

HEPPNER

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City moves forward with lot purchase



The Heppner city council voted Monday to purchase this lot on Chase St to be used for parking.

By David Sykes

The city of Heppner has decided to move forward with the purchase of a lot on North Chase Street and turn it into a parking lot. The council voted unanimously Monday to buy the lot from current owner Jason Patterson for \$18,500 and use the land to handle overflow parking from crowds during special events such as St. Patrick's Day and other downtown activities.

"I recommend buying it," City Manager Kraig Cutsforth told the council. He said the city could get it cleaned up and made into a good parking area. Councilmember John Bowles agreed, saying he thought it was a "good buy."

In other business at Monday's meeting the council learned it has received a \$50,000 grant from the state to cover COVID-19 related expenses. Cutsforth drew up a "COVID action plan" on proposals to spend the money which he presented to the council. Under the plan the city would use \$25,000 of the funds as matching grants with an additional \$25,000 from the Heppner Chamber of Commerce to help local businesses suffering loss during the pandemic. They would use \$4,000 of the funds for additional costs in cleaning and in personnel expenses for cleaning city properties. Cutsforth wants to use \$1,000 to purchase a new larger TV monitor for city hall to be used during Zoom meetings. The current monitor he says is too small to conduct a proper online meeting. It was also proposed that \$3,000 be spend on new outdoor tables to be placed on the sidewalk so businesses could serve food outside during the virus lock down. Later the tables could be used at the city park if needed. Also \$11,000 of the funds would be held in reserve for unforeseen expenses incurred by the pandemic. The council agreed with the action plan and voted unanimously to accept the state funds and proceed.

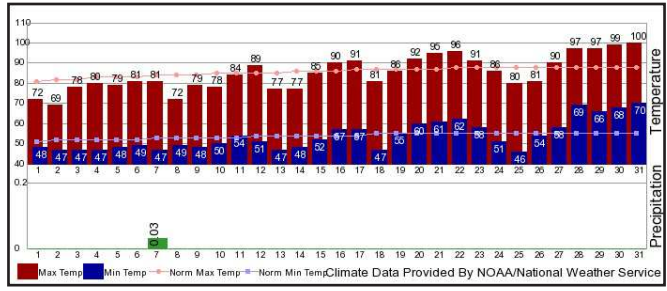
In other business the council voted to give an animal permit to Sheila Taylor and Neil Castillo on Aiken St in Heppner for permission to have seven

chickens. The two said they would be removing two roosters from the property as required by city rules.

The council also heard a report from Fire Chief Steve Rhea who said in the month of July his department responded to five motor vehicle accidents, secured the helicopter landing zone for medical flyouts 13 times, had four vegetation fires, one mutual aid to Lone and one illegal burn response.

Public Works Director Chad Doherty gave a report for July that said his department, in part during July, painted all of the fire hydrants on Main St and one on Gale, cleaned contact basins twice, did 15 septic dumps, took the city tanker truck to Hermiston for service and repairs, repainted the red fire line stripe on Hager St, the yellow caution curb on Court, sidewalk stripes at the elementary school and the shamrock on Main St. Public Works also replaced the paper and red rock in two bubble outs on Main St. and put down bars on Barret Blvd and Fairview. New cedar bark was also added to the kids play area at the city park, replaced the sand at Hager Park horse shoe pits, closed down the kid's play areas, sports courts and pavilion at the parks because of COVID-19 shutdown, but kept the city restrooms open.

Heppner experiences



According to preliminary data received by NOAA's National Weather Service in Pendleton, temperatures at Heppner averaged near normal during the month of July.

The average temperature was 69.4 degrees which was 0.4 degrees below normal. High temperatures averaged 84.9 degrees, which was 0.8 degrees below normal. The highest was 100 degrees on the 31st. Low temperatures averaged 53.9

In other public works business, the council agreed to increase the amount of money available to purchase a city street sweeper. The city's current sweeper is in poor condition and the city has been bidding on and losing out on purchasing another sweeper. The council agreed to add \$15,000 to the fund to buy a sweeper, and also understood that the current worn out sweeper would get \$5,000 when sold by the city.

In other business the council agreed to change city hall open hours to Monday - Thursday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.

In other business the council heard a report from Barb Orwick for the Neighborhood Center who said they gave out 54 food boxes last month, helped two families with their electric and water bills and contributed clothing to two homeless people. She said people in south Morrow County have been very generous lately and during the coronavirus quarantine, people were at home and many cleaned out their unused items and brought them to the Neighborhood Center. She said the center is also in need of school supplies because even though kids will be at home doing long distance learning this fall, school items are still needed for the home.

degrees, which was normal. The lowest was 46 degrees, on the 25th. On nine days, the temperature exceeded 90 degrees. It was at least 100 degrees on one day. Precipitation totaled 0.03 inches during July, which was 0.30 inches below normal. Measurable precipitation, at least .01 inch, was received on one day. Precipitation this year has reached 6.84 inches,

County Commissioner tests COVID negative, self-isolates

Morrow County Commissioner Melissa Lindsay says she is self-isolating for 14 days after having come in contact with a person who tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. Lindsay emphasized that she took the COVID-19 test after the contact, and her results came back negative.

In her position as a commissioner, Lindsay has been one of many in the county working on the myriad of issues presented by the pandemic, including being on the county's Emergency Management COVID-19 team, developing a reopening plan for the county and fighting to keep the county open with meetings and phone calls to the governor's office over the past several months.

The Heppner Gazette-Times contacted Lindsay following rumors that she might have contracted the virus, and she released



Commissioner Melissa Lindsay

the following statement: "Thank you for asking. I do not have COVID-19, in fact tested negative. I was in contact with a COVID-19 positive and therefore have self-isolated for 14 days."

"Many have seen how public shaming, based on fear and the physical and mental isolation of COVID-19 are difficult. We, as community members, have to find a way to stick together, support and do the things necessary

to overcome the issues surrounding COVID. I am happy to communicate and am transparent to any inquiry in those efforts. These are very difficult times and having worked through it in a direct way, I have grown even more sympathetic. Some people are lucky enough to work from home but not everyone is able to do so. Many have jobs that require them to go into work as we keep food supply chains, educate our kids and operate necessary services including health, safety and agricultural production in place.

"My commitment to our county and our school children getting back into school remains unwavering as I am working from home. I believe most are doing their very best to survive day to day and by supporting one another we are stronger," she said.

Governor Brown recall petition 'getting good response' say organizers

A state-wide petition effort to recall Oregon Governor Kate Brown has been getting "good response" in Morrow County, say two local women who have been collecting signatures in Heppner.

"It's been nothing but positive," says Evelyn Carroll of Heppner. "We have been out here (on Main St) and down at the Farmers Market and we're getting lots of signatures and lots of positive comments." People who talk to her are not happy with Governor Brown and want her out of office, she says. "Eastern Oregon has not been treated well by her," Carroll says, adding that Brown's actions have hurt all rural Oregon. "The people need to be able to vote on whether Brown should be removed from office," she adds.

Carroll and JoyceKay Hollomon, also of Heppner, have been setting up a table on Main Street in front of the food court every day. They have also been at the Farmers Market down at the park on Thursdays. Since the market has now been closed down because of state COVID-19 restrictions, they will be at the food court from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and on Thursday's from 4 to 7 p.m. to accommodate those who need to sign after work.

The two say they will be there until Aug. 21, when



Local women JoyceKay Hollomon (center) and Evelyn Carroll (right) tend the recall petition table while Theresa Jones signs. -Photo by David Sykes.

the signatures will be turned in to the state coordinator. Carroll said Bill Currier, chairman of the Oregon Republican Party told her they need 280,000 signatures to get the recall on the ballot but are shooting for 400,000 "just to make sure."

Carroll also said it's

not just Heppner having success with signings, as petition gatherers in Boardman and Irigon report they are also doing well. And Umatilla County is "signing like crazy" Carroll says. "East Oregonians are not very happy with what is going on in Salem," she points out.

near normal weather in July

which is 2.15 inches below normal. Since October, the water year precipitation at Heppner has been 8.22 inches, which is 4.83 inches below normal.

The outlook for August from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center calls for above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation. Normal highs for

Heppner during August are 85.5 degrees and normal lows are 53.5 degrees. The 30-year normal precipitation is 0.39 inches.

Advertisement for Polaris Summer Sales Event. Features rebates up to \$1000 and financing as low as 3.99% for 36 months. Includes an image of a Polaris utility vehicle.

Advertisement for Morrow County Grain Growers. Features the text 'GOING ON NOW!' and 'MORROW COUNTY GRAIN GROWERS' along with contact information for Justin Bailey.