

Morrow County's Home-Owned Newspaper

The Heppner

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School budget up less than 7%

Next year's proposed Morrow County school budget is up less than 7 percent.

Last week's Gazette-Times incorrectly stated the percent increase to be higher.

The budget is up \$630,217, mainly because of negotiated salary increases and benefits, says Superintendent Doyle McCaslin.

The total school budget proposed for next year is up from \$9,020,510 to \$9,650,727, an increase of \$630,217 or 6.99 percent.

McCaslin said that the district is working in several areas to hold down the budget expenditures, including:

1. reduction of requests for staffing.
2. more efficient allocation of staff time.
3. elimination of "cosmetic" remodeling, furnishings, furniture, etc.
4. placement of energy savings lighting.
5. elimination of many improvement projects
6. repair rather than replace buses, heat pumps, and typewriters.
7. elimination of most new purchases such as shop equipment, grounds equipment, maintenance equipment, and instructional equipment.
8. no major repairs, including roofs "patch and make do will be the order of the day."

"This change means that our focus will be on continuing all educational and extra-curricular programs at present levels, setting the priority on maintaining programs for youngsters rather than on upkeep and improvement of buildings, grounds and equipment," McCaslin said in his budget message.

Property taxes needed to fund the proposed budget will be up 14 percent, says McCaslin, mostly due to lower interest earnings by the district, a lower collection rate of previous year's taxes, and less federal forest fees.

Tax rates to fund the levy are estimated to be \$1.30 higher next

year, from \$8.01 to \$9.31 per thousand of valuation.

The total property tax levy is estimated to be \$7,237,692 up \$895,504 from last year.

"I must emphasize that these are very rough estimates," McCaslin said, adding that larger ending fund balances may bring property taxes down.

McCaslin also pointed out that it is necessary the budget be passed on the first election. "As you may recall, we are allowed on ly one vote-one request to exceed the 'net tax rate' limitation. Failing once means that we are in another mess in not only determining how much can be levied legally but also in actually getting voter approval of enough money to operate at or near present levels," he said.

The next meeting of the budget committee will be held on February 23, 7:30 p.m. at Riverside High in Boardman.

Supplemental tax statements will go out Feb. 24

The Morrow County Tax Collector will be sending out the supplemental tax statements for the Morrow County School District levy that was passed on January 13. These statements will be mailed on February 24 and will have a due date of March 15. The 42% tax rate is the rate necessary to collect the additional \$366,736 for the Morrow County School District. This supplemental statement is entitled to the 3% discount if paid by the due date. Once the due date has passed, the amount remaining unpaid on the supplemental tax statement will be combined with the regular Tax Roll and be treated as if it had been extended on the November 15, 1986 Tax Roll.



Holiday for Lovers

Youngsters at Teddy Bears Workshop (above) and not-so-youngsters at Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home took time out Friday to celebrate St. Valentine's Day.



Satisfied Customers — Stormy Jo Howard (left) daughter of Maureen Howard of Lexington sits comfortably on the tractor tire while Melissa Pettyjohn, daughter of Kerry and Larry Pettyjohn of Heppner enjoys her breakfast at the Morrow County Grain Growers appreciation breakfast held on February 14.



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County will require 9% property tax increase to balance budget

Morrow County proposes to levy a total of \$319,674 more property tax dollars this year than for 1986, a 9% increase.

The amount voters will see on the March 31 ballot—a one-year operating levy—will be \$2,710,611. An additional \$428,477 will appear as a separate measure on the ballot earmarked for county health care. Both ballot amounts total \$3,139,088 and are included with the tax base, \$553,320, when figuring the county's tax rate of \$4.34 per \$1,000 of assessed property tax value. A tax base is an amount already voted on which does not need yearly approval.

The county's total budget—a balance sheet of revenues and expenses—is down \$501,188 from last year.

The tax rate increase (up 48% from

Hometown contest winner

Linda Englert, Heppner, correctly identified all the store pictures in last week's "Re-Discover Your Hometown" contest, to become the first winner of \$100 in gift certificates. Linda's entry was the first correct entry drawn.

To enter this week's contest just look inside for contest rules and entry blank, and you could be the lucky winner of \$100 in gift certificates.

Stores to enter this week are: Coast to Coast, Shoe Box, Murrays and Bank of Eastern Oregon.



Linda Englert Win fair and rodeo pass

Entries for the 1987 Morrow County Fair and Rodeo theme-contest are due at the fair office March 5. The person submitting the winning entry will receive a free pass to the 1987 fair and rodeo and another prize which will be announced later.

Entries should be mailed to Morrow County Fair and Rodeo, P.O. Box 464, Heppner, OR 97836.

Fair Board asks lottery funds for building

The Morrow County Court last Wednesday lent its support to a proposed Fair Board project to build a 60' x 180' steel building to provide indoor animal exhibit space and show rings during the fair, and to provide the additional use for shows, sporting events, and auction sales during the remainder of the year.

The clear span steel structure would replace the existing sheep barn on the east boundary of the fairgrounds.

No objections to the project were raised at a public hearing held during the court meeting. The Fair Board will apply for lottery funds, a portion of which have been specifically earmarked for fairgrounds improvement. Six county fairs in Oregon were given grants in 1986-87.

The Fair Board estimates the building will cost \$72,888 excluding electrical and plumbing costs. This

year's Fair and Rodeo Budget includes \$16,000 for matching funds if the grant should be received. The county also approved \$2,000 from revenue sharing for the building. "In kind" matching will be used also, a fair board spokesperson said, to level the ground and install plumbing and wiring.

In other business, the Court:

-drafted a final agreement with the Morrow County Neighborhood Council to provide \$1300 per month through June 30 to be used for operating expenses. A temporary funding agreement signed by members of the council's executive board was in effect until the council's non-profit corporation status was ratified by the state.

-approved claims.

-discussed winter road conditions with Road Supervisor Don Ball. The Court and the road supervisor also discussed possible longterm equipment investments either by lease or

purchase agreements.

-learned that rock samples taken from the Boeing rock crusher site appear to meet specifications with no problems. "The aggregate is relatively durable and suitable for asphalt purposes," said Steve Anderson of Anderson-Perry and Assoc., an engineering consulting firm from LaGrande. The court last week asked Anderson to draw samples from both piles of rock at the Boeing site, do laboratory tests, and report his findings to the court.

-heard concerns of Boardman EMT Cheryl Animons that four members of the health care transition team met and discussed business which concerned the entire team without notifying the other three members. The Court said the members were discussing possible "ground rules and housekeeping" matters in preparation of the team's first meeting and said it would address the matter appropriately.

assessor and decided to use the less conservative valuation for the county.

If the county's total value should come in (in September when estimates are in the assessor's office) at less than the \$850 million, the county could not collect the entire \$3,692,408 (the county's operating amount, \$2,710,611, plus the medical operating levy, \$428,477, and the \$553,320 tax base.) They could only collect taxes which the \$4.34 tax rate would raise.

County employee (except the road

department) salary increases are based on the negotiated contract increases for the sheriff's department.

Road Dept. employees and elected officials (except the County Court) salaries were increased based on negotiated union contract amounts.

The budget committee decided that the county judge's salary should remain the same as last year. They also determined that the county commissioner positions were not funded adequately according to the responsibility and amount of time the job required. Commissioners this year received half the salary of other elected officials. The budget committee said commissioners should receive half the judge's salary because the judge's position requires a half-time commissioner and half-time juvenile court judge. The change will mean an additional \$2,772 annually per commissioner. Commissioners have been paid \$13,056 each year and are projected to receive \$15,828.

Replacement of road department equipment is the major item in capital expenditures. Much of the equipment is falling apart and historically, the budget committee has cut replacement of the equipment from the budget when short on money. The county needs a long range replacement program for equipment, the judge said.

A Lifeguard serial approved two years ago will not be on the ballot this year. In its third year, the levy will raise \$28,143 for operation of the Lifeguard helicopter in Morrow County.

Weather Report

February 11 - 17
 High Low Rain

Wed	40	31	07
Thurs	54	28	11
Fri	58	32	09
Sat	55	34	02
Sun	53	39	0
Mon	51	36	06
Tues	53	38	02

Market Report

Comments of the Morrow County Grain Growers

Tuesday, February 17
 Soft White

Feb	53.11
March	53.13
April	53.11
May	52.99/52.95
June	52.86/52.84
July	52.79/52.78
August	52.77

Barley

Feb	587
New crop	577
Hard Red Winter Ordinaries	53.00

PIK

Cash	109%
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