

Health district board discusses CREZ funds

By April Sykes

The CREZ (Columbia River Enterprise Zone) and its proposed disbursement of millions of dollars paid by businesses located in the zone in lieu of county taxes was a topic of concern for the Morrow County Health District Board at their regular meeting Monday night in Ione.

MCHD Board member Leann Rea, who is also not only a Morrow County Commissioner, but also a member of the CREZ Board, explained somewhat the CREZ Board's thinking on potential distribution of those funds to other government entities or charitable organizations.

Rea explained that the CREZ Board plans to invite proposals and grant requests on a yearly basis. However, concerns were raised by the health district board that monies that would normally go to taxing entities, such as the health district, would now go to the CREZ five-member, non-elected board, for distribution. Rea showed the MCHD Board an extensive list of entities that have requested funds of the CREZ.

MCHD Director of Nursing Molly Rhea, voiced concern about a rumored comment that "the health district would not receive a dime" of the money, possibly due to long-standing grudges against the district held by some north Morrow County residents.

Grigg said he and board Chair Larry Mills attended a meeting concerning the CREZ at the invitation of Cyde Estes, chair of the Morrow County Unified Recreation District. He said that "The purpose of the meeting was to assess the interest of the special districts in jointly sponsoring a letter to the Enterprise Zone requesting that a portion of the fees they collect be shared with the special districts."

Grigg later pointed out, and board members concurred, that the district would not be in the black if the district did not receive tax monies.

Concerning physician recruitment, Grigg related to the board that he has been in contact with a physician who is currently practicing out of state who has expressed an interest in working for the district. Grigg said that this physician is a colleague of Dr. Russ Nichols, who is employed by MCHD. He said that he has arranged to bring the doctor and his wife in for an onsite interview Aug. 21 and plans meet-and-greet dinner get-togethers with the physician and his wife and board members.

While the provider staff is currently sufficient, Grigg and the board anticipate the possible retirements of Dr. Ed Berretta and

Physician's Assistant Sheridan Tarnasky within the next several years.

Also at the meeting, Chief Financial Officer Nicole Mahoney submitted a proposal to the board that would provide for an accelerated pay-off of long-term debt, which would save an estimated \$400,000 in interest payments.

Through this proposal, the monthly payment for the Bank of Eastern Oregon Revenue Bond, currently at \$3,193, would be increased to \$4,500. The district's BEO loan for the hospital remodel, currently with a \$4,150 monthly payment, would be increased to \$4,500. The district's USDA loan, now at \$5,622, would be increased to \$6,000 per month. The district currently has a \$250,000 balance on the BEO revenue bond with a May 1, 2021 payoff date; a \$415,000 balance on the BEO hospital remodel with a Dec. 1, 2023 payoff date; and a \$1,065,608 balance on the USDA loan with an Aug. 1, 2042 payoff date.

All told, with this plan, the district would expect a \$2,035 monthly increase in payments, for a \$24,423 total annual increase.

Board member Joe Perry, who is also a banker, pointed out that the district would save money if it paid off the smallest loan, with the highest interest rate, which would be the BEO Revenue Bond. The board subsequently voted to increase payments for that loan to the entire \$2,000 a month, rather than spread out increased payments over the several loans.

In other business, the board voted to approve the low bid from Roche Diagnostics Corporation to replace the aging chemical analyzer for the Pioneer Memorial Hospital laboratory. While the Roche bid for the machines was slightly higher, the long term proposal, which included supplies, was lower. Roche Diagnostics Corporation's proposal for two analyzers called for \$204,686 for the first year for the new equipment and supplies, with \$56,686 each year for the next five years for supplies for a total of \$431,431. A bid submitted by Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics, Inc., of Newark, Delaware, for a combined analyzer was \$192,683 for the first year for equipment and supplies, with \$66,733 each year for the next five years for a total of \$459,615.

Mahoney said that the lab personnel were favorable toward that option.

In other business, the board:

-approved a one-year contract renewal for Sheridan Tarnasky, PA-C, with some small changes.

-learned from Grigg of expansion of patient

satisfaction survey to include the two clinics, one in Heppner and one in Irrigon.

-received a proposal from the Bank of Eastern Oregon for a \$200,000 five-year loan for purchase of an ambulance and other equipment with a 3.75 percent interest rate. Total payments for the five-year loan would amount to \$3,661 with no pre-payment penalty.

-learned of the district's annual employee engagement survey.

-heard from Grigg concerning the current state of the Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization. He said that the EOCCO Board members have agreed to seek approval for non-board member CEOs to attend CCO meetings and pledged to improve communication. EOCCO board members got a spot on the board basically through a six figure buy-in. Board spots were not made available to CEOs of the smaller districts, which were unable to come up with the dough. The recently-formed coordinated care organizations will supervise disbursement of funds for Medicaid patients for all types of care, including health, dental and psychological.

-heard from Grigg concerning a "National Night Out" sponsored by the Boardman Police Department, Boardman Rural Fire Protection District and the Morrow County Health District to be held at the Boardman City Park on Tuesday, August 6, from 5-8 p.m. The evening will include a hamburger/hot dog dinner, bike and infant car seat raffles and an opportunity to visit with providers. Grigg commented that he wants the people of Boardman and Irrigon know that the district wants to help them as much as they do Heppner.

-received the following

profit/loss statement for June: the district received \$646,023 in gross patient revenue; less \$11,411 for bad debts and \$86,481 for contractual and other adjustments, plus \$116,118 in tax revenue and \$31,516 in other operating revenue for \$695,764 in total operating revenue, \$707,303 in total operating expenses, \$39,763 in a non-operating gain for a \$28,224 gain for the month, an average monthly year-to-date gain of \$47,720 and a \$572,634 gain for the year to date.

-received the following report for June: Pioneer Memorial Hospital had two admissions, one swing bed admission, 17 admitted for observation, 488 total admissions, 83 emergency room encounters, 1821 lab tests, 138 x-ray procedures, 37 CT scans, 25 EKG tests, three colonoscopy procedures, two endoscopy procedures, 20 respiratory therapy procedures; Home Health had 95 patient visits; Pharmacy had 1084 drug doses for \$69,701 in drug revenue; Pioneer Memorial Clinic had 372 patient visits with 23 new patients, 36 seen by a nurse and five no-shows; Irrigon Medical Clinic had 135 patient visits, 22 new patients, 47 seen by a nurse and 14 no shows; Heppner Ambulance had 25 total page outs with 23 transports for \$26,697 in revenue; Boardman Ambulance had 32 total page outs with 18 transports for \$23,798 in revenue; Irrigon Ambulance had 20 total page outs with 13 transports for \$16,903 in revenue; there were seven flights. For the year end, Heppner Ambulance had 284 total page-outs with 241 transports; Boardman Ambulance had 396 total page outs with 230 transports; and Irrigon Ambulance had 291 total page outs with 187 transports. There were 42 flights for the year.

MISS CONGENIALITY



Lillian Sandford, Miss OHSR 2013-14, with Kyle Robinson of Heppner, the OHSR National Director, after coronation ceremonies in Rock Springs, WY. -Contributed photo

-Continued from PAGE ONE speech, impromptu, modeling and written rodeo knowledge test. They also participated in every rodeo performance, selling 50/50 tickets to raise money for the National High School Rodeo scholarship fund, rode in four grand entries, were buddies for the Special Kids Rodeo, signed hundreds of autographs for young fans and represented their states at the scholarship annual auction, rodeo knowledge bowl, talent show and Mr. National High School Rodeo Association contest.

Sandford, now a senior at Heppner High School, is the daughter of Rick and

Sylvia Sandford of Ione. She was joined at nationals by schoolmates Garrett Robinson and Tate Gentry, who both qualified in the shooting contest.

The top four in each event attend nationals each year. More than 1,400 athletes were on hand in Wyoming for the event. Oregon's high school rodeo season kicks off with the first fall rodeos being held Labor Day weekend, September 1-2, in Condon and September 13-15 in Molalla.

"I wouldn't have been able to attend finals without my gracious sponsors," added Sandford.

HHS to host volleyball clinic

Heppner High School is hosting a volleyball skills camp Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 5-6.

The session for grades four through five will be from 8-10 a.m. each day, with grades six through

eight from 11 a.m. till 2 p.m., and high school from 5-8 p.m.

Cost is \$30, which includes a t-shirt. For more information, contact Dieter Waite at 541-626-3836.

Fair offers opportunities for green thumbs

Yes, 2013 marks 100 years of Morrow County residents showing their blossoms, blooms and arrangements at the fair. It also will be the last year for the Heppner Garden Club to be the sponsor of flower exhibits. On that note, garden club members are asking county residents to help make it the best year ever.

Everyone is invited to bring exhibits to the Morrow County Fairgrounds Monday, Aug. 12, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. or Tuesday, Aug. 13, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Volunteers will be there to help provide water and jars for freshly cut flowers. Go to <http://morrowcountyoregon.com/county-fair/2013-morrow-county-fair-premium-book/> and look at the premium

book's pages 29 through 33 for information. Or find a premium book at your local post office. There is also a section for youth ages six and under, seven to 14 and 14-17. Garden club members will gladly help with any questions at entry time.

Local green thumbs are also invited to use their flower power and enter some of the special contests: Heppner Garden Club will award cash prizes for Best Arrangement and Most Blue Ribbons, a free floral arrangement will go from Murray's Drug to the winner of the "Just Imagine" class, and MCGG Green Feed will present a free rose bush to the winner of the "Timeless Beauty" class.

Pass the word and enter!

Wildhorse grants funds for bell rehab

Most county residents are already aware that the Morrow County Courthouse in Heppner is in the early stages of a face 'lift.' Many applications are going into various grant programs in the area to help fund this restoration. The Wildhorse Foundation of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation has awarded

Morrow County \$10,000 toward this rehabilitation project.

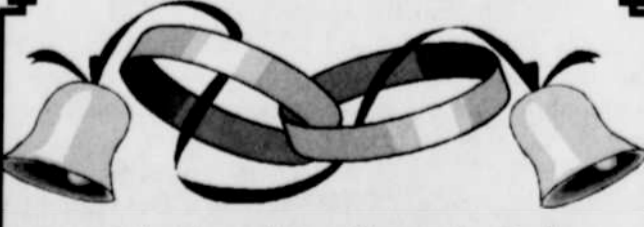
Residents can check updates as they become available in the Heppner Gazette-Times, on the Morrow County website at www.morrowcountyoregon.com and on the 'Morrow County Clock Tower Renovation' Facebook page.

Community lunch menu

St. Patrick's Catholic Parish members will serve lunch on Wednesday, Aug. 7, at St. Patrick's Senior Center.

The meal will include fish and chips, coleslaw, cucumbers and onions, hush puppies, and Jell-O parfait. Milk is served at each meal.

Suggested donation is \$3.50 per meal. Menu is subject to change.



Friends and Family are invited to the wedding of

Kylee Disque and Sean Allstott

on Saturday August 17, 2013 at 6:00 pm
Faith Presbyterian Church
1005 SE 9th Street, Hermiston
Reception to follow at Purswell's Place
465 Christensen Loop Rd., Hermiston
RSVP to 541-989-8535

MURRAY'S WILL CLOSE AT 4:00 PM THURSDAY AUG. 15 FOR WINE TASTING

WEDDING TABLES

Kylee Disque & Sean Allstott
August 17, 2013

Tayllor Gould & William Brannon
September 13, 2013


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Callahan Baker, daughter of Julie and Matt Baker of Lexington, at her grandmother's Heppner home, helping choose flowers to enter in the centennial fair. -Photo by Kay Proctor

DOG BITE HARRIS ALBUM RELEASE PARTY

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9 - BUCKNUM'S

BILLY COOK

DAN INFECTO

DOG BITE HARRIS