

HEPPNER

Gazette times

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VOL. 114 NO. 7 14 Pages Wednesday, February 15, 1995. Morrow County Heppner, Oregon

Plan to divy up road monies revealed

The Heppner City Council learned of a plan concerning distribution of road fund monies to cities, at their regular council meeting Monday night, Feb. 13.

According to Val Doherty, Morrow County counsel, the city of Boardman will become the beneficiary of a large tax windfall, with the proposed annexation of the Coyote Springs Co-gen plant into the city limits. The formula for distributing road fund monies to cities, mandated by law, is by assessed valuation. This formula, therefore, would give the city of Boardman the majority of the road funds and decrease the amount Heppner and other cities receives.

However, a plan has been proposed through which the cities would agree to turn their funds over to an entity with representatives from each of the cities. This entity would award the funds to the cities. Morrow County Commissioner Ray French said, for example, that the funds could be allocated as needed by the cities, not necessarily equally to all towns every year. For example, if a city has a project planned in the future, they could forgo their road funds for several years and then receive adequate funds for their project when the monies were needed.

Doherty said that the Port of Morrow, owner of the property on which the co-gen plant is situated, indicated that they were uncomfortable with the formula that would distribute a majority of funds to the city of Boardman. Doherty said the proposed plan was put forward to mitigate the impact of Coyote Springs annexation into Boardman city limits on the other cities of the county. All the city councils would have to approve the new plan and opt in it.

According to Doherty, the total amount of road funds distributed to the cities is around \$80,000 per year. Heppner City Manager Gary Marks said that Heppner's share has been around \$28-29 thousand. This amount would be reduced drastically as Boardman's assessed valuation soars.

In other business the council: -learned that the Heppner Economic Development Corporation has shelved its plans for a motel/hotel on Cemetery Hill for the time being, as reported by HEDC President John Murray.

Murray said that a feasibility study indicated that the site was too far away from downtown to be effective.

HEDC has decided, instead, to focus on the site for a housing development, he said.

-heard a request from Martha Doherty that the council take action to prevent the construction of a road for the erection and maintenance of a proposed cellular phone tower on the Don and Merlyn Robinson property near her home. Doherty's major complaint was that she did not want the traffic on the street near her home. City manager Gary Marks said that the city has no authority to prevent construction of a private road on private property and, further, that the property is outside the city limits. The council, however, did agree to direct Marks to write a letter to the cellular phone company, pointing out alternate routes for the road.

-heard a report on street and bridge improvements for 1995 indicating that the city is on track for replacement of Elder Street Bridge in May, followed by reconstruction of Elder and Aiken streets.

-heard an update on the sludge truck funding and approved a request to advertise for bids.

-approved plans for a public restroom to be placed in the city park and authorized advertisement for bids.

-approved authorization to advertise for proposals for the water telemetry system.

-approved authorization to schedule a public hearing on an ordinance providing for the organization administration of the city of Heppner Volunteer Fire Department.

-approved a fire protection contract between the city of Heppner and the Heppner Rural Fire District.

-approved authorization to enter into a joint purchase arrangement with the Heppner Rural Fire District to acquire a new chassis for the 1975 mini-pumper. Fire chief Rusty Estes reported that the pumper has become increasingly difficult to drive, tending to wander and recommended that a new chassis be purchased ahead of schedule.

-approved a request from John Edmundson that he be

allowed to paint an estimated 600 green shamrocks along a Volkswalk route during the St. Patrick's celebration;

-heard a request from Edmundson that improvements be made to the shoulder on the steep section of the hill up to the high school, especially with the seventh and eighth grades to be moved to the high school this fall;

-adopted the city code.

-approved a request from a group of children to raise four pigs as a 4-H project on the Unruh property located within the city limits.

Cut of 25 teachers county wide recommended to balance budget

By Chuck Starr, Morrow County Schools superintendent

What kind of budget cuts are being planned for our schools in 1995-96?

At the board meeting Monday night Feb. 13, I made the following report on recommendations I will be making to the Budget Committee on February 27:

As you know, we are in a funding crisis for the operation of schools in Morrow County. We need to take drastic action to bring our spending requirements in line with our expected resources over the next three years. To accomplish that goal, I will be making specific recommendations to the budget committee at a public meeting at Sam Boardman Elementary, on February 27 at 7:30 p.m. I want the board and the public to know the serious

nature of those recommendations. They are as follows:

I will recommend that we remove the funding for curricular activities from the general fund and budget for them in a separate fund requiring outside funding for operation. These activities will be dependent upon funding from such sources as the recreation district serial levy planned for May 16, or from other forms of local funding. I will recommend that this action be taken for at least the next two years.

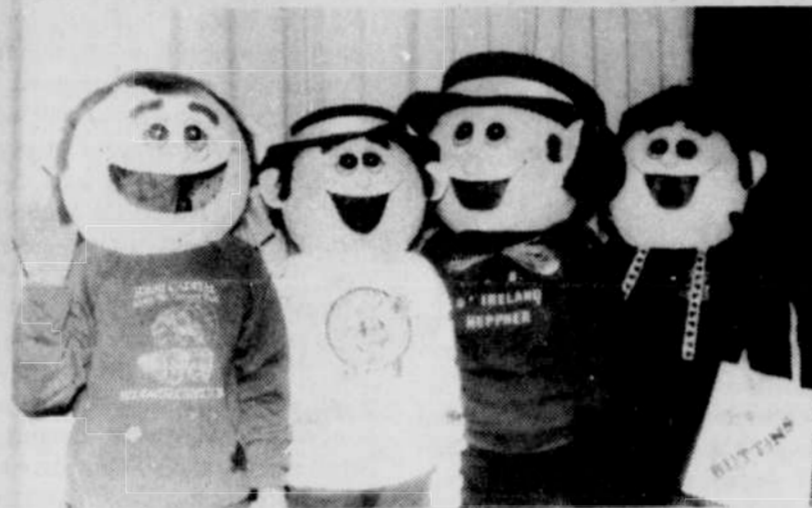
I will recommend that we reduce our licensed staff district-wide by 25 full time employees. That is 20 FTE beyond the five already planned for Heppner in the 7-12 configuration. This reduction will impact every school in the district. I will also recommend

that we reinstate 14 FTE of those 25 if the bond issue passes.

Implementing these recommendations will be very painful, and they will put extreme importance on both the bond issue and the recreation serial levy. As painful as this will be, there is no doubt that we must take this action if we are to place our district in a position of stability under the funding formula and begin to move in a positive direction in the future.

Once again, let me emphasize that the specific cuts, the positions to be reduced, and the schools affected by them will all be presented at the budget committee work session at Sam Boardman Elementary, on February 27 at 7:30 p.m.

Donation day for St. Pat's auction Feb. 16



Leprechauns getting ready for St. Pat's weekend

The St. Patrick's Day Auction Committee reminds everyone that they will conduct a "Donation Day" in Heppner on Thursday, February 16 from 4 to 7 p.m. Volunteers will ask local businesses and neighborhoods to contribute items that can be auctioned to support the St. Patrick's Day celebration. The yearly auction provides the main financial support for this community event.

The committee has several

convenient ways for people to make donations. On donation day, Feb. 16, people may leave their donation in their driveway and volunteers will come pick it up. Volunteers are available at any other time to pick up large items at your home or business. To arrange to have your donations picked up call Steve Rhea 676-9113 or Mike Mills 676-9141 days, or the Murrays, 676-9158 days and 676-9631 evenings. Small items may be left at Kuhn, Spicer and Mills office on Main Street.

Cardinals headed to District

The Lone Cardinals boys and girls team both earned the top seed in the Big Sky League earning them another trip to the District 3 1A tournament held in Hermiston.

The tournament begins Friday, Feb. 17 at 1:30 p.m. when Dufur girls play the winner of the Echo-Condon game (which was played off Tuesday night, Feb. 14).

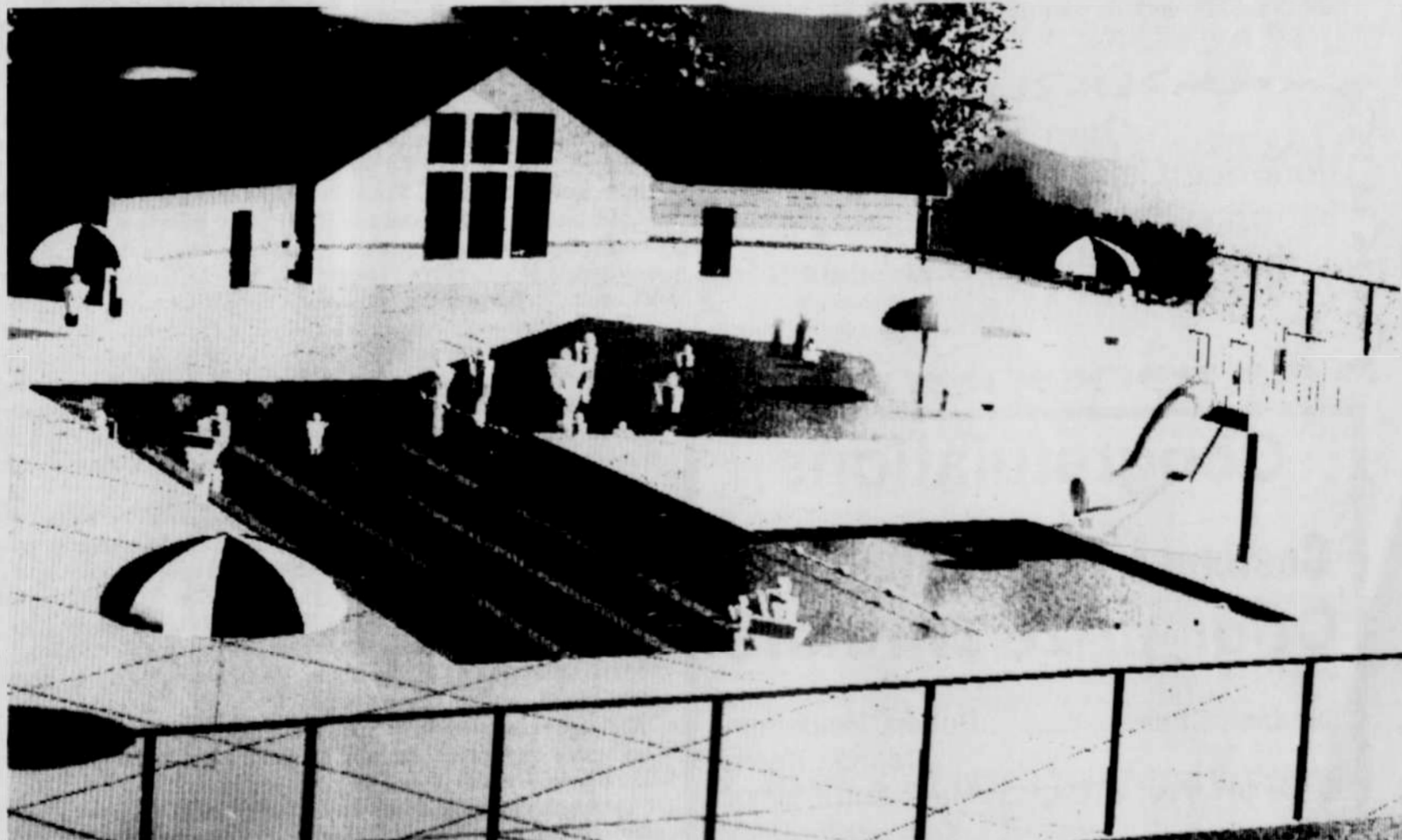
The Cascade Locks boys play the winner of the Echo-Helix game at 3:30 p.m.

Lone girls play Wasco County girls at 6 p.m. with the both boys teams following at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Feb 18 will see the loser of Friday nights games playing the winner of Friday afternoons games. Game time Saturday begins at 4 p.m.

All games will be played in the Hermiston High School new gym.

People for Pool show artist conception of pool



New swimming pool to be built

People for the pool, a local group working to have a pool built, released an artist's drawing of the proposed facility Tuesday.

Voters will be asked to approve a \$975,000 bond levy to finance construction of the pool at Hager Park.

The multi-use facility will include an indoor therapy pool for use in cool weather, and would be wheelchair accessible.

Ballots for approval of the pool will be going out to voters in the mail on March 10.

Grade point averages up slightly

Grade point averages are slightly higher at Heppner High School since the district went to a four-day school week, principal Steve Dickenson said Tuesday.

Dickenson said he examined the grade point averages of 95 students and found a slight upward trend.

He said he examined soph-

mores, juniors and seniors only, and only students who had attended school here last year.

Dickenson said that of those checked, 57 students had higher grade point averages for the first term, 36 had lower and two had not changed. "My gut feeling is that there is barely any change, but if there is it is slightly higher," he said.

Barbecue beef dinner planned

The Senior class of Heppner High School will be serving barbecued beef during the game against Pilot Rock this Friday, Feb. 17, in the home ec room.

Dinner will be served from 4:30 p.m. until the beginning of

the boys varsity game. The menu includes barbecue beef on a bun, salad, dessert and beverage. Price is \$4 adults and \$2 children 10 and under.

Proceeds go towards the senior drug and alcohol free trip to Seattle, WA.

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