

# County increases still lower than private sector salaries, judge says

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an increase from \$10,939 to \$17,945.

McElligott said even with these increases, county officials will still be low compared to salaries in the local private sector.

Columbia Basin Electric clerical employees make \$740 a month while county employees in the same jobs will make \$722. Bookkeepers at CBEC make \$1,100 to \$1,500 a month while the county makes \$777 to \$998. Clerical at the Bank of Eastern Oregon and Kinzua also make more as do bookkeepers at Kinzua. The school superintendent makes \$30,000 a year while the

county's top official, the judge, will make \$25,000.

McElligott said the largest increase in the budget is for the roads. That budget will increase from \$889,000 to \$1,511,581. Equipment in that budget will increase from \$121,000 to \$219,000.

The judge said the increase in the budget is part of a five-year plan to improve the road conditions in Morrow County.

He said six full-time employees are being added to the road department for a total of 18. About 60,000 gallons of gas is expected to be purchased at \$1.50 a gallon average. About

70,000 gallons of asphalt will be purchased at 80 cents a gallon.

McElligott said 65 miles of county roads will be resurfaced this year with patching done first. A road committee has surveyed all of the roads in the county and named 17 that need to be improved in the five-year period. They include Wilson, Bombing Range, McNab, Ione-Gooseberry, Rhea Creek, Baseline, Willow Creek, and the Sand Hollow Roads.

The judge said gutters on county roads have not been cleared for six years and that has caused water to build up

on roads and wash them out. He said gutters are now being worked on so the water will run off gravel roads. In September, he said the first phase of rebuilding will take place on the Bombing Range Road.

Road employees are working 10 hours a day, four days a week to save on transporting costs and to get more work done because time is not "wasted on traveling," McElligott said. He said the county is looking for more rock sites to stockpile materials so the road department won't have to travel as far as 25 miles to get to a crusher site.

A second construction phase will take place in February of 1981 at East Wilson Road. Patch work is done in May and June when the weather is warm.

A committee requested that the county attempt to pass a \$2 million special levy for the roads but it was turned down by the county court.

"It would take \$6 million just in materials (to improve the roads) not including the labor costs," McElligott said.

The Animal Control District is a new program that would provide county-wide animal control one day a week in each city. The animal pound would

be at a site in Irrigon. It will be voted on by a special ballot to see if the people in the county want a dog pound, McElligott said.

He added that every city except Lexington, has shown interest in the dog pound. A licensing program for dogs would be included with a possible charge of \$9 a year for dogs that are not neutered.

The cost of the Animal Control District would be a \$51,957 budget with taxes to pay for \$25,043.

The total budget is for \$4,280,740, up from \$3,898,266. Property taxes will pay for \$1,920,622, up from \$1,542,824.

All the budget is subject to tax relief from the state and will be on an A ballot only.

County Assessor Greg Sweek said the State will pay a portion of the taxes of 1,400 homeowners who filed for tax relief. Sweek said the other 5,000 taxpayers in the county did not file for the relief.

In October, when the assessors send out tax statements, persons who filed for the relief will have their bill reduced with the State paying a portion.

Sweek said \$602,000 has already been approved for the county budget because it is within the six percent limita-

tion. The county tax base is \$472,000.

Based on a county valuation of \$472 million, property taxes will be \$3.57 per \$1,000 valuation, up from \$3.22 per \$1,000 this year. On a \$60,000 piece of property, a taxpayer will pay \$214,000 for county taxes, up from \$193,20.

## Name omitted

Bonnie Arrington's name was omitted from the cast of the ski group, in a story in last week's issue about "Frankenstein Follies," that was staged last week at Heppner High School. The Heppner Gazette-Times regrets the omission.

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