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Silence shrouds resignation of hospital administrator

Hospital board members aren't saying much following the surprise resignation last Thursday of Pioneer Memorial Administrator John Hempel.

Hempel submitted his resignation after a closed executive session of the board Thursday at 8:30 a.m.



John Hempel

"There were some opposing views on management of the hospital and in discussing these matters with John, he chose to resign," said hospital board chairman Marcia Anderson.

Contacted Tuesday, Boardmember Pat Wright said that reasons for Hempel's resignation could not be told at this time, but would be revealed later. "We just can't say anything at this time," she said.

Boardmember Frank Pearson said that the board was going to move forward from here and that "we're going to look at it as an opportunity. We're in pretty good shape."

Anderson did not give details on the resignation, but did say that under Pioneer Memorial's management agreement Hempel actually works for St. Anthony Hospital in Pendleton.

"We will be looking for another person," Anderson said about filling the administrative spot. "St. Anthony will screen people and then we (Pioneer Board) will look them over." An interim administrator has already been named, and is on the job now, she added. (See related story)

Hempel has been hospital administrator at Pioneer Memorial Hospital for the past 18 months.



Signs of Spring

Mom and calf cast springtime shadows in their pasture along Willow Creek Rd. between Lexington and Ione.

Acting administrator on the job at Pioneer

Marvin Dearr, director of development at St. Anthony Hospital in Pendleton, has been acting administrator of Pioneer Memorial Hospital since last week's resignation of former administrator John Hempel.

Dearr joined the staff at St. Anthony Hospital in July, 1985. Part of his job as director of development, he said, is marketing. He has been involved in development of the St. Anthony clinic at Weston and the St. Anthony Health Care Center in Hermiston.

He has a Masters degree in health care administration from Baylor University, Waco, Texas. His health care background is in dentistry clinics in the U.S. Army. "Administration has basic philosophies," he said, "which carry over in all fields of medicine."

An acting administrator's job is to keep things going until a permanent administrator is found, he said. According to Pioneer's agreement with St. Anthony Hospital, St. Anthony screens applicants and makes recommendations to the Pioneer board. They are active and interested in the progression of the hospital, Dearr said, but it will take time for the hospital board to review applications.

"Much credit goes to the hospital staff," he continued, "for the good condition and quality care which the hospital provides. Everybody has a specific job and if they do the



Marvin Dearr

job, things will move along. Yet every organization needs watching, managing, to keep it moving along.

"I may be able to help the board and make the transition to a new administrator easier," Dearr said.

Amendment will allow hotel restoration

On March 31, Heppner residents will vote on a city amendment that will allow restoration of the Heppner Hotel into a senior citizens center and housing project.

The amendment will allow the ci-

ty to borrow money which, combined with a grant already approved will be used to finance the renovation. Money from rentals will repay the city loan.

The following is a brief history of the hotel written as an article in the March 24, 1983 issue of the Gazette-Times. The hotel was entered in the National Register of Historical Places in October, 1982.

The Heppner Hotel, owned by Arnie and Rita Hedman of Heppner, holds a lot of Heppner's history within its walls. June 1982, the hotel was nominated for placement on the National Register of Historical Places and was entered in the register October, 1982.

The hotel's historic significance isn't too apparent to the passerby. The large building has been standing since 1919, and the exterior hasn't changed much over the years; however, the history of the hotel itself tells much of Heppner's history.

Shortly after the town of Heppner formed, hotels began playing a vital role in the town's economy.

In 1873, a mail and stage line was established between Pendleton and The Dalles which passed through Heppner. Later much livestock, wool and wheat were shipped from the town. During this time, before the automotive age, travelers needed a place to stay. A hotel was a place to eat, get a haircut, sleep and be entertained.

The City Hotel was built in Heppner in 1877 and was destroyed in the 1903 flood. The grand Palace Hotel was built in 1891 and was destroyed by fire in 1918 along with 16 other businesses and over 30 residential buildings.

The community worked to rebuild the business district, and realizing the urgency for another large hotel, began plans to have one built.

In June of 1919, plans drawn by John V. Bennes, a well-known Portland architect, were approved for a modern first-class hotel. He also drew plans for the Heppner Elks Lodge that same year. Construction of the building began in November, 1919 by Lou Traver of the firm Traver and Snook. This firm also built the Heppner Elks Lodge.

With a shortage of materials, high prices, a shortage of labor and World War I, steps were taken to keep building costs at a minimum.

The plans also included several features to make the building as fireproof as possible.

On December 16, 1920, the St. Patrick's Hotel opened under the ownership of Pat Foley of The Dalles as lessee and James Hart as local manager.

After much controversy about the name "Hotel St. Patrick," the name "The Heppner Hotel" was coined.

The hotel served as a meeting place for many local organizations up until 1972. A governor, secretary of state, senator and other visiting dignitaries have stayed at the hotel.

Market Report

Commodity prices of the Morrow County Grain Elevator

Tuesday, March 24	
Soft White	
March	53.11
April	53.11/53.10
May	53.02/52.98
June	52.90/52.88
July	52.82/52.81
August	52.81
Barley	
March	58.7
April	58.7/50.586
May	58.3/51
June	58.0
July-Aug.	57.9
Hard Red Winter	53.08
PIK	
Generic Certificates	1033.5

Few attend last week's town hall meetings

A team of Morrow County employees presented the county's proposed budget at town hall meetings in Heppner and Ione last week. Ken Turner, chairman of the Willow Creek Park District board, explained the district's proposed levy, and Port of Morrow commission candidates listed their qualifications.

Morrow County's budget is "conservative beyond being conservative," Morrow County Judge Louis Carlson said. The proposed budget provides services at approximately the same level as last year. "It's important to remember that this isn't just our budget, it's your budget," he said. "Vote for it if you want all the services the county now provides. If you vote against the budget, we will assume that you

don't want those services. If you vote it down this first time, I personally guarantee it won't go back to you in the same form a second time," he said.

"If we do have to cut the budget," the judge said, "it will involve both programs and people that are not required by state law. And if people decide they don't want the services, we will cut them."

County Treasurer and Tax Collector Margo Sherer explained that although her office is funded by the county general fund, only part of her work benefits the county because she must collect taxes for the schools and special districts as well as for the county.

County Clerk Barbara Bloodworth said her office is responsible for recording mortgage

liens and other documents, microfilming, and keeping them safe. She also is responsible for all election in the county, the County Court minutes, and for state health records.

Sheriff Roy Drago said his department has the second-largest budget in the county. It includes five dispatchers, one civil deputy, and six deputies. He said reported crime in the county increased 22% between 1980 and 1984 and is continuing to increase.

Road Supervisor Don Ball said his department has a \$2.5 million budget to maintain 1150 miles of county roads, 350 miles of which are paved. He is a 30-year veteran of the road department and oversees 21 employees. Half of the roads are in fair to poor condition, he said.

"Without roads," he emphasized, "lumber would stay in the hills, agricultural products can't get to market, you would be unable to go to work, and your kids couldn't get to school."

County Budget Officer LoRayne Bowman reminded voters that the county will be asking voters for approval of two separate one-year operating levies. The \$428,477 health care levy will fund the North Morrow Medical Clinic, the Boardman ambulance, and Pioneer Memorial Hospital. The county's \$2,710,611 one-year levy will balance the budget for the rest of its operations.

Ken Turner explained that the Willow Creek Park District is asking for a \$29,300 levy for operation and maintenance. The board pro-

poses to have the Operators Training School at Boardman move the earth at the park to keep construction costs down, Turner said. "We need to pass the levy this time in order to tell the state we have voter support. Then we may be eligible for a 50% cost share grant from Parks and Recreation."

For further budget information and candidates' qualifications, see election issues on page 3.

Heppner senior chosen



Missy Eubanks

Missy Eubanks, 18, Heppner, will be a member of Oregon's team at a basketball tournament in Scottsdale, Arizona. Twenty-six states compete at the annual tournament.

Eubanks, daughter of Noel and Pat Harshman of Lexington, is a senior at Heppner High School and has played varsity basketball with the Fillies since her sophomore year. She learned of her selection on March 13 and the community has helped raise money for her trip to the tournament. Team members, she said, are recommended by Class B-AAA schools.

Eubanks will leave Heppner April 4 for three days of practice at High School in Lake Oswego and then leave for Scottsdale Community College with her coach and team members. She expects to return to Heppner April 12.

Heppner and Boardman high schools maintain accreditation

Both Heppner and Riverside (Boardman) high schools have been accredited for another year, the school board learned at its March meeting.

School Supt. Doyle McCaslin told the board that in addition to having their accreditation approved, both schools were commended by the Northwest Assoc. of Schools and Colleges.

Heppner is commended for its course offering strength in math, science, practical arts, computer program, good counseling program, good media program, and low student-teacher ratio. The association recommended that Heppner High School consider purchasing equipment and materials for computer education and review needs for courses relating to handicapped and accelerated students.

Riverside High School is commended for its good program in practical arts and offerings for special students, the availability of services through school and county resources, and the adequacy of the media program.

The board approved changes to the district's dress and grooming policy. The board did not approve wearing of shorts and sundresses during September, May and Jun-

earlier proposal by a committee of students and parents. A majority of school administrators recommended against that portion of the policy, the superintendent said. Allowing students to wear shorts (no shorter than mid-thigh) would require school principals "to perform a policeman's time-consuming and controversial role on dress of that type that youngsters, being youngsters, will test to every limit. We can anticipate various complaints, pro and con, if such a policy were implemented, and feel that we should not open the door to another area of potential controversy," McCaslin said.

The board approved a September 1 school starting date for next year. A survey of advisory committees, certificated staff and classified staff also preferred beginning the coming year before Labor Day.

In other business the board heard that a colony of termites in the 1952 wing of A.C. Houghton Elementary School in Irrigon hopefully could be controlled with pesticide and not need a more extensive eradication program. The colony had been discovered in wooden forms left in a concrete maintenance tunnel, the superintendent said. Once the forms were hauled away, spraying would be done during spring vacation while the

building was vacant.

heard a report on food service costs from each of the cafeterias.

approved a special field trip for the Columbia Junior High School eighth grade occupational versatility class.

approved a special field trip for Riverside High School Spanish classes.

approved hiring Kathleen McGowan as secretary in the district office.

approved hiring Doug Akeson as bus driver, replacing Terry Voltz on the Hardman bus run.

approved the following extra-duty contracts for spring sports: Mike Stookey-Heppner Jr. High head baseball coach, Steve Brownfield-Heppner High assistant track coach.

Weed Supervisor awarded

Morrow County Weed Supervisor Jim Van Winkle recently received a commendation from the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture for his discovery and eradication of a skeleton weed infestation near Riverside High School in Boardman.

The letter of commendation signed by Noxious Weed Control Program Supervisor Robert E. Brown said that Van Winkle's survey was responsible for detecting one of the

largest infestations of skeleton weed in central and eastern Oregon. "The infestation had real potential to spread further and cause serious economic losses to Oregon agriculture," Brown said. Van Winkle was also helpful in making recommendations for pre-planning of the 1986 Mid Columbia state-county skeleton weed eradication program, he said.