

Commission approves staff increases

Sheriff's Department and finance to get new positions

By David Sykes

The Morrow County Commission decided at its March 28 meeting to approve adding new staff to the sheriff's department and the finance office. If approved by the budget committee the sheriff will receive a new patrol person and a new investigator. The finance office is approved for a new full-time staff accountant. At the same meeting the commission turned down a request from planning to increase their staff by one half position.

According to Finance Director Kate Knop, the new accountant will be a full-time position responsible for assistance in general ledger maintenance, grants and contracts compliance as well as budgeting and other duties. The position will cost the county an additional \$87,433 per year in-

cluding salary and benefits. The department currently has three full-time employees with a total annual payroll and benefit budget of \$314,259.

Knop pointed out that the finance department had not grown "in more than 20 years", and that the new position will be of benefit to county citizens by providing "additional support in safeguarding assets, providing reliable information and complying with all applicable constraints." The commission voted unanimously to move the recommendation to the county budget committee which starts deliberations soon on the 2018-19 county fiscal year budget.

In other action the commission voted to recommend two new positions, a patrol deputy and an investigator, to the budget com-

mittee for approval. Both Sheriff Ken Matlack and Undersheriff John Bowles were at the meeting to explain the current police coverage in the county, and the need for new employees. The sheriff had asked for two patrol deputies and an investigator.

Matlack said with the current department staffing there are "holes" in the police coverage in the county, and that more people were needed to provide 24-hour police coverage throughout the county. Bowles said with vacations, sick leave, court time and investigations, there were not enough deputies on staff to provide 24-hour coverage across the county. It was pointed out at this time there is no regular patrol on county roads in the south end of the county (outside of the city of Heppner, which contracts

with the county for police coverage) and deputies only respond to these areas when called. The sheriff's department currently has 35 full-time and three part-time employees. No cost figures for the additional or current staff were provided at the meeting, however those figures are available in the county budget.

The commissioners at first voted in favor of two new patrol deputies with the understanding it would then be possible to have 24-hour coverage in the county. However, after approving the two new patrol deputies, a separate discussion was held on hiring a new investigator. At this time, it was revealed there was a misunderstanding between the sheriff and the commissioners, and that hiring just the two deputies without also hiring a new investi-

gator would not be enough people to provide 24-hour coverage. The commission at that time rescinded its original motion on the two deputies, and instead voted 2-1 to hire one deputy and one investigator. The additional staff will still leave some periods when the county has no coverage, but not as much the commission was told. The sheriff said the investigator was needed because at this time deputies are being pulled off patrol in order to do follow up work on current cases and arrests. The investigator will take over these duties and allow more time for patrol.

In other action the commission denied a request from the planning department to expand a half-time position in that office from half time to full time, and also denied a request from

the district attorney's office to hire an investigator there.

In other compensation action a three-percent cost of living increase (COLA) for county elected officials was approved for the coming fiscal year. County commissioners currently make \$39,564 per year, assessor, \$80,631, treasurer, justice of the peace and clerk, \$70,529, and sheriff, \$101,081. An increase to \$75,000 per year for the justice of the peace, but no COLA, was approved for the coming 2018 -19 fiscal year. The county compensation committee had earlier recommended a salary increase to \$51,000 for the county commissioners, but that recommendation was not followed, and the commissioners only received a three-percent cost of living increase for the coming fiscal year.

Sheriff's Report

The Morrow County Sheriff's Office has released the following information:

February 5: Morrow County Sheriff's Office received a report at Sage Brush Apartments on Boardman Ave NW, Boardman that there are subjects fighting in apartment six, ongoing issue. Complaint was unfounded.

-MCSO received a 911 hang-up call at Bella Vista Estates on Paul Smith Rd, Boardman. Called back, female said everything was fine and didn't need police. Received additional call, female said it was her husband calling and he was intoxicated. Luis Medel Rodriguez was arrested by BPD for Assault IV, lodged at UCJ, bail \$10,000.

-MCSO received a report at Irrigon Justice Court that someone stole UPS box out in front of ISA. Advised there is a bunch of gravel around where it was taken.

-MCSO received a dog complaint at SE Wyoming Ave/S First St, Irrigon. Warning.

-MCSO received a report on E Oregon Ln, Irrigon that dogs are coming on to their property, today tipped over their garbage. RP has pictures of the dogs.

-MCSO received a report on I 84 E, Boardman that on both lanes under the over pass there is a large amount of rocks.

-MCSO received a report on SE Eighth St, Irrigon of a dispute and RP would like to speak to a

deputy.

-MCSO received a report on NW Jones St, Heppner regarding children not attending school.

-MCSO received a report on SE Utah Ave, Irrigon regarding children not attending school.

-MCSO received a report on Ione Gooseberry Rd, Ione that two dogs running around, would like owners advised to keep their dogs in.

-MCSO received a request for extra patrol on SE Utah Ave, Irrigon. Someone recently broke into her vehicles during the night and took her stereo system.

February 6: Morrow County Sheriff's Office received a report on I 84 E, Boardman that a dark colored Honda is swerving in and out of the road. Referred to other agency.

-MCSO received a report on I 84 W, Pendleton, that westbound around the 241 they hit an animal, car airbags deployed, no injury. Referred to other agency.

-MCSO received a report of a motor vehicle accident at AC Houghton on NE Main Ave, Irrigon. 43 year old female had a head and neck injury.

-MCSO received a juvenile complaint at Irrigon Elementary School, SE Wyoming Ave, Irrigon.

-MCSO received a juvenile complaint at Ione

School, Spring St, Ione regarding tampering with a witness.

-MCSO received a report of suicidal thoughts from an individual at Meadow Brook Rd, Lexington. MCSO made contact with individual.

-MCSO received a juvenile complaint at Irrigon Elementary School on SE Wyoming Ave, Irrigon.

-MCSO received a report at Green Acres on Paterson Ferry Rd, Irrigon that her vehicle was stolen sometime last night and she heard it got into a motor vehicle accident.

-MCSO received a report at NE Elder St/NE Aiken St, Heppner that two dogs are loose running around. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a report on SE Eighth St, Irrigon that subject is hitting and RP wants subject out of the house. Jason James Abbot was arrested by MCSO for Violation of a No Contact Order. Lodged at UCJ, no bail.

-MCSO received a report on SW Second St, Irrigon that she just had two red vehicles racing from Wyoming to Nevada. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a report at Mountain Glen Apartments 9-16 on NE Pioneer Dr, Heppner that subject is at her residence. Skyler Lee Kendrick was arrested by MCSO on UCSO P&P detainer. Lodged at UCJ with no bail.

-MCSO received a report on SE Utah Ave, Irrigon that a blue Mercury flew down his street towards Tenth. Advised he lives off of Thirteenth on the dead end. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a driving complaint on Toms Camp Rd, Boardman. Pablo Madrigal Garcia was warned for illegal use of truck brakes.

-MCSO received a report on SE Utah Ave, Irrigon that a blue Ford Taurus was traveling at a high rate of speed on Utah.

-MCSO received a report on NE Second St,

Irrigon that bull dogs at a house near this location got out and attacked his dogs. Advised that his dog was bleeding and has some puncture wounds.

-MCSO received a report at Love's Travel Stop and Country Store on Tower Rd, Boardman that he bumped into another vehicle.

-MCSO received a report that RP lost his license plate for his truck somewhere off the interstate, Tower Rd or Threemile Rd.

-MCSO received a report at Irrigon Shell station, E Hwy 730, Irrigon that they would like subject trespassed from the location. Kayla Connell was trespassed from Irrigon Shell by MCSO.

February 7: Morrow County Sheriff's Office received a report at Love's Truck Stop and Country Store on Tower Rd, Boardman that a person went through the drive-through, believes they are intoxicated and driving. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a report on E May St, Heppner that RP found subject intoxicated and driving her scooter in the middle of the road. Advised he dropped her off at this house.

-MCSO received a report that Thor A Blanchard was arrested by Deschutes Co SO on IJC warrant. Subject cited and released to appear.

-MCSO received a report at Irrigon Justice Court that RP believes someone shot out his window while he was driving.

-MCSO received a report on SE Utah Ave, Irrigon that white Dodge Dart just spun its tires at the stop sign on Seventh and then sped down Utah, two male occupants.

-MCSO received a report about a dog complaint on Summit Ln, Boardman. Deputy spoke to owner about dog being at large.

-MCSO received a report on SE Thomas Ave, Irrigon that the residence on Thomas has been vacant for a while and he noticed one

of the doors was kicked in.

-MCSO received a report on SE Gilmore St, Heppner that a brow and white collie mix is at her residence.

-MCSO received a report on SE Hager St, Heppner that a black and white collie just attacked her chickens.

-MCSO received a report on Wilson Ln, Boardman that subject is at his residence and just assaulted him.

-MCSO received a report at Irrigon Motors on SW California Ave, Irrigon that his gray 1986 Ford F250 pickup was taken from storage within the last month or so.

-MCSO received a report on Paterson Ferry Rd, Irrigon that her foster child is out of control. RP advises he is attempting to get into the other foster child's room.

-MCSO received a report at Irrigon Shell station, E Hwy 730, Irrigon that Joseph William Johnson was arrested by MCSO on UCSO warrants. Lodged at UCJ, no bail.

-MCSO received a report on Washington Ln, Irrigon that he found a bike in the bushes by his residence and wanted to report it.

February 8: Morrow County Sheriff's Office received a report on Columbia Ave NW, Boardman that step son is breaking things in his house.

-MCSO received a report on W Idaho Ave, Irrigon that his 7-month old blue nose pit is missing. Dog is very friendly.

-MCSO received a report on E East St, Lexington that the horses that are pastured there have no water. The trough has not been filled since Sunday. Deputy made contact with the owners and they advised they will fill the trough tomorrow.

-MCSO received a report at Washington Ln/W Eighth St, Irrigon that there are cows out near this location. Complete, cows were put back in their pasture.

-MCSO received a re-

port on SE Utah Ave, Irrigon that a charcoal gray Nissan Exterra has been traveling at a high rate of speed on Utah towards Idaho for the past few nights around this time. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a report on SE Utah Ave, Irrigon that red Ford Focus flew through heading towards Tenth.

February 9: Morrow County Sheriff's Office received a report at Boardman Fire Hall on Wilson Rd SW, Boardman that subject is walking by the fire station and there are a lot of people following him. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a request for agency assist at I 84 E, Boardman. OSP has subject failing to yield. Subject yielded at the 162.

-MCSO received a report at NE Washington Ave/NE First St, Irrigon that there is a male cutting down trees with a chain saw in the area.

-MCSO received a report at Miller Rd/Kunze Ln, Boardman that there are cows out on the very east end of Kunze.

-MCSO received a report at Castle Rock Apartments on Tatone St, Boardman that son is threatening to harm RP and her daughter. Subject is 21 years old, he threatened to kill them. Jose Javier Ruiz Gomez was arrested by Boardman PD on charges of harassment and menacing, lodged at UCJ with bail of \$22,500.

-MCSO received a report at Irrigon Shell Station on E Hwy 730, Irrigon that a male came into the store and stole a bunch of product. Took \$10 worth of candy, put it in his pants and up his sleeve.

-MCSO received a report at Elks Club on N Main St, Heppner that subject just assaulted his son.

-MCSO received a report at SW Nevada Ave/NW Third St, Irrigon that female in a black Alantra hit a mail box.

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