

HEPPNER



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Court discusses fair and rodeo issues

By Doris Brosnan

At the May 23 meeting of the Morrow County Court, representatives of the Rodeo Committee and of the Fair Board visited with the court about some fair and rodeo issues. Judge Terry Tallman emphasized the need for communication between the facilities and the county maintenance staff, and he explained that these organizations must, as do other departments, follow a process with contracts that requires the signature of the County Court. Clarified was that the fair secretary, as a county employee, is under the supervision of the county judge.

Weed control at the grounds was discussed, as was the need for more garbage receptacles and consistent garbage pickup. Another issue of concern was inadequate parking, for which the Rodeo Committee has formed a subcommittee. The court suggested that the public works director meet with that subcommittee to create a plan.

The court expressed appreciation for the improvements at the fair grounds and for the volunteers who work there.

Veterans and Special Transportation coordinator Diana Ball and former coordinator Barbara Hayes spoke with the Court about the programs and the part-time position. Ball reported application for grants for next year's operating expenses and for a 26-passenger bus. The Court approved the applications. Commissioner John Wenzholz explained the state's funding methods and said that funding for bus buildings is tighter now than is funding for vehicles. Wenzholz proposed separating the coordinator's position into two part-time positions. He explained that too much work exists for one less-than-half-time person. Ball offered a list of duties and requirements for the special transportation position, suggested the amount of time needed weekly for the veterans work, and agreed that the two functions need more total time than the position covers. The Court studied the information and the projected costs of hiring an additional person and agreed to make a decision at a future meeting.

County counsel Bill Hanlon discussed three issues with the court. He explained the contract with the Museum Foundation and the court approved signing it, contingent upon the foundation's securing adequate liability insurance. He reported that

some unexpected language changes in the contract received for the Ruhl Pit led him to preparation of a contract with language previously approved by the county. The court approved signing the agreement prepared by Hanlon. He and County Assessor Greg Sweek, again offered information from records on the road to the Lone cemetery and an easement on that road. Hanlon explained the general law but noted that the question is whether the easement is for cemetery access only or for public access. Public Works Director Burke O'Brien added that the road in question is not a county road. Commissioner Dan Brosnan requested that Hanlon be present at a meeting of the parties who are discussing the road, to explain the legal status of the issue.

Hanlon also reported that some changes at the Umatilla County Community Corrections Center should be reviewed by Sheriff Verlin Denton, noting a change in the proposed county contract with the center. He suggested to the court that the county go out for bid on the second phase of the Wilkinson Arena doors, though the project is under the limit, and the court appointed Andrea Denton as the contract performance manager for that contract. The court requested Hanlon to prepare deeds for the Act of Congress parcels that the county has under lease.

Behavioral Health Director Kelly Sager reported to the court on the status of the Mid-Columbia Center for Living contract. He noted that property purchased by the county under the contract becomes property of the county, and the court reminded him of the responsibility for any such equipment. Sager reported the need for two more staff and vehicles there.

Funds sought for attorney's fees

A committee has been formed to raise funds for Morrow County School Board members Keith Lewis and Barney Lindsay. This fund is intended to help defray attorney fees for the two.

At the last board meeting, Chair Gary Frederickson brought forth questions regarding the qualifications of the two to serve as board members. Failure by Lewis and Lindsay to successfully fight these charges could result in their being replaced by appointees of the remaining board members. According to opponents of that

Sager told the court of a recent consumer satisfaction survey in which the county's Behavioral Health Department ranked second, a compliment to the staff. He also reported the department's selection as the "DUII Multidisciplinary Training Task Force" for the year. Sager described a legislative effort to correct an imbalance in funding between the mental health and the alcohol and drug financing. Morrow County, Sager said, had been suffering from the inequity of the state's formula, but he voiced concerns over the proposed new formula.

Sager also discussed with the court the need for supervisors of clinical staff working for licensure. The court approved his contracting with the Center for Human Development in Union County for this service. He also reported the unresolved issue of office space in Fossil, and he told the court about an organizational study that he expects useful results from in September.

The court also discussed some items with Director of Planning Tamra Mabbott. In response to a question about power plants, Mabbott reported that the Governor has signed a bill that would change some of the generating plant requirements. She said that she has not yet applied for a transportation grant for which the timing is not yet right. She submitted a consent-to-participate agreement with Morrow Power, which the court signed.

Public Works Director O'Brien reported the following: the crew has completed crack sealing on Willow Creek Road and finishing the same on Bombing Range Road.

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action, this would invalidate the results of the elections.

Contributions to the fund may be made by mailing checks or pledges to: The Lewis/Lindsay Defense Fund, P. O. Box 570, Heppner, OR 97836. Contact Kim or Mike Armato for further details by calling 676-9777.

A special board meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on June 6 at the district offices in Lexington where a determination is to be made about the status of these members. Interested community members are invited to attend.

Local OWGL members attend bucket brigade



Local folks who traveled via Oregon Wheat Growers League/ Farm Bureau buses to the Klamath Falls "Bucket Brigade" protesting the government stance against allowing farmers water for their crops include (left to right): Debbie Sutor, Oregon Wheat Grower League office manager, Adams; Chris Kaseberg, Sherman County President, Wasco; Karl Scronce, Klamath Falls County President, Merrill; Tom McCoy, OWGL President, Wasco; Virginia Grieb, Lexington; Daren Coppock, executive vice president of OWGL, Pendleton; Ken Klinger, Morrow County President, Ione; Greg Goad, Pendleton.

From the OWGL Newsletter

Several Oregon Wheat Growers League members and staff joined 13,000 people May 7 at the "Bucket Brigade" in Klamath Falls. The crowd assembled in peaceful protest of the US Bureau of Reclamation terminating all deliveries of irrigation water to Klamath Basin farmers, instead reserving all of the water for protection of endangered sucker fish in Upper Klamath lake and coho salmon in the Klamath River.

An array of politicians and local families addressed the crowd, which then moved to the main street in Klamath Falls and filled the 1.5 mile stretch from Veterans Memorial Park to the "A" diversion canal near Klamath Union High School. Descendants of the original homesteaders dipped 50 buckets of water - one for each state - from the lake near the park, which were then passed hand-to-hand down the street and poured into the irrigation canal.

In contrast to recent demonstrations in Seattle and Quebec, there were virtually no confrontations and no damaged property in this peaceful protest. One speaker testified that this gathering was the largest protest in Oregon history for any issue.

Farmers from all over Oregon, as well as farmers from California and Washington, came to Klamath Falls to support the local farmers in their quest to share the water. As those who came from the north drove into town, they drove by an Upper Klamath Lake that is brimming with water. One of the pools that flows under the roadway from the lake is within inches of exceeding its banks and spilling onto nearby farmland. And yet there is supposedly not enough water for the farmers to get even a bucket-full.

In the eyes of this writer, the federal decision to save every drop of water for the fish - particularly with the lake swelling its banks - is a clear and egregious abuse of the Endangered Species Act. The federal agencies involved (Bureau of Reclamation, Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service) have clearly displayed their belief that fish are more important than people or the local economy, and that even with a lake completely full of water, the farmers will still receive no water.

Congressman Greg Walden and his predecessor, Bob Smith, urged participants in the rally to flood Washington, D.C. with their opinions and recommendations on the issue. In particular, President Bush (president@whitehouse.gov) and Vice President Cheney (vicepresident@whitehouse.gov) need to be contacted, as do members of Congress from the Northeast - both Democrat and Republican - who have not experienced the business end of Endangered Species Act enforcement in their districts.

Congressman Walden's office is working on a list. Walden also announced that House Resources Committee Chairman Jim Hansen (R-UT) has agreed to hold a field hearing in Klamath Falls soon on the situation.

SHAME! SHAME!
U.S. BUREAU OF
RECLAMATION

UMATILLA COUNTY FARMS



Ken Klinger, Ione



Klinger passes a bucket down the line

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