



the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

MCHD Board responds to recent changes and events

New interim CEO announced



Emily Roberts

he not resigned.

Immediately after the events of last week, the MCHD Board began working on a plan to address the vacancy in the CEO position while also ensuring the district's stability. In the letter from the board to staff on Wednesday, June 23, 2021, the following was included, "I want to share what we as a board believe to be the most positive news and outcome we could have imagined emerging from this situation. We are pleased to share that Emily Roberts, MCHD's current compliance officer, had expressed an interest in pursuing an opportunity to become our newest Chief Executive Officer." On June 23, Roberts accepted the position as Interim CEO and immediately began working with staff.

According to the press release, in her first district-wide communication as interim CEO, Roberts shared, "I am honored to be writing to you as the district's interim CEO, a role that I take very seriously. As the interim CEO, I will give my best every day to regain your trust and to restore community confidence in our organization."

In addition, Roberts, a health care compliance professional, has a background in behavioral health and acknowledged the district's current challenges. She pledged the following, "Here is who I aspire to be for you: an authentic, resilient and energetic leader that puts the needs of the district first." She went on to say that she is "as enthusiastic and committed to

-See MCHD CEO/PAGE THREE

In a recent press release, the Morrow County Health District (MCHD) Board of Directors announced that Victor VanderDoes, who served for a brief time as Interim CEO, resigned from his position effective Friday, June 18, 2021. Mr. VanderDoes' departure was a direct result of his unauthorized presentation to the Boardman Chamber of Commerce. In a statement to all staff following the event, the board shared the following, "We must convey that his [VanderDoes'] conduct and the context of his words and actions in no way reflect the board's sentiments. We deeply regret the harm his comments may have caused to those present during that session, those participating in the event on social media, and to all the valued community partners he mentioned during his presentation." Board members John Murray, Chairman, Carri Grieb, Diane Kilkeny, Aaron Palmquist and Marie Shimer emphasized that neither they nor members of the executive team had prior knowledge of Mr. VanderDoes' intent or the content he presented. They also stated that under no circumstances would VanderDoes be permitted to continue in his role had

50¢

VOL. 140 NO. 26 8 Pages Wednesday, June 30, 2021 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Curbs and sidewalks going in



Workers began installing curbs and sidewalks Tuesday on the north end of Gale Street. The crews will be starting at 5 a.m. to beat the heat. Where were you in 1941? Heppner City Manager Kraig Cutsforth (inset) holds a 1941 automobile license plate uncovered during the street renovation project now going on in Heppner. Cutsforth says nothing too "unusual" has been unearthed during the renovation project. -Photos by David Sykes

Heppner saw the second phase of its big street project get underway Tuesday, when workmen began laying curbs and sidewalks on the north end of Gale Street. City Manager Kraig Cutsforth says there are three different crews that

will come into Heppner to do the total street project. The first crew who has been working here for some time already, tears out the streets and sidewalks and lays the new sewer pipelines. Another crew is now in to do the sidewalks, curbs and

gutters, and a third company and group will come in last to do the asphalt work.

He says the work tearing out old asphalt on Chase is going pretty smoothly except when the crew found a large fiber line in the road they did not know about,

which caused some delay. Cutsforth also said they ran into a lot of underground water on Chase Street, but not a lot of rock like what was found on Gale Street earlier. He says overall the entire project is going well, and it may be a little bit ahead of schedule.

The curbs and sidewalk crew uses a machine (above) to pour and form the gutters. The concrete is coming from local contractor Miller and Sons.

Residents seek relief as record breaking heat wave expected to last through Sunday



When the thermometer hits 110 it's time to head for the pool, which a lot of people did this week to cool off from this record heat wave that has this past week covered the Pacific Northwest including Morrow County. The National

Weather Service says the heat wave is expected to be with us until Sunday and to expect temperatures between 105 and 115.

The NWS also says the extreme heat will "significantly increase the potential for heat related illness-

es, particularly for those working or participating in outdoor activities." It said there is "the possibility that all-time record high temperatures will be reached or exceeded during this heat wave."

Wind towers red blinking light system changed

The steadily blinking red light system on the top of the towers of the new wind project in Morrow County, has been changed. The warning system that sees the red lights blink on and off simultaneously all night long, warning night airplane pilots away from the towers has been replaced with a new system

where lights only come on when an aircraft is detected in the area. The steady blinking lights were considered an eyesore.

Morrow County officials were informed the new lighting system had been installed in a June 16 letter from Wheatridge Wind II, LLC a division of NextEra which owns and operates the project. Commissioner Don Russell, himself a pilot, has been pushing for installation of the new on-demand light warning system for some time.

Replacing the always blinking red light warning

system with the "Aircraft Detection Lighting System (ADLS)" was required by Morrow County in order for Wheatridge to receive its Strategic Investment Program (SIP) tax abatement deal approved earlier. "If the ADLS system is not operational by July 1, 2021, then the SIP exemption would be null and void," the company letter to Morrow County Assessor Mike Gorman read. "As the projects have installed the ADLS we have met this requirement and look forward to utilizing the SIP exemption as agreed."

Ione schedules events for 4th of July celebration

IONE'S 4th of July Celebration

Saturday, July 3, 2021		
Golf Tournament	Willow Creek Country Club, Heppner	July 3 rd , 9 am
Movie in the Park (The Princess Bride)	Ione City Park	July 3 rd , Sundown
Sunday, July 4, 2021		
Fireman's Breakfast	Ione Fire Hall	7:00 - 10:00 am
Creative Care PreSchool 5k Walk/Run (\$10 Registration)	Ione City Park	7 am Registration/Walk starts at 7:30 am
Ken Turner Memorial Horseshoe Tournament	Horseshoe Pits	9:00 am
Church Service	Ione City Park	10:00 am
Cruz-in Car Show	Ione City Park	10:00 am
Vendors & Booths	Ione City Park	11:00 am
Fish Pond, Bike Raffle	Fire Hall/Park	11:00 am
Parade Grand Marshal: Loyal & Betty Burns	Main Street	1:00 pm
Duck Races	Main Street	After Parade
Free Swimming	Ione Swimming Pool	1:00-5:00 pm
Luke Basile & Jamie Nasario	Amphitheater Stage	2:00-3:00 pm
Cory Peterson Band	Amphitheater Stage	3:30-4:30 pm
Talent Show	Amphitheater Stage	4:00 pm Registration/Show at 4:30 pm
Featured Entertainment	Amphitheater Stage	6:30 pm
	Colorblind (6:30 pm)	Stompin' Ground (8:30 pm)
Fireworks Display	Visible throughout Ione	Dusk

All event, times and locations are subject to change.

Ione's 4th Of July Celebration Is Sponsored In Part By Morrow County Unified Recreation District

Replacing the always blinking red light warning

WWW.HEPPNER.NET
 SUBMIT NEWS, ADVERTISING & ANNOUNCEMENTS
 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
 SEND US PHOTOS
 START A NEW SUBSCRIPTION

YOU'VE BEEN WAITING ALL WINTER FOR THIS MOMENT.

SPRING SALES EVENT

GOING ON NOW

REBATES UP TO \$1,000 ON 2020 MODELS

POLARIS SPRING SALES EVENT

POLARIS | OFF ROAD

CALL 541-989-8221 EXT. 204 FOR MORE INFORMATION

WARNING: Polaris' off-road vehicles can be hazardous to operate and are not intended for on-road use. Driver must be at least 18 years old with a valid driver's license to operate. Passengers, if permitted, must be at least 12 years old. All riders should always wear helmets, eye protection, and protective clothing. Always use seat belts and seat belts or doors (as equipped). Never engage in stunt driving, and avoid excessive speeds and sharp turns. Riding and alcohol/drugs don't mix. All riders should take a safety training course. Call 800-342-3764 for additional information. Check local laws before riding on trails. ©2021 Polaris Inc.