

The Heppner

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Several concerns aired at Heppner Town meeting

Medical districts, school levy election, the Port of Morrow and the city of Heppner were the main topics of discussion at a town hall meeting held in Heppner last Wednesday night.

About 150 people came to the meeting to discuss problems facing Morrow County.

Discussions about a proposed medical district in the county took up most of the time at the meeting, with Larry Mills, Pioneer Memorial Hospital Administrator John Hempel and Boardman doctor Steve Zielinski the main participants.

Mills is chairman of a committee which just finished work on a three-page study of the needs and funding of health care in the county.

Made up of citizens from all areas of the county, the committee recommended, after one month of work, that a single health district be set up to oversee health care and provide for equitable distribution of health care funds in the county.

The committee was formed earlier by the county court after the court received petitions from both ends of the county requesting health districts be set up.

One petition from the Boardman area asked that a separate health district be formed in the county with the dividing line at the Willamette Baseline North of Lexington. A second petition from the Heppner area asked the court to consider forming one county-wide district.

The Boardman petition was initiated because of what residents there saw as unequal distribution of funds in the county. The Heppner signatures were gathered later feeling that one district would better serve the needs of the county as a whole.

At Wednesday's meeting Mills said that during the committee's work it was learned that lone is interested in having an ambulance and crew in that town, and that Boardman needs new equipment for its EMTs (including a new ambulance), improvements made to the North Morrow Medical Center and a new

addition made to the clinic to house the ambulance.

The committee also recommended that a rapid response vehicle should be located in Irrigon, and that space should be provided at the North Morrow Annex in Irrigon for use by a physician on a part time basis.

For Heppner the committee "strongly" recommended that the Board of Pioneer Memorial Hospital take immediate steps to reduce operating costs there. It said that the hospital beds should be reduced from 12 to four and the nursing home beds be increased by eight.

The committee felt that the property taxes used by the hospital be reduced by the same amount needed to fund the committee's recommendations for improvements in the other communities, thus causing no overall increase in taxes. If this could not be accomplished it was recommended that the district board "review the status of the hospital for change to an emergency center."

Hospital Administrator John Hempel said cost cutting measures are already underway at the hospital; however, he stressed that the single biggest thing the people can do to preserve the hospital "is to use it."

"If we had two more patients per day using the hospital there would be no more need for a tax asking," he said. "People need to utilize in-town physicians. These are things people have to look at. If they want a hospital here in the long-run they better use it," he said.

Having one medical district in the county received strong support from those present at the town hall meeting, with most saying they did not wish to see the county split.

Dr. Zielinski of Boardman spoke out against the committee's recommendation, saying he felt it was a stalling tactic, and that a single district would provide no "formula" for distribution of funds.

Under the single health district, representatives would be elected from all areas of the county to ad-

County approves emergency funding for Morrow County Neighborhood Council

The Morrow County Court last Wednesday approved a payment of \$1,000 to the directors of the Morrow County Neighborhood Council. The county said it would be necessary to have a signed agreement stipulating public use of the money to maintain operations pending incorporation of the Morrow County Neighborhood Council before payment could be made.

The Neighborhood Council has filed for status as a nonprofit corporation, but nonprofit status was not official at last Wednesday's Court meeting. The commissioners considered, but took no action concerning, a \$2500 donation during January and an additional donation of \$1000 the first of each of the next five months, which would total the amount included in this year's budget but not already paid for the Neighborhood Center.

Morrow County Judge Louis Carlson asked the executive board of directors if they could operate the

Neighborhood Council very long on an all-volunteer basis.

"We can do it because the need is so great," Neola Mackey, president of the council's board of directors said. We plan to have a cheese distribution in February, and will continue local food drives which always do well.

All food distributed during the last Thanksgiving and Christmas distributions with the exception of a Boardman firms' donation of turkeys, was collected in the Heppner-Lexington area, she said. We are making plans to hold food drives in Boardman and Irrigon and store the food there for distribution in that area. During the past July-Dec., the Hermiston Neighborhood Center distributed 4,428 pounds of food in the Boardman area and 3,371 pounds of food in the Irrigon area.

The Court also considered bills for labor and materials at the Foundation building on the hill by Heppner Medical Clinic. The Foundation

Building is being remodeled to house Justice Court, the Morrow County Mental Health Services, and Juvenile Services. The Court asked that contractors Dennis Miller and David Allstott submit their bills for contracted services rather than an hourly billing, since the county will approve payment based on the contract.

Undersheriff Verlin Denton asked the Court's approval for purchase of seven bullet-proof vests required by the deputies' contracts. "The vests we have are 7-10 years old and apparently they deteriorate and are only good for five years," he said. Quantity price for the vests is \$290 each. The Court approved the purchase from Sheriff's Dept. funds.

The Court also approved renewal of a service contract for maintenance of a microfilm camera in the Sheriff's Office. The terminal is a \$777 computer terminal for the Sheriff's Office. The terminal is necessary, the undersheriff explained because the department is behind in filing reports which road deputies write on the word processor because they can get back on the road much faster than if they had to write the forms by hand. The other three terminals in the Sheriff's Office are in almost constant use, he said.

In other business, the Court approved payment of \$12,468 for the addition at the North Morrow Annex Bldg. in Irrigon and withheld \$4,060 from payment until the windows, doors, and the floor are repaired satisfactorily.

approved purchase of sodium lights for the front of the Courthouse Bldg. in Heppner.

approved six property tax refunds.

heard a road report from Road Supervisor Don Ball.

approved putting an overhead computer wire from the hospital to the Foundation Bldg. so the offices there would be connected with the county's computer system.

heard that county Budget Officer LoRayne Bowman is sending out budget worksheets to the various county departments. The first budget workshop was scheduled for 9 a.m. January 30.

held an executive session regarding personnel.

reappointed Mary Bryant to a three-year term on the Revenue Sharing Committee.

reappointed Barbara Bloodsworth to the Morrow County Museum Board.

approved claims after Commissioner Irv Rauch determined that shoe polish which the Sheriff's Dept. purchased was actually \$24 worth of leather dye which the Sheriff's Deputies use to keep their leather gear from looking worn. Rauch sprayed a dab of the black dye on his brown shoe then voted approval.

Rents from apartments in the hotel would be used to pay off the debt, but Kuhn said the city council has shown reluctance to commit to the project, fearing it may go defunct.

However, Kuhn said that further delay on the project could jeopardize the \$500,000 grant already approved.

Mayor Cara Costa pointed out that the city is indeed being asked to put its name on a loan of \$360,000, but that it would be fully secured by the hotel. She said the value of the hotel would exceed the amount of the loan. "The project definitely would be a shot in the arm for downtown development," she said.

Discussion of the school levy election also was aired at the meeting.

Superintendent Doyle McCaslin said that the public is asking for better public relations and more communications over budget matters in the district. He said the district is considering a survey to feel out public opinion in the county.

On the reputation of the district when it is having budget problems, McCaslin said "we have wounded ourselves in attracting new teachers."

"We are competing nationwide for teachers. I think if the staff sees another good effort in May (when the 1987-88 budget is voted on) then I think it will help," he said.

Bob Miller of the Port of Morrow also spoke at the meeting, giving a brief overview of land and utilities available at the port.

Miller said the port is geared up to handle large or small industrial development, and that it hoped to increase its shipping through a container shipping dock located on port property.

Lifeguard begins registration service

Lifeguard Medical Transport, a non-profit air ambulance based in Pendleton has announced the inception of the Lifeguard Medical Transport Rural Registration System.

Rural Registration is available to any individual or business living or

working outside the limits of any city, town, or municipality within the Lifeguard Medical Transport service area (150 miles in any direction from Pendleton).

Anyone wishing to register need
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Mustang Power
 Mustangs Wayne Wilgers (32), Gene Garrett (40), and Trent Harrison (34) plot to take the ball from Stanfield during last Saturday's game. The Mustangs went on to win the game 60-51. See story page 8.

County hears recommendations and objections for one health care district

**By Donna Schmidt
 Boardman Enterprise**
 A single county-wide health care district governed by an elected board of directors was the recommendation presented to the Morrow County

Court at the conclusion of the first public hearing January 6 concerning the formation of separate medical districts within the county.

Larry Mills, chairman of the ad hoc committee appointed by the

County Court in early December to review health care throughout the county, read the recommendation before County Commissioners Irv Rauch, G.W. "Jerry" Peck, Judge Louis Carlson, and an attentive

crowd of about 50 people.

In the course of its review, the committee talked with members of the current health care boards, reviewed operating budgets, looked at existing medical equipment and facilities, and examined current county policies governing health care.

In its fact-finding report, the committee stated it found "...the current system of funding and operating the health care delivery system in the county neither fair nor adequate for the needs of the county's residents and that a change needs to be made to provide a system that is dedicated to solely providing health care."

Part of the proposed system would include a seven-member board of directors composed of three elected representatives from the north end of the county, three from the south end, and one position at large. The board would oversee the deliverence of health care in the county while retaining the existing medical boards in an advisory capacity.

In the event a county-wide health care district were formed and a board of directors elected, the committee suggested changes or improvements be made in each of the five cities within the county (see box). Funds for the improvements should be acquired by reducing the tax requirements for Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner, the report said.

No specific guidelines were recommended on the amount of funds necessary to satisfy health care needs within the county or on the manner of distribution of funds to each end of the county.

The committee viewed the purchase of a defibrillator for the North Morrow Medical Clinic, a solution warmer for the North Morrow Ambulance, and a training fund for EMTs as critical, immediate needs. The provision of revenue sharing funds was suggested as one option for meeting those immediate needs.

The committee asked the county court to act on the recommendation within 30 days, the same time period the committee had to complete its investigation and present a recommendation.

Members of the audience applauded the committee for its efforts, recognizing the time restraints the committee faced, but the recommendation was not without opposition. Several people testified in opposition to creating new government to address an old issue and urged the court to deal with the issue themselves.

"I have a lot of respect for the committee," said Ed Glenn, "but I think they missed the boat. I'm telling you folks, we don't need more government. We just need the present government to operate more efficiently. That's the problem; the only problem."

Glenn urged the court to make a decision. "We've let a problem develop and it's gotten out of hand," he said. "Don't pass the buck fellas, you take the bull by the horns and solve the problem."

Steven Rowe, a member of the North Morrow Medical Board and a proponent of separate medical districts, voiced no confidence in a county-wide health care system. "The north end has petitioned to

the County Court, the county court appoints a board, the board recommends appointing another board," Rowe said. "What assurance do we have that the new board will address the concerns," he queried, "no one as done it now."

Rowe stressed that the north end was looking for provision of needs, not a gold-plated system.

At the end of the hearing, Judge
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G-T begins new weekly publication



A new publication, The Morrow County Trader, begins publication this week. Look for the free shopper in stores and businesses in Lone, Lexington, and Heppner.

Published by the Heppner Gazette.

Times, The Trader will feature classified ads and short community notices.

As an introduction, free classified ads will be offered in The Trader for the next two weeks. Look for your copy of The Trader and use the free

classified ad coupon found inside. Free classifieds will not be taken over the phone.

To place display ads in The Trader contact an advertising representative at the Heppner Gazette.

Special Election January 13 (Unofficial Results)	Irrigon	Boardman	Lone	Lexington	Heppner Hardman	Total
	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
School Levy \$366,736 per year for three years	353 192	471 114	222 59	116 89	523 259	1685 713
Passed	Passed by 161	Passed by 357	Passed by 163	Passed by 27	Passed by 264	Passed by 972

Weather Report

By City of Heppner

January 7 - January 13	High	Low	Rain	Snow
Wed.	37	29	0	
Thurs.	38	20	0	
Fri.	37	16	0	
Sat.	35	18	0	
Sun.	37	22	0	
Mon.	51	22	0	
Tues.	47	31	0	T

Market Report

Complements of the Morrow County Grain Growers

Tuesday, Jan 13		
Soft White		
Jan		\$2.96
Feb		\$2.97/\$2.98
March		\$2.99
New Crop		\$2.75
Barley		
Jan		\$83
Feb		\$84.50
New Crop		\$69
Hard Red Winter Ordinaries		
Jan		\$2.91
PIK		
Cash by Fri.		106%
On account		108%