

SHERIFF'S CONTRACT

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only gets a midlevel deputy, and they do not keep a patrol car after it is taken out of service. Heppner does get the vehicle when it comes out of service.

Matlack also said he did not at this time know what the total contract would be, as the county is still in negotiations with the union representing the deputies. Matlack said the increase could be anywhere from 1.5 to 3.5 percent in the personnel budget. The council agreed to go ahead and authorize the new contract with a built-in 3.5 percent personnel increase, which would be reduced if the contract negotiations turn out to be less.

The council also discussed the advantage of having the sheriff department's main offices in Heppner.

"Having the sheriff department here is one reason we don't have much crime," Mayor Les Paustian said.

Councilmember John Bowles, who is also a deputy, agreed, saying, "It is a huge reason we have no crime."

In other action, the council heard from homeowner Ed Tarnasky, who said he received a packet from Oregon Department of Transportation about the coming project on Bar-

ratt Blvd. The state is going to be doing extensive work on that street, and Tarnasky's home is located there. It appears the state may need to purchase some of Tarnasky's property to complete the renovation of Barratt; however, he was concerned because the information he had received so far did not say how much property was needed.

"The packet shows property they are going to take but it is just a blue line on my property," Tarnasky told the city council. "Is it 30 feet, is it three feet? I don't know how much you are taking from me. Are you going to take my tree and part of my yard?"

Tarnasky said the state is going to meet with him to discuss the project. He said it was his understanding that if they cannot come to an agreement, they will go to mediation and, if that is not successful, he and the state would go to either binding arbitration or condemnation.

"I want it on the record that I feel coerced," Tarnasky said. He was concerned because the city was scheduled that night to sign an eminent domain authorization with the state on the Barratt property.

"Eminent domain is not something any city wants to do. It is not a desirable thing," said Pub-

lic Works Director Brian Harmon.

City attorney Philip Spicerkuhn said the action to approve use of eminent domain was a required part of the contract with the state and if it was not passed "technically" the city would be in breach of its contract with state redoing Barratt Blvd.

The council voted down a motion to delay approval of the use of eminent domain, and instead voted to approve the agreement with the state. Harmon assured Tarnasky that he would contact the state and get the situation worked out.

"I will make sure we get an answer by next Monday close of business," he said.

In other business, the council discussed the procedure for replacing the city manager Dave DeMayo, who is retiring. A discussion was held about possibly combining the public works position with the city manager's position like Pilot Rock apparently has.

Paustian said the city manager now has to follow certain state mandates and would need to be knowledgeable of these, and that there is a lot of responsibility that goes with the job. Spicerkuhn said that changing the position

could be done by changing the city charter. Paustian said the council should wait until applications for the position are received before making a formal decision. Heppner citizen Sam Hornbeck was at the meeting and he recommended the council not go this way. Hornbeck said he has seen it implemented in other cities and it did not work too well.

Sheriffs Report for February 2012

Traffic-
There were 18 traffic stops, resulting in 15 warnings and three citations.

A person called MCSO and reported a driving complaint. Deputies were unable to locate the vehicle. A deputy contacted a person who parked a vehicle in an alley. A motor vehicle crash was reported, resulting in no injuries. A motor vehicle crash was reported, resulting in the driver being arrested and issued a citation for driving while license suspended.

Code Enforcement-

Twenty-six animal complaints were reported. Two citations were issued for Maintaining a Dog as a Public Nuisance. Six cats and one dog were transported to Pet Rescue. Four code violations involving parked/abandoned vehicles

were initiated. A deputy made contact with a resident about a fence. A person called MCSO and complained about the gravel on the road, to traverse the caller's driveway.

Theft Complaints-

A person called MCSO and reported they gave money to another person to buy cigarettes and the other person has not returned with the cigarettes or money. Deputy made contact and the money was returned. A stolen cell phone was reported. A deputy investigated a theft from two businesses. A person reported a lost purse, which was returned. However medication was still missing from the purse.

All Other-

A person called MCSO and reported they heard voices outside their home. A deputy checked the area but was unable to locate anyone. A deputy responded to a burglar alarm. It was determined to be a false. A deputy investigated an assault. A person called MCSO and reported their ex-spouse was refusing to pay the caller as required. A deputy contacted the caller and advised the caller it was an issue the caller had to resolve through the caller's attorney. A deputy contacted juveniles who were trespassing and in the process of letting out animals. A caller reported a neighbor was piling debris

on her property. It was determined to be a civil issue. A disturbance was reported at a residence. The people involved were contacted by deputies and the issue was resolved. MCSO investigated graffiti downtown. A juvenile was arrested for Harassment. A person reported to MCSO that other people made some inappropriate comments to him. A deputy contacted the complainant, who was advised of his options. The parents of a juvenile reported they could not locate their son, who was driving around with his girlfriend. The juvenile returned home. A parent reported their teenager was having sex with another teenager. It was determined to be consensual and not violating any laws. A deputy responded to a residence for a suicidal person. Community Counseling was contacted. A person called MCSO to report they received a prank phone call. An elderly person reported people were inside with a firearm. It was determined to be a medical issue with the reporter. A resident called MCSO and reported two people entered the caller's residence. The suspects were identified; however, the resident did not want to pursue criminal charges. A person reported hearing adults and children crying nearby. A deputy responded was unable to locate anyone crying.

Chamber lunch meeting

The next meeting of the Heppner Chamber of Commerce will be held Thursday, March 22, at noon at All Saints Episcopal Church in Heppner.

Dirk Dirksen and Daye Stone will be there to talk about the Morrow County School District budget; they will also be updating chamber members on the status of the technology classes they are working on to accommodate future jobs in the wind farm industry.

Cost of lunch is \$9; Murray's Drug will cater. Participants are asked to RSVP for chamber lunch meetings by the Wednesday before.

Farm transportation amendment passes Senate

Last week, the United States Senate passed by voice vote a bipartisan amendment sponsored by Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley intended to make it easier for farmers and ranchers to transport their products to market if they operate near state lines. The amendment was cosponsored by Senators Roy Blunt (R-MO) and Pat Toomey (R-PA).

"This is a huge win for Oregon's farmers and ranchers," Merkley said. "Farmers and ranchers don't become commercial truckers just because they happen to live near a state line. I am pleased that we were able to cut red tape and put this arbitrary distinction to an end."

"Maintaining the historical exemption for farm vehicles from the requirements for commercial truckers is very important to Oregon wheat growers," said Blake Rowe of Oregon Wheat Growers League. The American Farm Bureau, the Oregon Farm Bureau and the Oregon Wheat Growers League all endorsed Senator Merkley's amendment.

Forest collaborative meeting scheduled

The Umatilla Forest Collaborative Group will meet at the National Forest Supervisor's Office in Pendleton on Thursday, March 22, at 10 a.m. The office is located at 2517 S.W. Hailey Avenue.

This group of diverse stakeholders meets regularly to explore and develop opportunities for collaborative recommendations to the Umatilla National Forest. The group currently is working to develop a recommendation for a project on the dry forest site of the Kahler Unit.

Oregon Solutions supports and facilitates the group by providing services and an internet presence. To learn more about Umatilla Forest Collaborative Group activities, access the website at <http://orsolutions.org/osproject/ufcg>.

The North Fork John Day Watershed Council is host to the group. Executive Director Elaine Eisenbraun would like to invite anyone who is interested in the operations of the Umatilla National Forest to attend these meetings.



A pathway to jobs. An investment in rural counties.

the
Morrow Pacific
project

Bringing new jobs and opportunity to Morrow County

The Morrow Pacific project is being developed to provide a coal export route to U.S. trade allies in the Asia-Pacific market. With your support, it will also provide new jobs and economic opportunity in Morrow County.

Creating Jobs

The project, which is being developed by Ambre Energy, will bring an estimated 25 jobs to Morrow County. It will also create 25 jobs in Columbia County and 55 jobs in the transportation of coal - for a total of 105 local jobs overall. These will be family-wage jobs with benefits, in the range of \$50,000 to \$90,000 per year.

Supporting Morrow County

The local economy will benefit in other ways as well.

- The project will pay an estimated \$750,000 in property taxes to Morrow County annually and \$850,000 in annual fees to the Port of Morrow, based on initial shipping estimates of 3.5 million tons.

- In addition, Ambre will make a voluntary annual contribution of approximately \$350,000 to support K-12 education in Morrow County, based on a 10-cents-per-ton contribution.

Show Your Support

These jobs and benefits could begin as early as mid-2013. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is currently reviewing the project and has invited public comments. Community support is crucial during the public comment period to make this opportunity a reality. Please visit www.MorrowPacific.com and click on **Show Your Support**. It's easy and quick - and it will make a difference in bringing jobs and opportunity to Morrow County. ■

Morrow Pacific Project Fact:

Every aspect of the project has been designed to meet Oregon's high standards. All facilities will be enclosed, barges will be enclosed and all operations are designed to eliminate dust and spillage.

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