

HEPPNER



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Ballot measures could have negative impact

City projects in final stages

The major city projects of street repairs and the sewer system renovation are now in the final stages. However, the city council faced some tough decisions at Monday night's council meetings, since some of the November ballot measures, if approved, could create financial and contractual consequences for the city.

"Contractors went over and above specifications in doing an excellent job," said Allen Rieke, sewer plant engineer. On August 28, contractors met the September 1, deadline for having the plant on line in order to be eligible for \$800,000 in grant funding to help pay for this \$2 million project.

A 30-day grace period will give contractors time to install a methane gas burner at the treatment plant, as required by the Department of Environmental Quality. The council also approved \$2,000 in change orders for grass seeding around the pump station and other turf work that was not in the original specifications. Operational costs for electricity to operate the underground sprinkler system are now estimated at \$10,000 per year.

The council approved a sewer rate increase beginning with the December billing. The average home owner who currently pays about \$19.70 per month will be assessed an additional \$2.50 per month for operational costs and .70 cents for sewer bond indebtedness payment, making a total bill of \$22.90 per month.

"We don't have any choice," Councilman Dave Allstott said, explaining that the law dictates that city services must be self supporting.

The council had hoped to delay an anticipated sewer rate increase for at least another year. In order to hold the line on city spending, budget cuts, including eliminating one city employee, have held operational cost increases to 3 1/2 percent since the last major sewer increase in 1991, City Manager Gary Marks said.

According to Marks the proposed new ballot measure five, if approved, would eliminate most council authority on the ability to control city finances. It would also eliminate the city's ability to honor previous bond agreements which could lead to default.

Marks also explained that the proposed measure 20 would eliminate the authority of municipalities to issue new

bonds for capital improvements, which could only be financed through voter approval by adding a tax rate above the proposed two percent state tax.

Caught in this catch-22 situation, cities may have a hard time budgeting or meeting financial obligations without knowing how much revenue can be received from the state if measure 20 is approved.

While major reconstruction of city streets has been completed, contractors still have some back filling, shoulder work and clean-up to do, Marks said. Representatives of the Morrow County School District were on hand to address the repair of streets in that area. Evidently when the school was built and the property was annexed into the city, the access roads were not declared as city streets. So now it becomes a matter of who is responsible for maintenance of that area.

Councilman Chuck Holtz pointed out that since the property belongs to the school district those streets could legally be gated. As to the city financing major repairs, it's a matter of lacking the financial resources and manpower, he said.

"Had the school district known that it was not a public street, maintenance might have

been included in, the school building bond issue," Heppner High School principal Steve Dickenson said. It was also pointed out that these through streets allow access to residents' homes and the county Emergency Management center. Dickenson said that as a home owner in that area he was concerned about fire protection access, should the steep hill above Water street be unusable due to weather conditions.

County members have agreed to hold a special meeting to work on a solution with school board representatives.

The council also reversed a 1993 resolution that allowed the city to pay the PERS portion of employees benefits in lieu of a six percent salary increase. Measure eight on the November ballot bans employers from paying an employee's PERS amount. The city will now put the amount paid for that benefit back into city employees' paychecks.

They also adopted a resolution to annex property on Cemetery Hill that has been purchased by the Port of Morrow in anticipation of development in that area. That property will be withdrawn from the rural fire district and placed under city protection.

Murray Drugs to host After Hours



Ann (l) and John Murray, Murray Drugs, will host the next Chamber Business After Hours on Tuesday, Sept. 20 at 6 p.m. This is an opportunity for local businesses and members to get to know each other's businesses, a bit about their history and related retail concerns.

Alumni tournament meeting set

An organizational meeting for the annual Alumni basketball and volleyball tournament will be held Thursday, September 15 at 7 p.m. at the

Columbia Basin Conference room. Anyone interested in helping is urged to attend. The tournament is held the last weekend in December.

Lesley's Eubanks celebrate anniversaries



Marie and Huston Lesley

A party, honoring Mildred and John Eubanks on their 63rd wedding anniversary and Marie and Huston Lesley on their 75th wedding anniversary will be hosted by the Hardman Community Center on Sunday, Sept. 25, from 1 to 4:30 p.m.

Dinner will be served at 1 p.m. with the club furnishing the meat entrees, beverages and cake. Those attending are asked to bring a potluck dish.

Huston Lesley, 98, grew up on the family ranch near Monument. He joined the army when he was 21 and spent 2 1/2 years as a non-commissioned officer during World War I.

After his return from the war, he and Marie met at a dance in Monument. Although they both grew up in the John Day area, they had never met before that dance. Marie said she was immediately attracted to "that good looking guy in uniform."

The two were married in a church in John Day on Sept. 1, 1919. He wore a blue suit with bell-bottomed trousers and she wore a fancy white dress, but no veil. She carried garden flowers fashioned into a bouquet by Huston's younger sister.

The couple had to delay their honeymoon until Huston was able to repair a used car he bought for \$80. Because they had no tent, they fashioned tree boughs into a shelter during a rainstorm on their honeymoon.

In 1926, Huston took over the stage line from Canyon City to Lone Creek, where they made their home. Roads had become more passable than rutted tracks and vehicles had become more reliable, improved from the days when car axles broke and repairs were just part of a day's journey.

In 1940, the Lesleys moved to Portland to work in the shipyards during World War II.

Three years later, however, they sold their home in Estacada and returned to eastern Oregon.

The couple said they ran out of gas at Hardman. But that delay became permanent as the Lesleys have now lived in Hardman for 51 years. They were the last shop keepers in Hardman and had a combined general store, garage and gas station.

The building, which was also the post office, became home. Marie served as post mistress for 23 years, until rural mail delivery started and the post office was closed because of the town's dwindling population.

The Lesleys business also diminished and they eventually closed their doors. They never considered leaving, however.

In the early days, the Lesleys' plumbing was "out back", water was carried from the pitcher pump on the community's well and there was no electricity.

The Lesleys have three daughters, Nellie Hobson, Anaconda, MT., Genevieve Woolery, Oregon City, and Fern Yeakel, Seattle, WA.; eight grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; and 32 great-great-grandchildren.

Huston is the eldest of 12 children, six of whom are still living, Bob, the youngest, who lives in John Day; Elvira Walker, Medford; Bill, Monument; Lela Sloan, Pendleton; Sally Smith, Portland; and Don, California. One brother died at the age of 14. According to Huston, the brother was virtually ambushed in a watermelon patch and shot in the leg. He was transported to Condon, but died, probably of loss of blood and shock, says Huston.



John and Mildred Eubanks

Houston's sister, Lela, and his brother, Bill, joined the couple for their 72nd anniversary.

Marie has a brother, Joe Legler, living in John Day. A sister and another brother have passed away.

Marie recently broke her leg in two places, but that still won't keep her down. "We had her in the hospital a couple of days," says Huston, "but she said she was going to come home and she did. I'm helping her out a little bit, but she helps herself mostly. I have to put her leg in bed," added Huston with a laugh.

John and Mildred Eubanks were married at The Dalles on Sept. 24, 1931. They spent their first winter in Portland where John worked for a produce company. They later came back to lone where he worked on ranches for \$1 a day. He started trucking in the spring of 1934 and on July 25 of that year, their son, Donald, was born.

In April 1936, John was run over by a truck and fractured his pelvis in nine places, in addition to suffering internal injuries. He was in the hospital at The Dalles for four months and was bedfast for two months after he returned. John's uncle, Lewis Halvorsen, ran the trucking business while John was laid up and continued working for him for some time. John was in the business until 1942 when they went into the restaurant business.

In 1945 the Eubanks had a daughter, Sandra.

They sold out to Betty and Roy Lieuallen and then moved to the Lewis Halvorsen ranch two miles below lone where they had a dairy. Mildred began driving school bus and continued for 13 years. They then rented the Withers ranch nine miles west of lone from 1946 to 1949, when they bought the 1400 acre ranch from the Withers' estate. They bought 640 acres of wheatland at Morgan from Melvin Gillespie of Athena and the Morgan elevator from Mahoney and Smith. In 1965 they bought 550 acres of wheat land from Don Linnell. They sold out to Mac-Wheat in 1977.

In 1952 they bought the Holly Bean place at Echo that had 440 acres of irrigated land, 230 head of beef cattle and 40 dairy cows. According to the History of Morrow County, "One day John came in and said to Mildred, 'This place would kill a man.' So they put it in the hands of a realtor and in a short time the place sold. The new owner dropped dead of a heart attack six months later."

In 1953 the Eubanks bought a cabin a Reid's mill near Parker's Mill, where they hunted and entertained. In 1961 they bought the R.D. Allstott Ranch at Eight Mile, farming the Jeannie Huston ranch at the same time. In 1971 they bought the John Rice home, along with seven acres in Irrigon and in 1976, they bought acreage from Al Conforth.

The couple retired in 1979, when they moved to their mountain cabin, which had been remodeled into a home. In 1981, they celebrated their 50th anniversary by taking a trip to Canada, accompanied by her sister and husband, John and Earlene Sanders.

The couple has seven grandchildren, Don's daughters, Rebecca, Melinda and Melissa; and Sandra's sons, twins, Rocky and Rusty, and Toby and Casey Rodriguez.

John has been a member of the Elks Lodge and Willows Grange. Mildred is a past president of American Legion Auxiliary and the Morrow County Cowbells and a member of Willows Grange.

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