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City gets $3 million for streets, sidewalks and new "Lovers Lane" foot bridge

Money is state funds and not part of Federal stimulus

By David Sykes

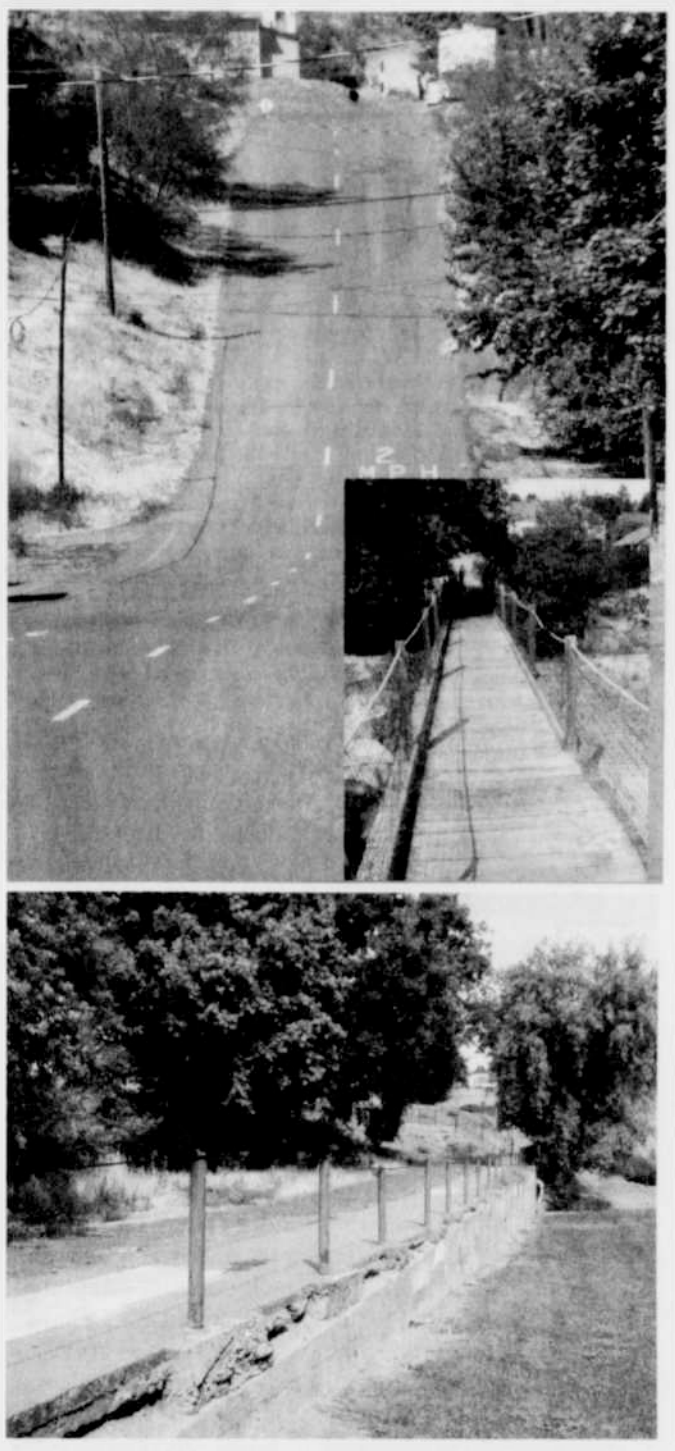
The city of Heppner will receive $3 million from the State of Oregon for seven projects ranging from sidewalks and streets to a new footbridge over Willow Creek, it was announced at Monday night's council meeting.

Council members learned of the unexpected money when City Manager Dave De Mayo explained how he had been contacted by state Representative Greg Smith in May about money that had become available for projects after another city had turned it down.

De Mayo said Smith called him on May 11 late in the afternoon, and said the money was available if the city could come up with a list of projects within two and one half hours. De Mayo said he consulted with Heppner High School Principal Daye Stone and then came up with seven projects to spend the nearly $3 million in state funds.

The list includes in prioritized order:

1. A rebuild of Barratt Blvd including a complete reconstruction from the sub grade up, including curbs, gutters, and a drainage system and sidewalks ($1.48 million). 2. Completion of Riverside Ave. consisting of installing curbs and gutters, installing sidewalk along the south east side and completing the installation of the storm drainage system (cost: $512,000). 3. Replacement and repair of "Lover's Lane" pedestrian bridge crossing Willow Creek behind the Bowling Alley, including replacement of superstructure and sidewalk approaches (cost: $149,570). 4. Heppner Elementary School sidewalk renovation including repair and replace of existing retaining wall and replacement of the sidewalk and replacing 300 ft of safety rail ($119,220). 5. Install sidewalks to and from Heppner High School starting at the junction of Gale and Water Streets up Water Street to Willow View Drive at the High School and then to the Junction of Spruce and Morgan Streets, about 3,300 feet, and then on to the intersection of Morgan Street and Riverside, another 1,100 feet ($477,760). 6. New sidewalks on Hager, Cowins and Gilmore streets, approximately 4,000 feet. ($100,000). 7. Stabilize an alleyway hill slope failure on Hill Street using drainage, geotextiles (permeable fabrics which, when used in association with soil, have the ability to separate, filter, reinforce, protect, or drain) and gabions (cages, cylinders, or boxes filled with soil or sand) ($100,000).



Some of the projects slated for Heppner include new sidewalks up to the High School on Water St. (top), replace foot bridge behind Bowling Alley (inset), and new sidewalk on Elementary School lower field.

"We feel we are fortunate we got this money," Mayor Les Paustian told the council. "A lot of other cities did not get anything." This is not local tax money, he added.

The money came from HB2001 which is all state money and not part of the federal stimulus program. "Heppner put in for federal stimulus dollars and was denied, De Mayo told the council.

In order to get the funds the city will have to provide the engineering for the

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Barney Lindsay elected school board chair

Irrigon High may become 3A school

By April Sykes

Barney Lindsay was elected Morrow County School Board Chair at a meeting held Monday night at the district offices in Lexington.

Lindsay and Thad Killingbeck were sworn in as newly elected members and Dan Daltoso was elected vice-chair.

Morrow County School District Superintendent Mark Burrows told the board that the Oregon School Athletic Association will move Irrigon High School to 3A classification from 2A, effective 2010. He said that the district is concerned about the proposed move as the newly formed Irrigon High School, which is now in the same classification as Heppner High School., will have to compete with much larger, established schools, such as Riverside High School, Nyssa and John Day. "It would be really a tough thing competitively," said Burrows. He added that economics is also a consideration, saying that it could cost the district "a bundle of cash" for transportation and other costs. The criteria for classification placement is student enrollment with the bar set at 220 students for 3A. Burrows said that IHS currently has only 180 students and the district plans to petition OSAA to reconsider the proposed change. If IHS is reclassified it would be effective from 2010 to 2014.

Burrows also told the board that Windy River Elementary School has not met its Average Yearly Progress goals for the second year in a row. He said that the school did not meet its goals in two subgroups, English Language Learners and Special Education. Since WRE did not meet its goals for the second year, the school will now have to undergo a comprehensive improvement planning process and will have to notify parents of WRE students that they can choose to send their children to a school that performs higher at the expense of the district. If WRE parents so choose, they could opt to have their children attend another school in the district, such as Heppner Elementary or Irrigon Elementary and the district must pay for transportation. WRE is comprised of fifth and sixth-grade students. Because WRE did not meet its AYP, the district is now eligible for grant monies to assist the improvement process.

At the same time, Burrows said that he is proud of Morrow County Schools and expressed regret that two small areas prevented WRE from achieving its AYP goals. "It's a shame with the federal government, if you mess up in one little area, it doesn't give you credit for all the gains," said Burrows.

Heppner High School Principal Daye Stone said he is looking forward to the new proficiency-based system at HHS this fall. In May, Stone said that the school will change from seven to eight periods per day and from a curriculum based on "seat time" to proficiency, where students will be tested to determine their proficiency in a subject before they will be able to move on to a higher level. He said that while at first there were some "misnomers" about the new program, he had visited with "movers and shakers" in the community to help disseminate the information about the changes and the questions have died down. "It's an exciting time period," said Stone.

Also at the meeting, the board approved the canvas of the Community Education Committee election results. Burrows said that no one filed for the Community Education Committee positions in any community and the board is exploring eliminating the committees. The board decided to seek legal counsel toward that process and directed Burrows to write letters to the write-in candidates to that effect. "The CECs are no longer useful," said board member Bill Kuhn. Burrows said that there have not been active CECs for the last three years and noted that serving on a CEC is no longer relevant. He suggested that interested citizens participate in booster clubs and site councils. He added that the election process is also expensive for the district, amounting to around $1,000 per election. CEC write-in candidates who were approved, receiving at least two votes each, were Deanne Irving, Irrigon, Kent Hansen, Marcy Rodelo and Sheila Corpus, all Boardman, and Marcia Kemp, Heppner-Lexington.

In other business, the board:

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Temple snags Amateur Calf Roping saddle

By Autumn Morgan

After 21 years of competing for the Morrow County Jackpot Rodeo Amateur Calf Roping saddle, Dick Temple has finally taken it home. Temple rode his daughter Kristal's, horse, Sunny, who had only been out of the barrier two times in the last four years..

Temple began teaching himself calf roping when he was 19 and he still loves roping even though he doesn't get a chance to do it much. Today he ropes calves with just reins attached to the halter because the mare "really loves to rope calves, even though I had a little trouble with her at the rodeo."

This year, he had some extra help getting ready for the rodeo. Kyle, Devin and Garrett Robinson "helped me practice the five times I practiced this summer," said Temple. In between the go-arounds Kyle helped him tie another rope in case he missed the first loop. They had to rig the second loop so Temple could throw the first on the ground and pick up the second loop without being bucked off.

Dick Temple works on wrestling his calf to the ground during the Amateur Calf Roping competition at the Morrow County Jackpot Rodeo on Sunday, August 9. More Morrow County Fair and Rodeo pictures can be found on Page FIVE *-Photo by Sandy Matthews*

Temple graduated from veterinary school in 1970 and moved to the area in 1986. "Karen and I came here looking for a place to raise a family and this has been a wonderful community," he said.

Temple also does some team roping with his brothers, Daryl and Brian, once or twice a year. He has placed at the Wild Cow Milking in the Pendleton Round-Up 13 years in a row.

Temple has won a jackpot or two in his life but now "knows that saddle exists because I have touched it. I still don't know if elk and jackalope exist, but I think the jackalope do because I have seen the does," said Temple. "This is my 21st year competing for the saddle. I will miss competing for it next year. I figure every roper in the arena was a better roper than I am but I got lucky this year."

Man drowns at Boardman Marina Park

According to the Boardman Police Department, on Sunday, August 9, at approximately 2:30 p.m., a 21 year old man drowned while swimming at the Boardman Marina Park.

Witnesses reported the man had swum across the swim area and was swimming back to the opposite shore when he began struggling in the water. A friend on shore attempted to rescue the struggling man, but was unable to do so. A Boardman Police officer arrived on scene and, with the help of several citizens, dove into the water and was able to retrieve the man from about six or seven feet of water.

Ambulance and fire crews from Boardman, along with the undersheriff from the Morrow County Sheriff's Office, arrived on scene and attempted to revive the man. Their efforts were unsuccessful due to the amount of time the man had been under water. The man was pronounced deceased at the scene.

A relative of the deceased reported the man had suffered from muscle cramping in the past while swimming and nothing in the water of the swim area was found to have contributed to the drowning.

The man was identified as Juan Florez-Perea of Mexico. Florez-Perea had been staying with family in Boardman while working during the harvest.

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