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Gazette Times

VOL. 131 NO. 36 8 Pages Wednesday, September 12, 2012 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

# Council discusses free water for hunters

**At least one Heppner resident doesn't like visiting hunters filling up water tanks like this one for free. Dick Paris of Heppner took this picture at the Heppner water station at Heritage Park and even told the hunter about his objections.**

**By David Sykes**

A service to give free drinking water to hunters and make them feel more welcome in Heppner has at least one resident here not so pleased.

Dick Paris told the Heppner City Council Monday that he doesn't like the city's policy of providing free drinking water to hunters, and since he pays for water, he thinks they should too.

Paris said he went so far as to confront one archery hunter filling up this past week and told him how he feels about it. "I told him I had to pay for my water and how does he feel about getting water for free," Paris said. "I have watched my lawn dry up because of the price of water. I can't afford it and why should these people come from the coast and get free water?" he asked the council. "I like to see some consideration for tourists, but I would like to see some consideration for people who live here."

The city set up a watering station at Heritage Park a few years ago where hunters could pull in with RVs, water cans and tanks and fill up before heading to the mountains to camp. The station is complete with a sign on main street pointing out the service to hunters pulling into town. The free water fill up is part of an effort to make hunters feel welcome to the area, and help the local businesses which rely on hunters' dollars for income. The city also provides a dumpster near the park for hunters to place their trash when leaving town.

Paris said he can appreciate the fact that some businesses make money off the hunters, and "I see the empty store fronts on main street," he said. But. still doesn't like the idea that he pays for water and they don't. He even took a picture of a hunter filling a 300-gallon water tank. Paris said the man told him he was taking the water up to a campsite in the mountains, where he would share with several hunters who have RVs and camp together. "The guy was real nice about it but I just told him I didn't think it was fair, him getting his water for free and I have to pay for mine," said Paris, who happens to live on Water Street in Heppner.

The council spent some talking about the free water for hunters policy. The council discussed putting a coin operated water meter on the faucet and the additional cost that would be to the city. Mayor Les Paustian said there were a couple of months out of the year that hunters use the service and that the typical RV holds 25-40 gallons of water. The council also discussed having the police monitor the water area, and maybe putting a meter on the faucet to see how much is actually being used.

One person in the audience suggested that maybe local businesses could be approached about paying for the hunter drinking water. No one on the council mentioned that business owners in Heppner already pay an extra $17.50 per month on their water bills over what residents pay. Called a fire flow fee, the extra charge was implemented after the city put in its new water system several years ago. Local business pay the fee even though they traditionally use less water than residential users. Businesses typically have only one or two restrooms, used only during working hours, and do not have lawns, gardens showers or washing machines as residents do. The council took no action concerning the water service.

In other business the council heard a request from Bucknum's Tavern to be able to place tables on the sidewalk in front of the business and serve meals outdoors.

In discussing the request, the council determined it did not have a formal permit process allowing businesses to put tables and chairs on the sidewalk, and there are already two businesses, Murray's Drug and Cornerstone Gallery, which do. It was pointed out that Sally Anne's Antique store also puts merchandise on the sidewalk.

Cody High of Bucknum's said at this time they did not plan on serving beer outside, but did want to place several picnic type tables outside for customers. High, who is also a member of the city council but excused himself from the council for the discussion, said Bucknum's is getting more and more customers and needs the additional space. "We want to do something that is nice for out current customers and do something for our new customers," High said.

"I don't see a problem with the tables as long as they are not encroaching on foot traffic," said Mayor Paustian.

The council passed a motion to temporarily allow Bucknum's to set out tables on the sidewalk for food service while it further researched the possibility of a city code addressing the practice.

The council authorized the city manager to set up a new back account specifically for handling the $1.2 million in lotto funds received by the city from the state, through the Port of Morrow, for certain city infrastructure projects. City officials will be meeting with Ferguson Engineering to "go over our wish list for using the grant," according to city manager Kim Cutsforth.

Cutsforth asked the council to begin thinking about future projects for the city. State Representative Greg Smith has said there should be additional funds coming in.

The council learned that the dilapidated old abandoned apartment building on Chase Street is scheduled to be burned by the fire department. The site will also be cleaned up by owner Alvin Liu.

In other business, the council heard that issues between Oregon Department of Transportation and landowners on Barratt Boulevard in Heppner have

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# County Court directs department heads to curtail unnecessary expenditures

The Morrow County Court met in Heppner on September 5 with Judge Terry Tallman and Commissioners Ken Grieb and Leann Rea in attendance.

**Finance Dept. Cash Flow Update:** Finance Director Rick Worden provided the court and several department heads with spreadsheets and charts indicating the differences in the general fund bank balances, cash outflows, payroll comparisons, cash inflows and accounts payable from this time last year. It was noted that the approx. $75,000 received as overhead from the CSEPP program will no longer be coming into the county's general fund. At the conclusion of the presentation the court decided to notify all department heads that all unnecessary expenditures are to be curtailed until after November 15, 2012 when tax revenues starts coming into the county. At this time it appears the county may be able to fund necessary items without obtaining a short term loan as was necessary last year. The city and citizen comment period for Heppner was opened; no comments were offered but Cody High and Kim Cutsforth attended.

The court reviewed and approved the OYCC final payroll, payroll payables, 2012 Morrow County · Rodeo payouts, voids and account payables in the net total amount of $96,396.87.

**Road Dept.:** The crew has been working on repairing all gravel roads that had developed dust holes from harvest traffic. Those repairs were finished yesterday. The crew worked on a total of 25 different roads in the county. The crew excavated, formed and poured a concrete base for the new kiosk at the old "Spring Hollow Bridge". The kiosk was then mounted to the base and the signs were added. The crew has been working on the drainage system along Spruce Lane that goes up to the Heppner High School. All 800 feet of the 24 inch diameter culvert has been installed beside the road. Currently the crew is working on the drainage ditches and catch pond at the top of the hill. Meadowbrook Road: The crew has been working on ripping up the old asphalt from Bert Peck Road intersection to near Highway 74. The old asphalt was ripped out and processed into base material, ditches were constructed as needed. The crew has started hauling and placing gravel over the base rock. A fallen tree was removed from Olson Road near Kunze Lane; another tree was removed along Kunze Lane. The county and the state have come to an agreement to build a fence around their gravel pits in Irrigon. Dave Pranger did some in county paint striping last week, and is currently striping for Baker County.

**USFS update and Title II Projects:** Forester, Jonathan Day provided the court with four Title II projects and requested the court prioritize the various projects. They were rated as follows: Noxious Weed Eradication in the amount of $10,600 (high), Small Diameter Thinning in the amount of $18,550 (high), Refurbishment of Scenic Byway Interpretive Signs in the amount of $10,350 (high) and Wall Creek Road Reconstruction (3.1 miles) in the amount of $55,200 (medium). There is a total of $36,031 that can be used towards these projects. The county funds will be used to leverage additional funds where possible.

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# Sexual Assault Response Team forming in Morrow County

The Morrow County District Attorney's office hosted a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) training at the Port of Morrow on Sept. 7. The training was facilitated by Jenna Harper of the Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force.

SART is a multi-disciplinary, inter-agency collaboration that unites its members in a coordinated victim-centered and offender-focused approach to the intervention and care for sexual assault victims.

Representatives of the Morrow County District Attorney's office, Morrow County Sheriff's Office, Boardman Police Department, Victim's Advocate, Domestic Violence Services, and Community Counseling Solutions attended the training to learn how to create a SART, create protocols, set goals, and learn how to collaborate with local agencies and community groups to provide services to victims of sexual assault.

"We are excited to create a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) in Morrow County. The goal of the Morrow County agencies that attended this training (is) to create a team that will increase victim and community safety and to prevent future victimization," said Justin Nelson, Morrow County District Attorney.

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

# Mustang tailgate supper Friday

A tailgate hamburger supper will be held this Friday, September 14, at the Morrow County Fairgrounds in Heppner, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

The dinner will include a hamburger, chips and a drink for $5.

The game, featuring a varsity game between the Heppner Mustangs and Willamina, will begin at 7 p.m.

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