to be added.

Hutchinson mentioned that a number of merchants in Heppner had expressed an interest in donating mats and other equipment for a wrestling team and the mats could be used for tumbling in physical education classes and for gymnastics too.

Doherty said that to begin a wrestling program would cost at least \$4,800 per school—less any donated equipment costs. "The other school districts in the league are saying hold the line on sports," Doherty said. "We are not going to be received with open arms if we expand our program. The other districts are not going to like it."

Chuck Starr, lone high school principal said, "I am a former wrestling coach and I would love to see wrestling here but let's look at it realistically. We could save money by using volunteers but volunteers don't last long. We could start a program and discontinue it if it does not work out but we all know it is harder to disallow a sport once it's started."

"Once a program gets started, younger kids will want to get into it at the junior high and grade school levels. The gas allocation is already tight. Even though there has been a lot of interest shown, there is already a great deal of

activity in sports."

In other board action, they accepted a county-wide visitation policy which requires a permission card to be obtained before entering a school.

Corky Hassell, an Irrigon teacher, felt that the visitation policy was restrictive on teachers on whom they could see, even after school was out, but the board passed the policy as written despite his objection.

"Passing this policy without change will only increase the distance between the administration and the teachers in the county," Hassell said.

The board also decided to accept the new bus bid from Diesel Service Unit, for the chassis, and Schetky N.W. Sales, for the body of the bus. The 30-passenger bus, when assembled and delivered to Lexington around April, could cost as much as \$18,584.27 but it was still the lowest bid.

The board approved the hiring of a teacher's aide or two half-time aides for the A.C. Houghton grade school in Irrigon. The teacher's aide position will be discontinued when the school moves to its new building. The grade school has grown from 511 students last year to 592 so far this year. The aides will be for the first grade level where there are about 30 students in

each of the three classes.

The board also approved that senior Leila Briedenbach, of Heppner High School, be allowed to finish out her last year even though her father, who works in the forest service department, will probably be moving because of a transfer.

They also ruled that Rita Gibson, also of Heppner High, may be allowed to continue school on a part-time basis.

Gibson works the lunch schedule at a local restaurant and misses three periods of school in the middle of the day. Gibson will be enrolled in the Diversified Occupation program at the high school to allow her to work and still go to school. The Diversified Occupation program usually only allows a student to miss two class periods a day.

The school board also decided Monday to increase the

number of baseball games the high schools in the county can play from 12 to 15 dates.

Riverside principal Dan Valtoso showed the main interest. He said the Morrow County Schools only play 60 per cent of the games that the schools they compete with play. He said it is hard to compete with teams that are playing that many more games.

Valtoso said his teams could

play many teams close to his school and he realized lone and Heppner were not in as good of location but they could play each other more often and therefore have more games.

He said the teams Riverside plays compete in from 18 to 30 games in a season for an average of 23 games.

Valtoso requested an increase from 12 to 20 games in the 10-week baseball season. The board decided that 15 dates to play on could give the Morrow County teams the

opportunity to play 20 games or more with double headers being scheduled.

Valtoso reasoned that with more games, more players will play and therefore more people will turn-out and that is the objective of the athletic program.

Heppner principal Jim Bier said "We don't have room to schedule more games because the spring schedule is packed," but he did add, after the board approved the increase, that he would add the increase if he could.



Morrow County School Board members (L-R) Pauline Winter, Ken Broadbent and Matt Doherty discuss the wrestling issue.

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## Road problem aired by County Court

County Court Judge D.O. Nelson labeled last week's session of the county road committee as a discussion session about road maintenance.

He said the court asked the committee to provide direction on formulating a road policy for the county. The committee meets again September 20 at the courthouse in Heppner.

On Tuesday, the Court was slated to hold a meeting with Neal Nunamaker of the city of Portland to discuss that city's idea to barge sludge from its sewage plants up the Columbia for disposal in the Boardman area. The court has submitted a list of questions to be answered by the city of Portland. No decisions are planned at the session, Nelson said.

## Zone change challenged by Boardman man

Arnold Braat, a Boardman landowner, has filed a petition with the State Land Conservation and Development Commission, challenging a zone change made by the Morrow County Planning Commission to allow construction of a subdivision near his farming land.

The Commission has scheduled a hearing on the matter October 12.

Braat first appealed to the County Court to rescind the zone change allowing the subdivision to be established on the grounds that noise from farm machinery and crop-dusting planes as well as the

environmental impact of dust and spray chemicals would pose a detrimental effect on the development.

The county court agreed with the Planning Commission's granting of approval for the subdivision following a hearing at the courthouse in Heppner. An attorney, Ed Glenn, representing Dewey West, the subdivision's development argued in favor of the proposal.

Interested persons may obtain more information by contacting the Appeals Coordinator of the Department of Land Conservation and Development, 1175 Court Street, N.E. Salem, Oregon, 97310.

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