

City votes to cut \$4 million from water repair project

The Heppner City Council Monday pared back the large city water project, voting instead to cut almost \$4 million from the proposed \$6 million renovation and upgrade. Cut from the project are three new wells and a new 750,000-gallon storage tank.

About 26 members of the public attended the city council meeting, which was moved to the Senior Center to accommodate the larger crowd.

Leading the effort to trim back the size of the project was council member Tom Wolff, who made a detailed report on why he thought the city could not afford the more expensive \$6 million project. City Manager Jerry Breazeale and Mayor Bob Jepsen argued in favor of the larger project saying the city needed the increased capacity in order to grow.

At last month's meeting Wolff had proposed that the city use the extra money currently being taken in with higher water rates to do the job piece meal with leased equipment and seasonal help

over a number of years. Monday night he said he had re evaluated his proposal and now felt the city should borrow money to do the project, but at the smaller scale.

The city is currently expected to take in an additional \$143,000 per year with the recently enacted water rate increases, which Wolff said should be able to pay for the debt on the \$1.73 to \$2 million smaller project. He said the priority of the smaller project would be to "put pipes in the ground."

Everyone agreed that the city's 43,000 feet of water pipes are in bad shape and need to be replaced. The pipe replacement will move ahead and be the major scope of the reduced size project.

Wolff gave several reasons why he was against the \$6 million project. "I believe the master plan is good. The financing plan is good and the city council did approve the plan," Wolff said. "I found out, however, that churches, ball fields, the water park and the hospital, with its 104

paychecks, do not pay for water. The people in Salem (the state agency providing low interest financing and grants for the \$6 million project) don't feel that is good enough. (They would require charging these groups if the financing package were accepted)," Wolff said.

Wolff told the council and the gathered crowd that he "ran the numbers" on the project and found that it would cost \$203,000 per year to finance the debt on the loans and city is only collecting \$143,000 for debt service. "There is a gap," he said. In addition he pointed out that 110 percent of the loan would have to be collected the first 10 years which would require \$223,000 for debt service. He estimated that water rates would have to be raised again by 65 to 80 percent to cover the payments.

Wolff also voiced his displeasure when he first learned the debt would not be revenue bonds as first proposed, but instead general obligation bonds, which are

continued page 3

81st Pro Rodeo to host world and local contestants

The 81st Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo will be held this weekend, Aug. 15 and 16. Many top-ranked contestants will be facing up against challenging local talent.

The PRCA rodeo kicks off in Heppner with Mutton Bustin' at 6:30 p.m., on Friday, Aug. 15. The Rodeo action will begin at 7 p.m. During the rodeo there will be a "Call Your Dog" contest and following the rodeo, the ladies will be out in the PRCA Slack contest.

Saturday events will begin with Mutton Bustin' at 12:45 p.m., and rodeo action begins at 1:15 p.m.

Cowboy breakfast at Fairground

The Wrangler Cowboy Breakfast will be held at the Morrow County Fairgrounds, Sunday, Aug. 17. Breakfast will be served from 8-11 a.m.

Cost will be \$15 for a family, \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 12 and under.

Bring the family and enjoy pancakes, ham, eggs, hashbrowns, coffee and milk.

Tickets may be purchased at the gate. Adult prices are \$8 each and the cost for children 7-12 is \$5. Children six and under are admitted free.

Sunday, Aug. 17, will bring the Morrow County Rodeo with local residents or graduates competing for money and awards. Opening the event will be a slack competition at 10 a.m., and Morrow County Rodeo action will begin at 1:15 p.m.

Headlining the list of entries for the PRCA rodeo are four of the top 15 world standing contestants. They Shawn Greenfield, Lakeview, OR, with \$69,638 won this

year and currently standing first in the world in steer wrestling; third place in calf roping in the world,

Blair Burk, Durant, OK, with \$57,714; Cory Petska, Lexington, OK, currently eighth in the world in team roping, with \$36,364; and Clint Corey, Powell Butte, OR, fifteenth in the world in bareback riding, with \$33,884.

A good showing of Morrow County talent will also be available. Bill Bishop, of Irrigon will be participating in calf roping; Tom Camarillo, Ione, will be steer wrestling; Dave Cannon, Jr., Heppner, will be calf roping; Steve Currin, Heppner, will be participating in calf roping and steer wrestling; Jerry Gentry, Heppner, will be calf roping; and Blake Knowles, Heppner, will be participating in steer wrestling and team roping.

Big Bend Rodeo Co., of Ritzville, WA will supply the rough stock again this year. They are nationally renowned for their quality stock. They are bringing a "National Bucking Horse," a "National Bucking Bull" of the year and a NFR Bucking Bull champion.

The whole family is sure to enjoy the many events and "world-class" talent to be seen at the rodeo. Also, remember to enjoy all the many other fair activities that will begin Wednesday, Aug. 13.



Blair Burk



Clint Corey

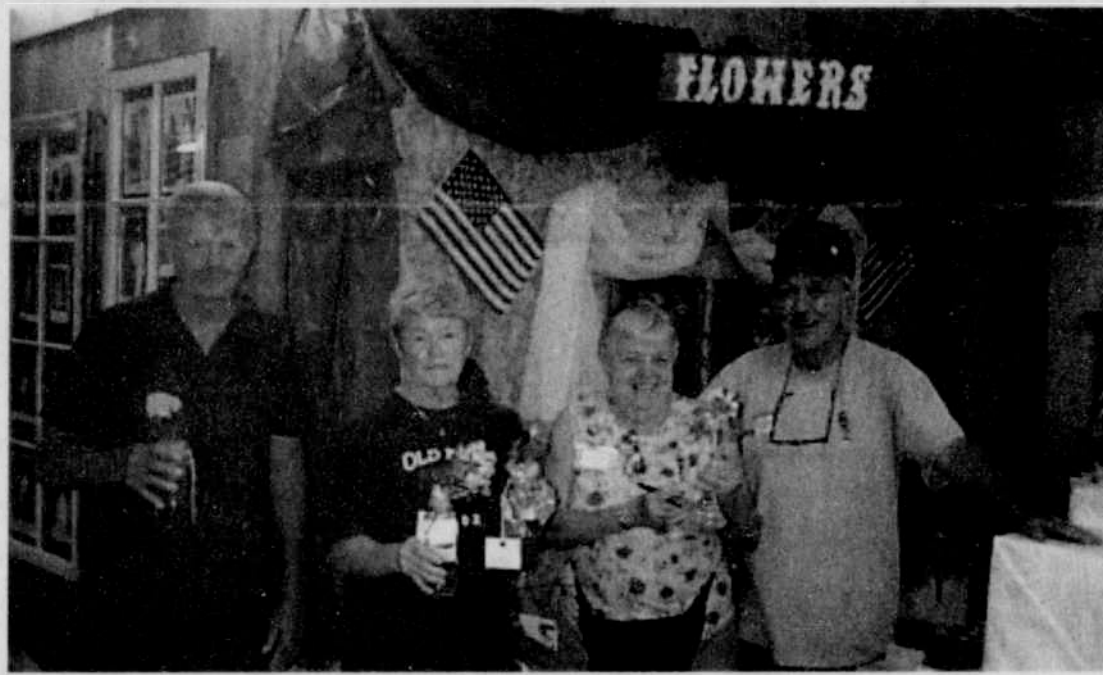
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2003 Morrow County Fair and OTPR opens Wednesday



(L-R): Merle Cowett, JoAnne Bureson, Betty Bailey, Heppner Garden club members, and Chuck Bailey, Heppner Garden Club president, receive a place flower entries for the 2003 Morrow County Fair. The fair opened Wednesday and runs through Sunday.



Lizz Green (left) receives vegetable entries from Lexington resident John Renfro, a former sweepstakes winner.



(L-R): Joey Olson and Ashley Sjurset, with mom, Lori Sjurset, set up their stall for their sheep which will be coming in later.

School board breaks deadlock, selects Bill Kuhn

The Morrow County School Board, which had twice deadlocked over selection of a seventh board member, broke their deadlock Monday night to select Heppner lawyer Bill Kuhn to complete the board.

The board voted 4-2 to select Kuhn, with board chair John Renfro, Lexington, Craig Miles, Heppner, Ken Matlack, Irrigon, and Barney Lindsay, north Lexington, voting in favor of Kuhn. Julie Weikel, Boardman, and Pat McNamee, Irrigon, voted against Kuhn. Renfro expressed the appreciation of the board to Angela Gutierrez of Boardman, the other candidate who had expressed interest in the position.

The board elected Barney Lindsay as vice chair 6-1, with Weikel having the lone dissenting vote.

The board approved the initial presentation of their 2003-04 goals, which includes a statement that the board

"wants to open the Irrigon High School in the fall of 2005." When pressured for a definite commitment on opening the school by Irrigon resident Meredith DeHaven, Renfro replied that the current board intends for this to happen, but has no guarantee of the actions of future boards.

The proposed 2003-04 goals include:

Financial:
-continue many of the ideas established in 2002-03;
-maintain a cash carryover of \$1.5 million;
-maintain the equity issue with the goal that the amount of money each school generates would be the amount that each is allowed to spend;

-have a balanced budget in terms of yearly income and expenses by 2004-05;

-seek board approval for any exceptions to the equity funding issue;

-try to develop a 3-5 year budget concept so that the board can plan for the future.

Communication:
-continue the meetings that are held with each school's staff;

-increase newsletters, trying to publish six of them and put out a Spanish version that would be placed in supermarkets;

-expand the celebration of testing with more board involvement and

continued page 3

ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:
MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

We Will Be Closed
Saturday, Aug. 16th
For Fair And Rodeo
We'll See You There!

Morrow County Grain Growers

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