

# BMCC remains committed to students

By Dr. Connie Green, Interim President, Blue Mountain Community College

In 1962, our community took on the courageous challenge of opening one of the first community colleges in Oregon. In the nearly 60 years since Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC) first opened its doors and began serving students, much has changed. The college has celebrated triumphs and weathered challenges. The past year has brought about a particularly challenging time for our faculty and staff, students, and the communities we serve.

BMCC is working to address the issues that most rural community colleges in 2021 face: enrollment decline, budget challenges, poverty and COVID-limited contact that has resulted in decreased connections to high schools, universities and businesses. Despite these challenges, and what you may have read elsewhere, BMCC is committed to being your college and meeting the needs of the communities we serve in Umatilla, Morrow and Baker counties. Failing you is not an option.

As the interim president at BMCC, my agreement with the Board of Education is to address these issues openly, and with the campus team and our community partners working together to create a stable two-year budget that will provide predictable and stable learning opportunities. This step will ensure BMCC's programs and services to our students and partners are strong and vibrant. In doing so, we will also become flexible and nimble to ensure the connections and the results increase as we all work together to support communities and individuals that thrive in eastern Oregon.

So, yes, BMCC is experiencing significant transition and change to meet the current reality. The college will begin a search for a new president. The intent is to not pass on current budget challenges for a new president to handle. The college and its Board of Education recognize that for BMCC to continue to meet the evolving needs of its students and communi-

ties, it, too, must adapt. That means BMCC will change how we are organized, how we operate and how we partner. This can be a scary endeavor.

It can also be an opportunity.

BMCC has an opportunity to renew its commitment to students and the community while reviewing its internal organization and structure, and right-sizing. It has an opportunity to serve students in new ways in a post-pandemic era that will see our economy in recovery and our local industries adapting to the challenges of the past year.

So how did BMCC end up in its current financial challenge? The answer is multi-pronged.

Like most community colleges across the country, BMCC has experienced enrollment decline for the past several years. This was exacerbated by the pandemic over the past year, which forced us into virtual learning, and became a major challenge for the hands-on Career Technical Education (CTE) programs. Since community colleges rely on enrollment for tuition revenue and state funding, fewer students mean less revenue. The primary sources of funding for Oregon's 17 community colleges come from three revenue sources. In 2019-2020, the College received 31.03 percent from state funding, 32.38 percent from student tuition and fees, and 36.59 percent from local property tax revenue.

Many community colleges, including BMCC, have had to raise tuition to help cover costs. BMCC has also taken steps to reduce its expenses over the past year, reducing nearly \$2 million for the 2020-2021 budget. These reductions were in materials and services and staff development, as well as a reduction of 24 positions. Last year had difficult decisions. The intent of the board is for the college to make any additional reductions for the 2021-2022 budget so that the expenditures and revenues balance and the college is "right-sized" for the future.

How does BMCC do this? Through inclusive conversations with faculty, staff, students and the

# Dr. Emily Jack accepts MCHD offer

Dr. Emily (Thompson) Jack has accepted the offer made by the Morrow County Health District Board for employment in the district, MCHD Administrator Ryan Fowler told the board at their regular meeting Monday night in Boardman.

The MCHD contract with Jack includes a staggered compensation package per hour, depending on years in the physician's specialty and in which capacity the doctor is serving, such as clinic only-\$108 to \$128 per hour, emergency department and clinic from \$123-\$143 per hour; ER on call-\$75; ER Patients-\$75; hospital patients \$108-\$128 per hour; procedures, \$108-\$128 per hour; and physician assistant supervisions-\$200 per month base for each PA supervised plus \$90 per hour of supervision for each PA being supervised to be tracked in bi-weekly timesheet (chart review).

The agreement includes a sign-on bonus of \$20,000 upon signing the agreement and an additional \$20,000 on the first day of work within the district for a total of \$40,000. If the physician does not start employment as scheduled, the physician will repay all amounts paid by the district by Sept. 30, 2022.

For each year, the physician is granted 24 days paid vacation, six days paid sick leave, 10 days for continuing medical education and is eligible for payment of district recognized holidays, plus up to \$10,000 for the reimbursement of documented moving expenses.

The board subsequently approved the contract with Dr. Jack, commencing no later than September 30, 2022 and continuing through September 30, 2025 unless either party gives 120 days' notice of termination or resignation. A three-year renewal of the agreement may be available to the physician if the district does not provide notice of termination.

Concerning the search for another physician, "Pacific Companies ruled out the previous candidate that they had identified," said Fowler. Pacific Companies earlier had two candidates, but that was narrowed down to one.

Fowler reported that Boardman Fire and Rescue District had proposed splitting the ambulance service, which is operated by Morrow County Health District so that Boardman Fire would operate the service in Boardman and Irrigon. "After a productive work session with county commissioners, we believe it is in the best interest of Morrow County to retain control and ownership of the ambulance service to improve services," he reported. Boardman Rural Fire Protection District had just recently changed its name to "Boardman Fire and Rescue District."

Fowler reported that he had communicated with Heppner attorney Bill Kuhn concerning the property transfer in Irrigon to allow space to build the new Irrigon Ambulance building. He said that Kuhn assured him that he was "within

two weeks of having all the paperwork completed."

In other business, the board:

- learned from Fowler that the district has received inquiries from two qualified candidates for the Chief Nursing Officer position following the recent resignation of current CNO Jamie Houck, R.N. He said that he hoped to fill the position quickly to "give Jamie an opportunity to work with the selected candidate prior to her departure."
- received the February profit and loss statement which showed a \$294,194 loss for the month with \$1,071, 642 in gross patient revenue: less \$16,368 for bad debts, \$243,281 in contractual and other adjustments, plus \$185,460 in tax revenue and \$5,127 in other operating revenue for \$1,002,569 in total operating revenue, \$1,360,746 in total operating expenses, a \$63,983 non-operating gain for the \$294,194 loss.
- approved an expenditure of \$154,000 for 11 hospital beds from Stryker Medical, Chicago, Ill. Chief Financial Officer Nicole Mahoney noted to the board that the purchase of the beds was not budgeted but will be paid for with COVID monies. According to the Stryker invoice, the district saved \$65,017.22. Stryker's original fee would have been \$219,017.22--\$202,375.91 for the beds, \$14,166.31 for freight, and \$2,475 for disposal of the old beds for \$219,017.22.
- approved an invoice and budget expenditure for \$32,787.13 (\$27,322.61 in matching funds and \$5,464.52 for an administrative fee) from the Oregon Office of Rural Health for the Oregon Partnership State Loan Repayment Program for matching funds for employment of Katie Mencos. "This is a tremendous tool for us," said board Chair John Murray, noting the benefit of providing health care professionals in underserved areas.
- approved a quote from Patriot Building & Grounds Maintenance for cleaning of the Irrigon Medical Clinic for \$23,844 annually. Currently the staff does the cleaning, but the board concurred that "it needs professional cleaning." Patriot was the only bidder.
- approved a maintenance service agreement from Turn-Key Medical, Inc. for parts and labor for software at \$9,200 per month for a total of \$36,800. MCHD's current contract with Turn-Key expires on January 24, 2022. "We want to lock in at these prices," Mahoney suggested, and the board approved the expenditure.

- approved a three-year expenditure from VelocityEHS, Chicago, for an HQ account for \$5,000 for year one, \$5,100 for year two and \$5,200 for year three.
- approved a flexible agreement with impact! Communications for newsletter development, design and production services, including social media, website updates, brochures, signs and banners, development and distribution of press releases, with the community newsletter prices at \$8,500 per edition, a monthly communications/design support at \$5,165 and training with an undetermined fee.
- approved an agreement for technical services with Incyte Pathology, PS, to provide a technical supervisor responsible for assisting Pioneer Memorial Hospital in accessing regulatory compliance in its high or moderate complexity laboratory.
- approved credentials for two Providence providers.
- received the following report for February: Pioneer Memorial Hospital had three in-patient admissions, six swing bed admissions, 11 admissions for observation, one admission for hospital respite, 614 total outpatients, 50 emergency room encounters, 1,541 lab tests, 80 x-ray/ultrasound tests, 31 CT scans, two MRI scans, 24 EKG tests, two lower endoscopy procedures, two upper endoscopy procedures, 24 respiratory therapy procedures; pharmacy had 2,669 drug doses for \$93,980 in drug revenue.
- received the following clinic reports: Pioneer Memorial Clinic in Heppner had 356 patient visits, with 12 new patients, 20 seen by a nurse, 16 no-shows; Irrigon Clinic had 349 patient visits, with six new patients; Ione Community Clinic had 41 patient visits, 29 seen by a nurse and zero no-shows.
- received the following Home Health & Hospice reports: Home Health had 169 patient visits; Hospice had two admissions and three deaths.
- received the following ambulance reports: Heppner Ambulance had 23 page-outs with 21 transports for \$38,295 in revenue; Boardman Ambulance had 41 page-outs with 19 transports for \$37,716 in revenue; Irrigon Ambulance had 24 page-outs and 13 transports for \$21,441 in revenue; Ione Ambulance had one page-out, with no transports; there were seven life flights.
- held an executive session following the regular meeting.

community. BMCC has already begun intensive work internally, reviewing department budgets, organizational structures and potential revenue options. Nothing is off the table for discussion as we review budgets and options.

Now, a discussion does not necessarily mean all things change. A discussion means we learn, listen and consider implications so that we can make informed decisions moving forward. We need a structural organization, plan and budget that is sustainable and provides students and the community with college programs and services that are stable and predictable, as well as flexible and nimble.

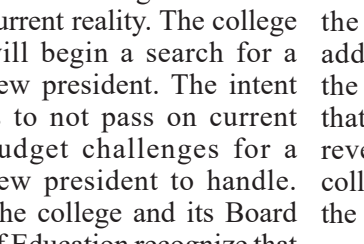
While this process will be challenging – and even heart-breaking – for many, BMCC's faculty and staff are resilient. They have weathered past storms, and each time the college comes out stronger.

With these impending changes, there remains one constant: BMCC is committed to the students and communities it serves. Our administration, faculty, staff and Board of Education are committed to strengthening BMCC so that it can thrive and be the affordable, high-quality educational option for eastern Oregon. We are committed to working with local industries to put eastern Oregonians back to work and reinvigorate our local economy. We are committed to being "Students First." And, just like when we first opened our doors in 1962, we are committed at BMCC to you – our community.

**DEADLINE: MONDAYS AT 5 PM**

## Fact Sheet

### Residential Burn Barrels: A Source of Toxic Pollution



**How does burning household waste produce toxic air pollution?**  
Burn barrels are inefficient and polluting; they produce low temperature fires that receive very little oxygen. They also produce a lot of smoke (finely divided particulate matter) and many toxic substances. Virtually all of the pollutants are released into the air close to ground level, where they are easily inhaled.

**What materials can be burned?**  
Untreated wood, paper and natural vegetative materials can be safely burned.

**Burning the following materials is illegal anytime, anywhere in Oregon:**

- Asbestos
- Asphalt
- Auto parts (including frames)
- Dead animals
- Plastic and rubber products
- Tires
- Waste oil, petroleum materials
- Wet garbage and food waste
- Material creating dense smoke or noxious odors.

Burning prohibited materials can result in serious fines. For more information on Oregon's open burning rules and recycling options, contact DEQ.

**Complaints**  
Please call your local fire department to report an open burning complaint. You may also contact DEQ's complaint hotline at 888-997-7888 or submit a complaint online at <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/GetInvolved/Pages/File-Pollution-Complaint.aspx>

**DEQ**  
State of Oregon  
Department of Environmental Quality

**Portland**  
700 NE Multnomah St.  
Suite 600  
Portland, OR 97232  
Phone: 503-229-5696  
800-452-4011  
503-229-6762  
Fax:

**Bend**  
475 NE Bellevue Drive  
Suite 110  
Bend, OR 97701  
541-388-6146

**Pendleton**  
800 SE Emigrant Ave  
Suite 330  
Pendleton, OR 97801  
541-276-4063

**The Dalles**  
400 E Scenic Drive  
Suite 307  
The Dalles, OR 97058  
541-298-7255

**Salem**  
4026 Fairview Industrial Drive SE  
Salem, OR 97302  
503-378-8240

**Medford**  
221 Stewart Avenue  
Suite 201  
Medford, OR 97501  
541-776-6010

[www.oregon.gov/DEQ](http://www.oregon.gov/DEQ)

*DEQ is a leader in restoring, maintaining and enhancing the quality of Oregon's air, land and water.*

**SOUTH-END STATION, HWY 74 HEPPNER/LEXINGTON HWY, LEXINGTON**  
**NORTH-END STATION, 69900 FRONTAGE LANE, BOARDMAN, OR**

**North and South Transfer Stations DO NOT Accept:**  
Lead-acid Batteries  
Asbestos  
Dead Animals  
Sewage Waste or sludge  
Chemicals  
Explosives  
Open Burn barrels  
Hazardous Materials  
Automobile bodies

**Este sitio no acepta Estos artículos:**  
Baterías de plomo ácido  
Amianto  
Animales muertos  
Residuos de aguas residuales  
Químicos  
Explosivos  
Barriles Open Burn  
Materiales peligrosos

**Morrow County Public Works**  
541-989-9500  
visit: <https://www.co.morrow.or.us/>

Are you awesome?

# we're hiring.

**UEC is looking for exceptional people to join our team!**

Visit our website: [ABOUT/CAREERS](http://ABOUT/CAREERS) for full job descriptions and open positions.

[www.UmatillaElectric.com](http://www.UmatillaElectric.com)

**UMATILLA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

**Hermiston Office**  
750 W. Elm Ave.  
Hermiston, OR 97838  
(541) 567-6414

**Boardman Office**  
400 N.E. Eldrige Drive  
Boardman, OR 97818  
(541) 481-2220