

Proposed cuts 'would be devastating', says state economic development officer

Minster says now is wrong time to cut lottery funds for economic development

By David Sykes

"The message here is this is no time to cut economic development funds," Rick Minster of the state Business Development

Dept. told the Heppner Chamber of Commerce last week.

Minster, who lived in Heppner and raised his family here but whose office is now based in John Day, said with the poor state of the economy and Oregon's 10.4 percent unemployment, a plan to cut 25 percent of the lottery funds received by his department is simply not a good idea.

The cuts have been proposed as a solution to a \$375 million state budget shortfall this year. The 25 percent reduction in lottery funds to economic development would shift money to other areas of the state budget. Minster says economic development gets 7.2 percent of the lottery funds generated in Oregon. "We all know education is a big part of the lottery funds," he said. "Both parties (Democrat and Republican) have promised to hold education harmless. If that happens there goes the rest of government," Minster said of the state's large education budget. If the lottery money is reduced, his department's funding will be cut back by \$8 million out of a budget of \$408.3 million. He said that of the 65 people in the department, nine positions could be eliminated.

Minster has worked for the department for 12 years after he was laid off following the 1998 closure of the Kinzua sawmill in Heppner. His coverage area has grown where he now services seven counties and says each one of those counties has benefited from the Business Development Department. "Every community out here has used our development funds," he pointed out. "We work with businesses on financing. We do lots of loan guarantees. We will come in at a per-

centage of a certain project and have loaned millions of dollars to small businesses."

As an example, Minster pointed to the new Greenwood Industries sawmill near Boardman which used money from a special "Governor's Fund" for economic development to set up. He said the business development fund in his department is the one that is going to take the biggest hit with the cuts.

Minster took comments from the Chamber audience and Larry Mills of Heppner said "I am appalled with 9.5 percent unemployment and the Nature Conservancy and State Parks want to put 15 percent of lottery into buying up more land. Now is not a good time and I can't see locking up 15 percent of the lottery with the unemployment we have," he said.

Minster said that voters had earlier approved

the use of lottery funds for use in purchasing land for parks and conservation, so there was nothing that could be done about it.

Minster did say that one bright spot of his district is the Port of Morrow in north Morrow County. "When I go through and see what they have done there, I just say this is the way it should be." He said it is the only place in the state of Oregon you can find 300 contiguous acres for development.

On the contrary, Minster said Harney County has been devastated with the loss of businesses there. "They have really nice empty buildings. They have nothing. Their manufacturing has all left."

He said without businesses and the jobs that go with them any community is going to have problems attracting young people and their families, but retired people will come to the smaller communities to live.

And the school year begins...



Top Photo: Oskar Peterson (8th grade) and Junior Verduzco (4th grade) get ready to head home after the first day of the 2010-11 school year at Lone Community School. Bottom Photo: Students at Heppner Elementary School enjoy their first afternoon recess of the new school year. —Contributed Photos

Heppner Gazette-Times closed for Labor Day

The Heppner Gazette-Times will be closed on Monday, September 6, in observance of the Labor Day holiday.

The deadline for news and advertisements for the September 8 edition of the newspaper is Friday, September 3, at 5 p.m.

Tribes seek 'Squaw' name changes

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is seeking to have "derogatory" names changed for three areas in Morrow County, the tribes said in a recent letter to the Oregon Historical Society.

The Tribes have identified Squaw Creek, Squaw Spring and Squaw Butte in Morrow County as the three names they want changed. In all there are a total of 44 proposed name changes across Baker, Grant, Harney, Morrow, Union and Wallowa counties.

In the proposal, Squaw Creek would be changed to Ninipa Creek, which means "by the aspens". Squaw Spring would be changed to Ninipa Spring and Squaw Butte would be changed to Sisu Butte which means "smelly". The creek and spring are located at Big Rock Flat in Morrow County and Squaw Butte is near Ella.

The Tribes say they want the name changes because they say the word "squaw" is offensive as it is a derogatory term for an Indian woman.

"Pursuant to Oregon Senate Bill 363, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Cultural Resources Protection Program is seeking to replace derogatory names for geographic features identified as 'Squaw' within the ceded lands boundaries and traditional use areas of the Weyiletpuu (Cayuse), Imatalamlama (Umatilla), and Waluulapam (Walla Walla)," the Tribes said in an August 9 letter to the Oregon Geographic Names Board of the Oregon Historical Society.

Pettyjohn's offers Direct TV discounts too

An article in last week's Gazette-Times about the closing of Heppner TV, quoted a Direct TV satellite employee as saying people who want to switch to satellite need only to call the Heppner TV office to receive a special discount.

Pettyjohn's Building Supply in

Heppner, which is also a Direct TV dealer, contacted the Gazette to say they can also offer the same discounts as the Heppner TV office, so former cable subscribers who want to switch to satellite may also call their business.

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Health district hires physician's assistant for Irrigon Clinic

By April Sykes

Morrow County Health District CEO Michael Blauer told the board at their August 30 meeting in Heppner that the district has hired a new physician's assistant for the Irrigon Medical Clinic.

Blauer said that PA John Adair from Idaho will start shadowing physicians in Heppner on September

13 and will begin work at the Irrigon clinic when he becomes licensed in Oregon. Dr. Russell Nichols will be his supervising physician. Dr. Kenneth Wenberg is covering the clinic in Irrigon in the interim.

According to Blauer, Adair, who graduated from Idaho State University, grew up in Burns and his wife is from Vancouver.

They have a two-year-old child.

Blauer also reported that the district is in the process of remodeling Pioneer Memorial Clinic in Heppner. Board Chair Larry Mills said that the remodeling will improve the reception area, aid in sound absorption and will

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Football season begins with trip to Gold Beach, community ties

The 2010 Heppner Mustang football season begins this Friday, Septem-

ber 3, with an away game against Gold Beach. But during halftime something

special will happen that tie the two teams, and towns, together.

To start off their season Gold Beach High School will be inducting the first group of people into their newly started Hall of Fame. Among those people is a former Heppner resident, Charles Edward (Ted) Ferguson, now deceased.

Ferguson was born and raised in Heppner and moved to Gold Beach after finishing college in 1954. Ferguson, who had a love for sports, became one of the founders of the Gold Beach football team.

A full story on Ferguson will run in next week's edition of the Heppner Gazette-Times.

G-T Trophy Corner



While fishing near Astoria, Marv Padberg, with the help of Howard Mullins, caught these salmon on August 18. Marv and a few others have been fishing for salmon to serve at the Annual Ione Education Foundation Dinner that is held in September. —Contributed Photo

Ione School District to clarify admissions policy

By April Sykes

The Ione Community School Board, at a work session prior to their regularly scheduled meeting Tuesday, August 24, discussed their policy on admission of non-resident students. Superintendent Mark Mulvihill told the board that their charter and policy statements concern-

ing non-resident student admission, particularly in the newly published student handbook, differed somewhat and asked that the board to give him clear direction concerning their

philosophy on admissions, enrollment limits and class size targets. Mulvihill said that a policy statement clarifying the board's expectations of the district's admission policy would be presented to the board for review at the next board meeting.

It was also suggested that the district's athletic handbook be revised to include activities as well as athletics.

During the meeting, Principal Jerry Archer introduced the district's new music teacher, Jordan

Bemrose, whose position was funded by the Ione Education Foundation. Archer remarked on Bemrose's "excellent" qualifications and remarked, "The education foundation is fantastic. It is so supportive. It's amazing." He said that numerous students have indicated that they plan to participate in the program and several musical instrument rental companies have been scheduled to come to the school for students wishing to play an instru-

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The Heppner Gazette-Times wants to see pictures of your trophy animals from this hunting season. Stop by to have your picture taken, drop off photos, or email them to editor@rapidservice.net.

