

# COMMISSIONER WARNING

-Continued from PAGE ONE

May 20 meeting, Boardman City Manager Karen Pettigrew came to the commission asking for permission to extend out its zone into the city's urban growth boundary (UGB). Under Oregon law if Boardman's new zone is located only within its city limits, it can apply for and create its own zone with just the sponsorship of the Port of Morrow. It would not need the county's blessing. But since prime industrial land is located in the UGB the city wants that land included for future industrial development and income, therefore, it came for county approval. Lindsay refused to call for a vote on Boardman's request, saying she thought there was still room for negotiating with the port. Instead a motion was held to table Boardman's request until last week's meeting, however the commission still did not discuss or vote on Boardman's request.

In making his case for the county to come to agreement with the port, Russell spent some time laying out the benefits the current expiring enterprise zone has brought to the county. "What has the enterprise zone done for Morrow County?" he asked. "We are fourth in the state in average per capita income with \$53,078, just behind Clackamas County," he

pointed out. He asked commissioners to compare that to neighboring Umatilla County which has average yearly income of its citizens of only \$40,238. Russell said the positive difference between the two counties is because of the wage requirements included in all enterprise zone business agreements.

Russell went on to give an example of the large increases in tax income realized by the county since the year 2005, which he attributes to the zone. Russell also said there's been a huge increase in the amount of appraised valuation within the county, also because of the zone. "When this first started the enterprise zone members said this was a time to think outside the box and really benefit more of the county," Russell recalls. He went on to say that the money has been distributed in four categories: housing, education, community enhancement and emergency services. He said the money has gone to such groups as Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group (WCVEDG), the Boardman Community Development Group and the city of Irrigon. As an example, WCVEDG has used the money not only as grants for housing purchases but also to rehabilitate existing housing and build four

new recently completed duplexes in Heppner. With money from the Columbia River enterprise zone both Boardman and Irrigon still have incentive programs in place to stimulate housing.

Russell said there have also been many grants given to expand and improve new and existing businesses in the county. On money given to education, he says every year high school students in Morrow County can take college courses through Blue Mountain Community College or Eastern Oregon University at no cost to the student, "paid for by the enterprise zone." In another program, the enterprise zone has paid for 60 students to participate in a program matching students with employers, giving them an opportunity for students to work and have exposure to different career paths.

"This is all going to go away because we, as a county commission, want to control the enterprise zone," he told the other commissioners. "We don't want to be partners; we want to control it. Our partners have bent over backwards to compromise their original position," Russell says. He pointed out that in the current enterprise zone Boardman is a permanent partner, a position the Port of Morrow has been willing to give up.

"This program has worked exceptionally well over 10 years," Russell said, "And we, as the county, are going to blow this program up. We, as a county, know full well the port won't sign off on this resolution. It's like asking someone to buy a house without inspection. The details aren't there. I wouldn't sign that, the Port of Morrow isn't going to sign that, nobody would sign that in their right mind," Russell said. Lindsay said she has had "numerous" conversations with both the Port Manager Ryan Neal and Port Chairman Rick Stokoe and thinks there is room to negotiate. Lindsay wanted to know how Russell knew the port would not sign. Russell said he had polled most of the port commissioners individually and was told they would not sign the resolution.

Commissioner Jim Doherty has not changed his position during negotiations, saying consistently there is nothing stopping the port from moving forward at any time with an enterprise zone, even without the county. "I would suggest that your impassioned pleas are going to move the enterprise zone forward because there is nothing in this resolution that stops the enterprise zone. I think they are going to agree with you

and I think they are going to move forward with an enterprise zone," Doherty said of the port.

If the port and Boardman exclude the county and move forward on their own, it will leave out some of the port's most productive future industrial development ground. Some of this land is located within the Boardman city limits and would be available for new industry and tax abatement programs, but much more of the undeveloped industrial property is located in what is called the Port's East Beach area, which is outside the city limits. Without a partnership with the county for an enterprise zone, this property would not be available for tax abatement and incentives for new businesses. "Without the enterprise zone it puts the Port of Morrow, the most successful port in the state of Oregon, not able to compete," Russell said. "Because they can't offer the same tax abatement that is offered at 73 other locations (enterprise zones) in the state of Oregon," he said.

After much discussion the commissioners voted to approve Lindsay's latest proposal to the port. Under the proposal the new enterprise zone will be a partnership between the county and port. Boardman

would not be a permanent member, and no zones of influence maps will be included. That motion passed 2-1 with Russell voting no.

Lindsay said the county was prepared to use commissioner discretionary funds to hire current zone administrator Greg Sweek to begin drafting the new zone application to the State of Oregon. Former county appraiser Sweek is an expert in enterprise zones and has been involved with their applications and administration for many years. He is the administrator of the current zone, CREZII.

Following passage of the county resolution Russell pointed out that the county had yet to discuss or vote on the most recent port proposal for a zone partnership. The resolution was approved and signed by the Port Commissioners and delivered to the county, however commissioners had never discussed or acted on the proposal. As with the county, the port proposal called for a partnership between just the county and port, excluding the city of Boardman. The port's proposal, however, included maps of zones of influence as part of the agreement. Russell voted yes on the port resolution, Lindsay voted no and Doherty abstained, so the resolution failed.

## Willow Creek Water Park

At this time we are planning to open the Willow Creek Water Park on Monday, June 8th! Our hours are Monday-Saturday 1-7 pm. This opening is contingent upon us entering into phase II of COVID-19 re-opening. If we enter into phase II and open on June 8th please abide by social distancing and cleanliness guidelines:

- stay six feet apart in lobby and on pool deck.
- do not come to the pool if you are sick.
- wash your hands often and use hand sanitizer.

We will be doing our best to keep the pool facility clean and safe by:

- cleaning the bathrooms often throughout the day.
- using gloves and masks in our concessions stand.
- sanitizing all surfaces (pool ladders, chairs, tables and restrooms) at the end of each day.
- encouraging our employees to stay home if they are sick.

We will have more information about swim lessons later.

This year we are offering half-season passes in case we get shut down in the middle of the season due to COVID-19. All passes are only available to residents in and around Lone, Lexington and Heppner.

First pass good from June 8-July 18, 2020  
Second pass good from July 19-August 28, 2020

Family-\$70.00  
Individual-\$37.50  
Babysitter-\$20.00

Life vests, goggles, pool noodles, water shoes and floatation devices will not be offered for rent or use this year due to COVID-19.  
Pool parties will not be offered this year. If you plan to bring a large group to the pool, please notify us ahead of time.  
Thank you for your support and we hope to have a safe and fun summer with you!

For questions, call: 541-676-5752  
Willow Creek Water Park Staff

### Dr. Anderson's

# KIDS SUMMER TUESDAYS 2020



Schedule any child for an eye exam with Dr. Anderson on any available Tuesday, purchase 1 pair of Children's Package complete frame & lenses for:

## \$49<sup>50</sup>\*

and 2nd pair for same child is: **FREE\***

EXCELLENT SELECTION OF TOP QUALITY FRAMES!

## AFFORDABLE FAMILY EYEWEAR

*If you are using insurance, please ask for details!*  
Se Habla Español • Open Monday to Saturday • Same Day Service on Most Prescriptions  
Dr. Anderson: Saturday Appointments Available  
**Most insurances accepted: MODA, Ameritas, Regence and Many More!**  
541-567-3790 • 298 E Gladys Ave, Hermiston, OR • [www.affordablefamilyeyewear.com](http://www.affordablefamilyeyewear.com)

\*Single vision polycarbonate lenses. Kids Transitions, Anti-Reflective, Polarized half price. Cannot be combined with any other sales or promotion. 16 years and younger.

# FREE DUMPING

Until further notice to aid in the protection of our residents the north and south transfer stations will only be open on Saturday's 9am - 4pm.

It is recommended that everyone follow precautionary guidelines to help prevent the spread of illnesses.

- If you feel sick, stay home.
- Practice social distancing by maintaining 6 feet or more between you and someone else.
- Wash your hands with soap or hand sanitizer.

**SATURDAY ONLY**  
**9AM - 4PM**  
**CLOSED ON SUNDAY**



### MORROW COUNTY TRANSFER STATIONS

<b>NORTH TRANSFER</b> 69900 Frontage Ln. Boardman, Oregon 97818	<b>SOUTH TRANSFER</b> 57185 Highway 74 Lexington, Oregon 97839
<b>Questions or comments contact:</b> Morrow County Public Works, 365 West Highway 74, Lexington, Oregon 97839 Phone: 541-989-9500 Monday - Thursday 8am - 5pm	

# OR UNTIL FULL!

## JUNE FRAME & LENS SALE

All Regular Priced

# FRAMES

up to \$125\*

# FREE

with purchase of prescription lenses

MEN'S • WOMEN'S  
CHILDREN'S  
SUNGLASSES

Plus:

# 25% OFF

# LENSES

INCLUDES:  
ANTI-REFLECTIVE  
TRANSITIONS AND  
POLARIZED LENSES

Like & Share our Facebook posting or come by and sign up and you will be entered into a drawing for a frame of your choice up to \$200.  
Drawing on June 30, 2020.

## AFFORDABLE FAMILY EYEWEAR

Same Day Service on Most Prescriptions  
Dr. Anderson: Sat. Appointments Avail  
**IF YOU ARE USING INSURANCE, PLEASE ASK FOR DETAILS!**  
Most insurances accepted: MODA, Ameritas, Regence and Many More!

Se Habla Español  
Open Monday to Saturday  
[www.affordablefamilyeyewear.com](http://www.affordablefamilyeyewear.com)  
298 E Gladys Ave, Hermiston, OR  
**541-567-3790**