

County Court hears county audit report

By Doris Brosnan

At the Morrow County Court meeting January 26, finance director Lianne Currin presented the 1998 audit, discussing each of the many fund types and the several accounts, schedules and reports included in an audit.

Currin reported that she will go over "budgeted" and "actual" spending in detail during budget committee meetings. She explained a rule that requires depreciation of all assets, including infrastructure such as roads and bridges and suggested that an appraisal of assets and additional programming to compute this will be needed.

The court congratulated Currin for another clean audit. She noted the importance of timely reports by departments and suggested that department heads are responsible for tracking fixed assets, adding that a bar code scanning system might facilitate that work.

Public works director Guy Van Arsdale reported to the court on early snow plowing that has kept ahead of school bus runs; cutting of brush in the Irrigon area; culvert installation on Social Ridge Road; installation of an engine into a front-end loader; completion of the Pine City guard rail; and near completion of the bridge at Gooseberry.

Van Arsdale also reported having sent the required information about the GPS airport approach to the FAA and informed the court that Senator Ron Wyden has a goal of acquiring a grant to establish automatic weather observation systems for all airports with Life Flight service.

The court approved a bid for the backhoe attachment.

Commissioner Dan Brosnan reported that a meeting with OSP Superintendent Ruecker on Jan. 28 will address the contract for the independent study of the CSEPP issues and the role of the person hired to facilitate that study.

The court approved a budget resolution for additional revenue and appropriations for a grant to establish the regional partnership. They also approved a change to a system of paying claims every two weeks, rather than every week, which will save the finance department time and create more interest earnings on revenue.

In a discussion of the car-use policy - specifically the question of an employee's driving a county car to and from home - Currin reported that the tax attorney was explicit about the tax law that makes exception only for road department circumstances and specially marked and law enforcement vehicles. Such use by other employees is considered a taxable benefit.

After considerable discussion, the court resolved that the policy shall be that no one is allowed to commute except law enforcement personnel, the public works director and assistant road master.

Ione City Mayor Betty Gray and council person Mark Bruno

appeared to thank the court of help with the crushed rock for work on Main and Spring Streets, which are now safer.

Gray reported that a flood mitigation plan for Rietmann Canyon, some money for which was awarded from tippage fees, would be far more expensive than expected. She explained that Ione City Council has discussed a curb and sidewalk project that would prevent water from going into businesses and that the council wants to redirect the awarded amount to this new project. Bruno added that the sidewalks would alleviate a foot traffic problem for students traveling Spring Street to the school and library and would help correct the absence of handicap access to sidewalks.

He told the court that the city would seek a grant for the plan to pipe floodwater to the creek. In answer to questions, the Ione representatives explained that they expect the work to not exceed the amount previously awarded. The court approved amending the original use of the tippage fee award to this minor flood control effort.

Representing Census 2000, Karen Hutchinson-Talaski reported that just less than 100 people in Morrow County have been tested for the work as enumerators and that another 50 are needed for creation of an adequately-sized pool from which 80 enumerators may be selected.

Talaski encouraged the commissioners to send her names of persons interested in being tested. Talaski also mentioned some programs that rely on census numbers and reported that forms will be mailed to individuals in March, to be returned by April.

Enumerators, working from the manned census centers in both the north and south county areas, will visit residences that do not return the forms.

Cyde Estes, of the Blue Mountain Community College Foundation, presented a letter from the finance director outlining the cost of administering a payroll deduction program. She also presented a draft survey that outlines the BMCC Foundation's funding of higher education through payroll deductions. The court approved the survey.

Planning Director Tamra Mabbott asked the court, which agreed, to sign a letter of support for a grant application to the Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation for signage to mark the Heritage Trail.

The court also authorized graphic work for the Trail project.

Mabbott reported on a visit with Umatilla County Commissioner Dennis Doherty about impact aid and the (CSEPP) moratorium, in which they agreed that the two counties should meet to further discuss these issues.

Mabbott suggested that the meeting would be apropos to requesting help from Umatilla County for legal and staff expenses in pursuing impact aid.

Doherty suggested that the commissioners schedule one meeting with both the Hermiston Herald and East Oregonian editors, and the court agreed and set a date and time.

Mabbott offered a copy of the draft letter about impact aid to come from the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Assessor Greg Sweek continued with the court an earlier discussion with them and department heads that focused on many operational inadequacies of the computer programming that a programmer was to have installed and fine-tuned.

Sweek voiced the desire to halt the work of the programmer and seek another source of programs. The court noted that they wish to talk to the present programmer next week, after she has received a letter explaining doubts that she can complete the assessment and taxation program but noting that the county expects her to complete accounting programs.

They expressed concern that severing the relationship now could place some departments at risk.

In the meantime, information for other options will be accumulated.

Commissioner Brosnan advised the court that the Washington Ground Squirrel was officially listed as an endangered species last week. The court discussed the many issues related to the listing of the squirrel, including procedural questions, interest by Representative Bob Jenson and impact on industry.

Before closing, the court reviewed the renewal of the agreement with Franklin County Correctional Center for jail space and approved that contract.

High schoolers invited to 'pig out'

The third annual "Pizza Pig Out", sponsored by the Heppner Campus Life, will be held Monday, February 7, from 7:17-8:38 p.m. at the Heppner High School cafeteria.

High school students are invited to "pig out" on all the Papa Murphy's Pizza and pop they can eat and drink for \$1 each.

For more information, contact Greg Lynch, 676-5759.

Child care classes offered

Umatilla-Morrow Head Start, Inc., has announced several classes offered by Child Care Resource and Referral.

Family Child Care Overview will be held February 7, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Boardman area. This class is required by the Child Care Division for anyone wishing to become a registered family child care provider and will include information on recently passed regulations.

Anyone who is currently doing family child care in her home and who is not registered with the Child Care Division or for more information may call Starla Halverson at Child Care Resource and Referral.

Oregon Child Care Basics I: Safety and Health will be offered February 8-9 from 6:30-9 p.m. in the Pendleton area.

This training covers information on illness and injury prevention, immunizations, nutrition, safe food handling and responding to medical emergencies.

This training is appropriate for anyone providing child care in a home or center as well as for parents. The training will qualify family child care providers to apply for a waiver.

A \$5 registration fee and pre-registration are required.

Ages and Stages: How Brain Development Impacts Children's Lives will be held February 19, from 8 a.m.-noon in the Boardman area.

This training offers participants an opportunity to learn how the brain develops and how that interacts with the developmental stages of children.

Legislature approves county crops agent funding

The 1999 Oregon Legislature provided funding for a number of new agriculture faculty positions in the Oregon State University research and extension system. Funding was provided to take the Morrow County crops agent position, currently held by Kathryn Kettel, from a half-time, fixed term position to a full-time, tenure track position.

Because the current position was neither advertised as full-time nor tenure track, according to higher education system regulations, Kettel cannot automatically assume the new position, according to Bill Broderick, Morrow County Extension Service staff chair.

According to the news release, Kettel was given a full-time, fixed term (non-tenure track) appointment as of Oct. 1, 1999 and will remain in this position until Dec. 31, 2000 at the longest.

A search will be conducted to fill the new position in Morrow County and input is needed.

A planning meeting is

scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 23, from 6-8 p.m. at the Heppner Ranger District conference room, in the ranger district building, Heppner.

Everyone is invited to attend. The purpose of the meeting is to brainstorm and discuss the role people would like the new crops agent to play in Morrow County. Input will be sought on priorities, field research, new technologies, one-on-one contacts and an ag economist.

The goal for this meeting, said Broderick, is to come to a consensus among those present as to the direction the position should take and to identify individuals who can serve on the selection committee.

The time-frame for filling the position is as follows: begin advertising in mid-March; accept applications until late April; interview in May. The position will be available no later than January 1, 2001.

Call Broderick, 676-9642, to RSVP no later than Wednesday, Feb. 16, or for more information.

Boardman awards banquet set

Boardman will honor those who made Boardman a better place to live and work in 1999 at the annual Community Awards Banquet Friday, February 4.

Dinner will be at the new Port of Morrow Riverfront Center, Two Marine Drive in Boardman. Social hour music will be provided by Mike McCormick, guitarist and banquet entertainment by "Absolutely Nobody," the men's quartet from Blue Mountain Community College.

For the first time, Boardman area businesses and organizations will sponsor and decorate tables to promote their business, celebrate Valentine's Day or just for fun. The evening will feature a silent auction and another with Irrigon auctioneer Ray Fox. A variety of auction items - from "romance" lodging packages to pre-paid registrations to selected

Blue Mountain Community College classes will be available.

Social hour begins at 6 p.m. This is a great time to view the table decorations and auction items or visit the no-host bar. Dinner, with a choice of baked ham or chicken cordon bleu, will be served at 7 p.m.

The dinner will be followed by awards to the Outstanding Boardman Educator, Business Person and Citizen of 1999.

The auction, proceeds benefiting the Boardman Chamber of Commerce and its community improvement projects, will conclude the awards dinner.

Tickets are \$15 each if purchased in advance or \$17 on the day of the banquet. Tickets are available in Hermiston at the Simmons Agency, in Boardman at the Chamber of Commerce, Umatilla Electric Co-Operative and Boardman Pharmacy.

BMCC Nursing Dept. offers orientation sessions

The Nursing Department at Blue Mountain Community College will hold four, one-hour sessions to provide information to students interested in entering the associate degree nurse program.

Two sessions will be held Thursday, Feb. 3, from 11 a.m. - noon and noon-1 p.m. in HE 107, and two sessions on Monday, Feb. 7, from 11 a.m.-noon and 3-4 p.m. in HE 106.

All applicants for the ADN program must submit a completed application packet to the college no later than March 31 to be considered for entry to the program.

A completed packet will include an application form and

supplemental application form, official high school and college transcripts, transcripts indicating completion of three terms of anatomy and physiology, three terms of chemistry and one term of Math 60 (students must complete these courses with a C grade or above); names and addresses of three people other than family; and a handwritten statement regarding reasons for seeking a career in nursing.

For applications, contact the BMCC record office in Morrow Hall or call (541) 278-5759. For program information, contact the nursing department in the health education building or call (541) 278-5877.

Fire advisory committee to meet

A city of Heppner Fire Advisory Committee meeting will be held Wednesday, February 9, at 7 p.m. at Heppner City Hall, 188 W. Willow.

The agenda will include computing Rural Fire District Agreement Charges of 2000-2001 and discussion of a county-wide fire district investigation, in addition to other discussion.

Prostate cancer group to meet

The Pendleton Prostate Cancer Support Group will meet in Pendleton at the Western Bank, 1701 S.W. Court Ave., on Monday, February 7, at 7 p.m.

The topic will be, "What Your Blood Tells About You." Speaker will be Edward Morrow, medical technologist at Interpath Laboratory.

Meetings are free of charge and open to all interested people, including wives. Those attending are invited to bring a friend.

Call June Miller, 443-6171, for more information or to get a map.

Gun Club News

by Sandi Day

The Morrow Co. Gun Club held their weekly shoot on a very cold blustery morning Sunday, Jan. 30.

Despite the coolness an abundance of shooters showed up for the second week of shooting for league handicap scores.

The leaders on the 16-yard line were Rob Ashbeck with 23 of 25, a three-way tie between Brian Haguewood, Curt Day and Jeff Cutsforth with 21 and Mick Sharp with a 20.

The winners of the 20-yard handicap were Harvey Childers with 23, Rob Ashbeck with 22 and Curtis Cutsforth with a 21.

Winners in the ladies event at 16 yards were Bonnie Grant, Sandi Day, Deona Hodges and Katie Walton and the 20-yard line was a tie between Bonnie Grant and Katie Walton, Sandi Day and Deona Hodges.

Junior shooting newcomer Tayler Hodges made his debut with a very respectable seven of 25.

The Annie Oakley was won by Curt Day and the golf round was won by Rob Ashbeck.

Next week's shoot will be held on Sat., Feb. 5, at noon at the club in Lexington.

4-H News

Paws and Claws

By Kim Morris

The second meeting of the Paws and Claws 4-H club was held on Jan. 16-their first meeting of the new millennium.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. at club leader Becky Tullis's house. After the 4-H pledge and motto, members started by going over the parts of the guinea pig, using Toto and Pooky, actual guinea pigs, to remember in case members had to show one in the fair.

Next, the club members and their parents headed out to the shop and went over the parts of the chicken using Whitey and Pickle to demonstrate.

After finishing up outside, members headed back to the house and played "Jeopardy" with some of the body parts members had already been over that evening.

The meeting was adjourned at about 6:45 p.m. and members then were able to get refreshments and go home.

The next meeting will be held Sunday, Feb. 20, at 5:30 p.m.

Horse 4-Hers


By Stacey Just

The meeting on January 16 had to be cancelled at the last minute and the club was unable to get a hold of some people to tell them. Sorry for any inconvenience or confusion it may have caused.

The next meeting will be held February 20 at 2 p.m. at the fairgrounds. "Yummy" door prizes will be given out, so don't miss out.

For more information call Ruby Shear, 422-7290.

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