

County equips new surveyor position

By David Sykes

The Morrow County Commission has been busy buying equipment to outfit the new county surveyor position it created earlier. The surveyor position was previously an elected one and filled the last several years by Stephen Haddock. However, under state law counties can do away with the elected position and hire a surveyor as a county employee. Last year Morrow County decided to do that and subsequently for the first time did not hold an election, and instead hired Matthew Kenny to

the position. Kenny was previously a survey technician for the Umatilla County Road Department. The new equipment was needed because when the position was elected the surveyor would bring his own equipment and vehicle to the job, so now Morrow County needed to purchase those things by the end of this year.

At its December 16 meeting the commission voted to buy a 2021 Ram 2500 Crew Cab from Dave Smith Motors in Kellogg, ID for \$32,415. Kenny reported to the commis-

sion that he asked eight different dealers for quotes on existing inventory and received back three that met the specifications. Dave Smith was lowest with one from Power Chevrolet in Sublimity and Landmark Ford in Tigard both being higher. Kenny said the "general consensus" is that inventory on fleet vehicles is "extremely low," so he felt good getting three bids. Commissioner Don Russell said he has bought vehicles from Dave Smith Motors for many years and has gotten good prices and service. He noted that they are also the largest Dodge dealer in the world and located in Kellogg.

In other surveyor equipment purchases, the county voted at its Dec. 23 meeting to buy a GNSS system and robotic total station setup at a cost of \$44,500. The system is a needed piece of equipment for surveying. Kenny received three bids on the equipment and went with the low bid from Kuker-Ranken in Mountlake Terrace, WA.

In other business at their Dec. 16 meeting the commission voted to sell two sheriff vehicles at the state auction. The vehicles are a 2013 Dodge Charger with 105,229 miles and a 2013 Dodge Ram with 142,322 miles. The vehicles will be transported to Salem to be sold at the periodic state auctions.

In other action the commission voted to grant a tax refund of \$2,793 to Arcus, LLC for property on Buttercreek that was improperly assessed for the 2017-18 tax year. The error was discovered after this year tax statements were already mailed out in October. At an earlier Dec. 12 meeting the commission granted a tax refund to the Port of Morrow the amount of \$4,892. The Port had been incorrectly billed for two tax lots taxable due to a lease. The lease had not been exercised yet so the parcels should have remained exempt from taxes. At a Nov. 25 meeting the commission approved a \$3,052 tax re-

fund to CoreLogic, a real estate data company, for its overpayment of taxes.

The commission voted unanimously to reappoint Stanley Anderson to the county planning commission. He was originally appointed in 2019. County planner Tamra Mabbott said she did not advertise the position was open for public application because she felt the cost of \$300 to advertise in the two newspapers was too much to spend. The position is for the Irrigon area. The commission agreed that since he was appointed and Anderson had agreed to serve again, they should not

appointment and whether to advertise it open "on a case-by-case basis." Mabbott also suggested that the commission consider dropping the number of planning commission members from the current nine to seven or maybe even five. "It is not a 'statutory requirement' to have nine," she reminded them.

In other business the commissioners heard from Wym Mathews from the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture who gave a report of a new feedlot operation being planned in Umatilla County but located near the Morrow County line (see map).

and ranches practices of Madison Ranches and his belief they will operate the facility responsibly. "Management is very important to make sure a facility is successful. This facility (Madison) is successful and has a long history of successful farming and livestock management compliance," he said of the applicant. He said the permit would protect the environment and still allow the facility to be profitable.

The commissioners listened to the report and viewed a power point presentation from Mathews but took no action as it was

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Two bedroom one bath home on quiet street in Heppner. Lots of personal items that come with the house. Has 2 car garage, chicken coop and garden area. Priced reasonable and with some care clean up and fix up will make a nice home for you or as a rental investment property. Call me for an appointment to see.
365 S Gilmore ST Heppner

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There are two homes on this property. The bigger one is a 3 bedroom 1 bath 958 sq ft now renting for \$800 per month. Smaller home is a 1 bedroom 1 bath 576 sq ft renting for \$400 a month. There are water rights from the creek to water the yard and a shed in the back. Located on a dead end street. Call for an appointment and have a look.
680 W SPERRY ST, HEPPNER

\$20,000
Oversized city lot on dead end street. Sewer, water, electric all available. Manufactured home ok. 100' X 132 square foot. 3 acres. Located close to grade school. Not far from city park. Addition adjacent lot available for sale.
610 Garrigues St Heppner

\$89,000
Looking for small town living in Oregon? Here it is. With outdoor activities, a rural lifestyle and a slower pace Fossil is where you belong. And this 3 bedroom 2 bath home is move in ready for you and your family. Deck out back and a big porch in the front. Refrigerator and stove included in sale. There is DSL internet access so you can work from home. Call me to schedule your appointment for a visit and experience a new lifestyle.
1153 D Street Fossil, OR

\$535,000
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67208 HWY 74 Lone, OR

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350 Aiken St Heppner

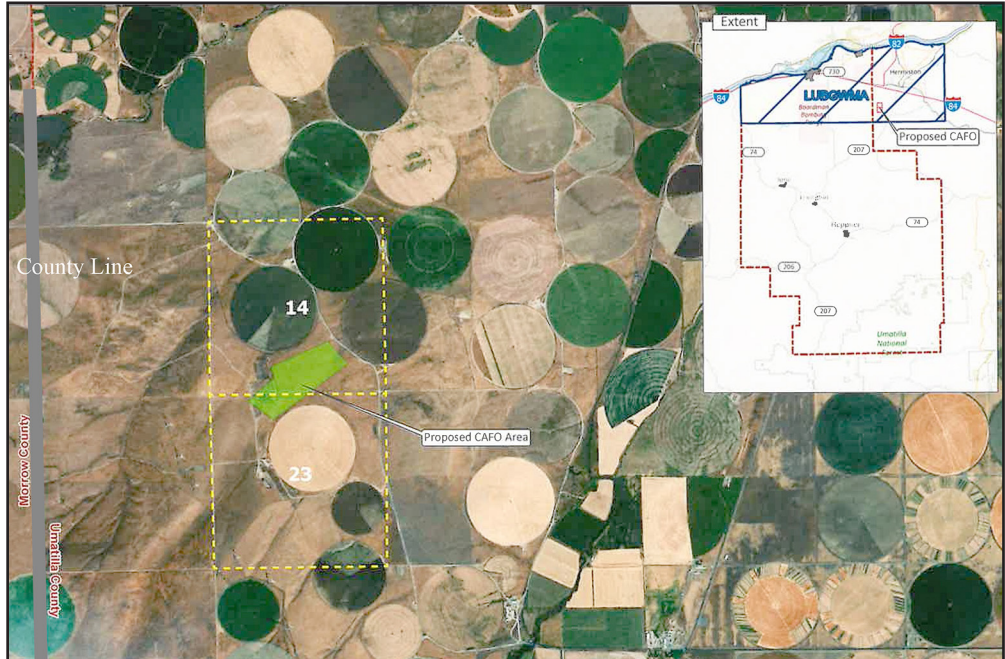
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Map of the proposed new 6,000 head animal feed lot in Umatilla County near the Morrow County line.

advertise the position open, which would have given others the chance to apply.

The decision opened a broader discussion on what county positions should be advertised to the public and which should not. Commissioner Jim Doherty said he normally wants open positions advertised but would take acceptance to planning commission positions because it "is a different sort of thing to me." He said it is hard work the planners do, and he even proposed paying the planning commission members for their volunteer work. Doherty suggested the county either set a policy for appointing members to all committees and when they should advertise, or to consider each

If approved the lot would be located at Madison Ranches and have a maximum of 6,000 head of cows and would use 8,660 adjoining farm acres on which to spread fertilizer manure from the facility for crops. Mathews said none of the wastewater or manure from the lot would go into the ground water in the area. He said it would be continually monitored for nitrogen and nitrates especially since the facility is located in the Lower Umatilla Groundwater Management Area.

Mathews went over the extensive monitoring and compliance features required if the permit is issued. He also praised the past and present farming

informational only since the facility is located in Umatilla County.

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