

The Heppner Gazette-Times

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Heppner, Oregon



Weather

by the City of Heppner

	May 6-12		
	High	Low	Precip.
Tues.	54	38	.0
Wed.	60	35	.0
Thurs.	63	38	.0
Fri.	61	35	.0
Sat.	53	33	.0
Sun.	59	35	.0
Mon.	68	47	.0

Too many sites for Senior center

A Heppner senior citizen's group has a unique problem. Too many sites on which to build their proposed senior citizen center.

Monday night, controversy over which site is best came to the surface at the Morrow County fair board meeting.

The dispute developed when one group of seniors began working to have the center built on land across Hinton Creek behind the Heppner grade school. The county donated land for the center. The county donated land for the center and has said it will pay for a bridge, road and paving.

A second group of seniors want to build the building, not at Hinton Creek, but on the fairgrounds where the little league field is now located.

In response, the county fair board, which hopes to use the proposed center during fair for needed exhibit space, agreed to deed the seniors a 100 by 150 foot lot in the middle of the little league field on which to build the center.

The county court has since approved the transfer of land from the fair board to the seniors, and the controversy escalated.

Monday night several people spoke in favor of moving the center to the fairgrounds, but most spoke against.

"I object to donating the property," said fair board member Harold "Shorty" Peck. "The seniors themselves are not all in favor of it. There are two factions." Peck said the fair should keep the property because "there is no place we can gain an inch of ground. We are absolutely hemmed in."

Fair board chairman Charly Daly said he objected to the amount of money it would take to develop the Hinton Creek site, and he was in favor of the center being built at the fairgrounds. "It's (Hinton site) going to cost the county a bridge, streets and pavement," said Daly. "I think the county is in bad shape and they shouldn't be stuck with \$100,000 to \$150,000 in bridging and paving."

The Hinton Creek site is across the creek, and will require a new bridge, and then a road and paving around the site before a building can be constructed.

"I think Paul Jones and some others are pushing something that is going to cost the county a lot of money," Daly said.

Those on the other side argued that if the senior center were built on the fairgrounds, it would take away a little league field, and probably eliminate the baseball program at the junior high.



"Shorty" Peck

"The junior high uses that field to practice on," said coach and teacher Al Beck. "And it is inconceivable to me to put the High School and Junior High together (on the big field). It is not big enough and someone is going to get hurt." He said if the senior center is built at the fairgrounds, and the little league field is lost, "we would just drop junior high baseball."

Speaking for the Willow Creek Little League, George Koffler said his group had originally told the fair board there would be a new field built by the Corps of Engineers below the dam in Heppner; however, from the looks of the turnout this year, the little league would still need the field at the fairgrounds, Koffler said.

"We did say we would have a new field next year below the dam," Koffler said, "but I hope we didn't give the impression we no longer wanted to use the field here." Koffler said that there were 85 to 90 kids out for little league this year.

"We support the building of a senior citizens center, we just don't think it should be built on a little league field. Maybe you could build it farther back off the middle of the field," Koffler said.

Those in favor of building at the fairgrounds said the new building could be used for both the seniors, and during fair, for exhibit space.

"We are getting short on exhibit space," said Jane Rawlins, a member of both the fair committee and the senior citizens building committee. "Everyone is fighting for space and this would make a nice addition and give us some room," she said.

If the center were built at the fairgrounds it would take up space



Charly Daly

that has been used by carnivals in the past, however, Daly said the days of small carnivals at small fairs is over. "The cost of liability has made the small carnival a thing of the past," said Daly.

The fair board did not take any action during the meeting on the proposed senior site at the fairgrounds.

PUC advises

Shippers of options for saving line

The Heppner Branch line of the Union Pacific Railroad is in fairly good shape even if the railroad should decide to file for abandonment of the line, said Dave Astle, assistant Public Utility Commissioner of Oregon at a meeting Monday night in the courtroom of the Morrow County Courthouse in Heppner.

Astle and Claudia Howells, the manager of the Rail Abandonment Task Force, met with local shippers to gather data and advise them of the options for appeal that they have if Union Pacific should decide to file for abandonment with the Public Utilities Commission.

The state, cautioned Astle, does not have the power to stop abandonment, the federal government has jurisdiction there. Since deregulation of the railroads in 1980, they are more willing to abandon rail lines, especially since they were forced to purchase a bankrupt line in the northeastern U.S. and go into the rail business.

The task force, said Howells, can get information to the public concerning their options and to the railroads, encouraging them to do a

better job of seeking increased business on the line.

In the case of the Brownsville branch line, Howells said, only one shipper was left, but his business was completely railroad oriented. When the line petitioned for abandonment, the shipper filed only a weak protest and the abandonment was granted. Now the track is gone, and the shipper has had to rearrange his business completely in order to accommodate trucks. The product is trucked to Eugene and loaded on the railroad, because it requires long distance hauling, and trucking is too expensive for long distance.

In Tillamook, the railroad filed for abandonment, and the Port of Tillamook took over operation of the line when protests failed and abandonment was approved.

Basic causes for rail abandonment are probably competition from low-cost short-haul trucks which puts the railroad in the position of hauling only grain, coal and hazardous commodities which they would prefer to avoid because the profits are in long-haul general freight.

Another problem with branch lines is the high cost of maintenance

which, Astle says, the railroad claims is nearly 50% labor costs.

Astle listed five important elements of a good protest:

1. Good data from shippers detailing their use of the railroad is needed so the PUC can catch any inaccuracies which might exist in the railroad's petition.

2. An analysis of the percentage of their business which depends on the railroad in order to convince the Interstate Commerce Commission that the railroad is necessary.

3. An explanation of the impact the loss of the railroad would have on their business, if it would mean that production would be cut, jobs lost, or business reduced.

4. An analysis of the reasons the loss of service would impact the business.

5. An explanation of the effect of the railroad's actions on how much is shipped, because the ICC needs to know if the railroad is trying to discourage shippers to use the line.

The task force, said Howells, has agreed that if a branch line shows little use and if no growth is expected in the future, that abandonment should not be fought.

Representatives from Kinzua Corp., Morrow County Grain Growers, Heppner Nor-Gas, Jordan Elevator Co., Crum Ranches, Triply H Ranch, and Proudfoot Ranch said that they had shipped a total of approximately 722 cars last year, but that there is potential for greater use of the line. Clyde Allstott of Heppner Nor-Gas said that he currently received 100% of his propane (15 cars per year) by rail, and Crum ranches ship 100% or 60-70 carloads of grain per year, but others said that there was a potential for increased usage of the line.

Larry Mills, manager of M.C.G.G. said that a lot of grain is currently being stored because the farm program dictates that it be stored rather than shipped. He expects the elevators to be 80% full by harvest which will make it necessary to truck grain to Arlington and ship it by barge down the Columbia. The truck-barge method is a faster way of moving grain during harvest, he said.

Kent Goodyear, speaking for Kinzua Corp. said that because of a "shake-up" at Union Pacific, Kinzua felt that the railroad might file for abandonment even if use of the line were increased, but that railroad officials had indicated that they might consider the possibility of a "Short Line" operator maintaining and running the line while U.P. maintained ownership.

Howells reported that Union Pacific is not abandoning lines as

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Planning Commission recommends

No building in growth area

By Avon Melby

Heppner Planning Commission recommended Monday night that the city council should discourage those who request city water service in the urban growth boundary of the city.

Building in the urban growth boundary should take place after the town has filled up, and should not be on a request basis when there are so many houses for sale and empty lots which could be used as building sites within the city.

There should be no building in the city's urban growth boundary unless it was to be annexed to the city, or provides a distinct advantage to the city.

Planning Commission Chairman Dave Allstott said it was creating a hardship on citizens sending them to planners to ask for recommendation on water permits when the city could tell them these requirements before they went to so much trouble.

Ken Key did not formally ask, but said he was going to the county planning commission to get their permission to place a mobile home on his two-acre lot on cemetery hill, and would ask for approval next month from city planners, so he could get a water permit.

If a development plan, including proposed roads and lot divisions, is

presented the planners it can be reviewed with the possibility of annexation, Allstott said, in a discussion after Key left. Commissioners recognized that some of the lots Key has are prize locations overlooking Willow Lake and will probably eventually be sold for homes. But roads must be developed, and it must be planned and controlled growth.

Extension of time on conditional use permit, and a change, was granted Helen Riehl, for property behind the truck wash. The Riehls are going to tear down an old shed and replace it with a metal building 38 by 66 feet to be used as a storage area for both their drive-in business and the car wash. They will build a cyclone fence around the area.

No decision has been received from the Corps of Engineers on the Jay Coil request to place a mobile home on West Sperry street, city attorney Bill Kuhn said. The Corps must determine if the location is within the flood zone before a conditional use permit can be allowed. Request for the permit was made last month.

Kuhn will attend a workshop in Pendleton later this month. He said he would learn more requirements for updating of the city's comprehensive plan so work on that could get started.



Garden club members place evergreen in planters

Civic groups plant evergreens

By Justine Weatherford

The planting of the new evergreen trees on May 7, in the large boxes on Heppner's Main Street is a joint effort of two organizations that believe strongly in civic beautification and the stimulation and invigoration of civic pride.

The Heppner Chamber of Commerce has contributed the money for the plantings and the members of the Heppner Garden Club have done the work of refilling the eight large boxes which the Chamber established last year.

Soon trailing lobelia, petunias and geraniums will add color to the boxes says Martha Doherty, the garden club secretary who has been a leader in this civic project. Gard-

ners Bebe Munkers, Verna Brinda, Bill Rawlins, Dorothy and Wilbur Jackson assisted the garden club officers, President Jane Rawlins and Martha in filling the boxes properly.

The eight evergreens planted were carefully selected because they are especially root hardy and have an excellent chance of survival. The two trees near the Shoe Box and the Elks are Skyrocket Junipers; the two near the Post Office and Case Furniture are Austrian Pines; near Murray Drugs and the Wagon Wheel the trees are Emerald Green Arborvitae and near the Bank of Eastern Oregon and Ben Franklin Savings and Loan the gardeners planted Moon Glow Junipers. The following businesses have generously donated the water

for the boxes: Les Schwab, Sears, Central Market, Abstract and Title, Murrays Drugs and Gardners.

After their considerable expense and effort, the Chamber members and the gardeners hope that the citizens who live here or who visit here will not mistreat the planted boxes. Already some trash has been removed from them this spring. White metal trash cans are nearby the planted boxes, and the garden club hopes that everyone will deposit refuse in those trash containers and that the planter boxes will be kept flourishing and neat and a positive step in promoting and enlivening civic pride.

Spray woman wins Mother's Day diamond

The 1/4-carat diamond offered as a special Mothers Day promotion by Heppner merchants was won by a Spray woman, Jeri Wight, who entered the drawing at Central Market. Retail value of the diamond is \$299.95.

Merchants who participated in the diamond give away are Sears, Country Rose, M & R Floor Covering, McDonald's Chevrolet, Shoe Box, Central Market, Petersons, Court Street Market, Dr. Rolan, Les Schwab, Bud's Pub, Case Furniture

R & W Drive In, Murrays Drug, Gardner's Men's Wear, Coast to Coast, Heppner Elks, Morrow County Grain Growers, and Pettyjohn's Farm & Builders Supply.

Some polling places changed

Before going to vote next Tuesday, be sure you know where you're going. Voters in four precincts need to go to a location different from where they voted in the last election.

Northwest Heppner Precinct No. 9 will vote at the New Pettyjohn Office rather than the Morrow County Museum.

Hardman Precinct No. 3 will vote at the Morrow County Courthouse in Heppner rather than at the Hardman Building.

Lexington Precinct No. 7 will vote at the new Mormon Church rather than at the School District Office building.

South Boardman Precinct No. 2 will vote at the old U.S. National Bank building instead of at Sam Boardman Elementary Building.

To refresh your memory, voters in other precincts, vote at the following locations:

North Boardman, No. 1 - Greenfield Grange; Ione, No. 4 - Ione City Hall; N. Irrigon, No. 5 - North Morrow Annex; South Irrigon, No. 6 - Columbia Jr. High; Northeast Heppner, No. 8 - Heppner Neighborhood Center; Southeast and Southwest Heppner, No. 10 and 11 - Morrow County Courthouse.