

HEPPNER

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Gazette Times

VOL. 134 NO. 43 8 Pages Wednesday, November 11, 2015 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

City seeks broad new powers over 'chronic nuisance' properties

Proposed ordinance would allow city to "close and secure" homes or apartments against occupancy for up to one year

By David Sykes

In an effort to correct what it deems "chronic nuisance" properties, the Heppner city council Monday moved forward with a new ordinance granting it broad powers to remove people from nuisance homes, businesses or apartments and then prevent occupancy of that property for up to one year. City Manager Kim Cutsforth says the new ordinance, which was borrowed from Pendleton, is necessary because some properties are not responding to current nuisance abatement

methods.

Under the proposed ordinance, a copy of which was handed out at Monday's council meeting, if a home (or any property) is turned in three times within 90 days for any of 19 named nuisances, the court may "authorize the city to physically secure the property against all unauthorized access, use or occupancy for not less than 30 days or more than one year."

The 19 "nuisances" that can trigger the action include: harassment; intimidation; disorderly conduct;

assault or menacing; sexual abuse, contributing to the delinquency of a minor or sexual misconduct; public indecency; prostitution; alcoholic liquor violations; offensive littering; criminal trespass; theft; arson; possession, manufacture, or delivery of a controlled substance; illegal gambling; criminal mischief, conspiracy to commit any of the above activities; fire or discharge of a firearm; unlawful operation of sound producing or reproducing

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School district discusses field trips, student safety

By April Sykes

The Morrow County School Board Monday night voted overwhelmingly against allowing students from other districts to accompany MCSD students on field trips.

Board member Barney Lindsay was the sole dissenting vote.

"It's great that kids get to do things, but who are we serving?" said board member Thad Killingbeck, who voted against expanding field trip eligibility. "FFA

is a club spending their own money to go to a place. It's not a field trip," said Killingbeck, making the distinction between school field trips and extracurricular activities such as FFA or Technology Students Association trips to their national conventions.

Others cited the problems that could arise, such as behavioral and liability issues, if students from other districts were allowed to attend MCSD field trips.

At the meeting, Superintendent Dirk Dirksen told the board that the district is in the process of hiring a nurse to work primarily with children in the schools and with other district issues.

"The biggest challenge is hiring a nurse," added Dirksen.

Dirksen said that Todd Siex is now working as a student resource officer in Heppner and Irrigon. Dirksen said he would be

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Mustangs slay Dragons, advance to state quarterfinals



Wyatt Steagall takes down a Monroe Dragon in last Saturday's first-round state playoff game. The Mustangs defeated the visitors 55-14 to move on to the quarterfinals. The Mustangs will host the Reedsport Braves in a quarterfinal game this Saturday at 1 p.m. -Photo by Sandra Putman -See sorry PAGE FOUR

Heppner fire hall bonds pass, Lexington local option tax renewed

Voters in both the City of Heppner and the Heppner Rural Fire Protection District passed bond measures last week to build a new \$975,000 fire hall, while Lexington residents approved a five-year renewal of a local option tax for the Lexington Fire Department.

According to final results released by Morrow County Clerk Bob-

Childers, all measures passed overwhelmingly.

In Heppner, 317 residents, or 71 percent, voted to approve up to \$585,000 of general obligation bonds to pay capital costs related to a new fire hall, with 124 dissenting. The bond monies are intended to cover 60 percent of the cost of the new hall, with the other 40 percent, \$390,000, covered by the Heppner Rural Fire

Protection bond that was also on the ballot. The rural fire district bond passed by more than 80 percent, 193 to 41. The bond levies will be for 21 years.

The new station will be built just outside city limits at Highway 74 and Fuller Canyon Road, on land donated by Morrow County Grain Growers.

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Electric Co-Op holds 71st annual meeting

By David Sykes

Columbia Basin Electric Co-op held its 71st annual meeting last Thursday, and officials reported the co-op is in good condition.

President Lori Anderson reported the results of the election, which saw Gary Wilde elected to the board of directors in zone one, and Roy Carlson Jr. in zone seven.

Co-op Manger Thomas Wolff reported that the finances of the business were sound, showing net margins

of \$805,035 in fiscal year 2015, which ended in June.

This is up slightly from \$765,450 over last year. Wolff also reported there will be a capital redistribution of \$660,000 which would go out to those who were members in the last half of 1984 and 1985 and be based on their percentage of ownership of the co-op.

Wolff also reported that the co-op is planning a big-

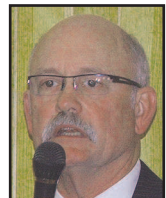
ger online presence in the spring, when they hope to have a website that customers can log onto and check their account and pay their electric bills.

He also introduced past and present employees of the co-op who were in attendance at the meeting, which was held in the Catholic Church parish hall in Heppner. He especially spoke to

long-time, now retired, employee Bill Gentry, who -See CO-OP MEETING/PAGE THREE



CBEC President Lori Anderson



Co-op manager Tom Wolff

Man arrested in I-84 car chase



A fleeing suspect forced a collision with an Oregon State Police trooper on I-84, but the trooper still managed to stop the Dodge Avenger and arrest the driver. -Photo courtesy of Oregon State Police

A Grand Ronde man was arrested after a car chase and collision with Oregon State Police on I-84 near Boardman last week.

On Nov. 4 about 4:30 p.m., OSP troopers from the Hermiston office responded to a welfare check on Interstate 84 near milepost 174 (just east of Boardman). A 2008 Dodge Avenger was seen parked in the emergency vehicle turnaround at that location. Police said initial reports indicated the vehicle had been involved in a possible domestic disturbance.

An OSP trooper made contact with the lone occupant of the vehicle, later identified as Clint D. Cureton, 22, of Grand Ronde, OR. Cureton became belligerent and fled the area at "a high rate of speed," police said.

The trooper pursued the vehicle eastbound on I-84, reaching speeds of over 100 miles per hour. The suspect driver suddenly slammed on his brakes, apparently trying to cause a collision with the pursuing trooper. The trooper managed to slow considerably and make an evasive maneuver, but the vehicles still collided.

After the impact, the trooper managed to force the Dodge to a stop into the -See CAR CHASE/PAGE FIVE

Fish and Wildlife Commission delists wolves statewide in split vote (4-2)

SALEM, Ore.—The Fish and Wildlife Commission voted to delist wolves from the state Endangered Species Act throughout Oregon Monday.

The meeting began at 8 a.m. and adjourned at 6:44 p.m. About 106 people came to testify and they were limited to three minutes each.

Commissioners thanked the public for coming to testify and asked that interests on both sides of the issue continue to work with each other.

Chair Finley noted the many people "some in cowboy hats and others in t-shirts supporting wolves" who came out to testify on opposite sides of the issue because they care about wolves.

"The Wolf Plan has been working well and you are all responsible for that," he told the public still in the meeting at the end of the day. "We will remember the merits of the Wolf Plan and the next one will be as good or better. You can all help that happen."

With the Commission's decision made, the rule was filed with the Secretary of State Nov. 10. The filing removes wolves from the



An ODFW biologist in the process of collaring wolf OR33, a two-year-old adult male from the Imnaha pack, this year in Wallowa County. Larger wild animals are typically blindfolded while immobilized to protect eyes and to help calm them. -Photo by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

state ESA but has no other effect on wolf management at this time.

The Wolf Plan continues to provide protection of wolves into the future. Any take of wolves is tightly regulated in all phases of the plan. Non-lethal preven-

tive measures to prevent wolf-livestock conflict are the first choice of wildlife managers in all phases of wolf management. There is no general season sport hunting of wolves allowed in any phase of the Wolf Plan.

Wolves in western Oregon will continue to be managed with ESA-like protections until they reach the conservation objective of four breeding pairs for three consecutive years. This is known as Phase 1 of wolf management.

Additionally, west of Hwys. 395-78-95 wolves are also still listed under the federal Endangered Species Act and the Commission's action has no effect on their federal status.

Wolves in eastern Oregon moved to Phase 2 of management earlier this year. They will move to Phase 3 after ODFW documents seven breeding pairs for three consecutive years, which could occur as early as January 2017. In Phase 3 while wolves are delisted, controlled take of wolves

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