

The Official Newspaper
of the City of Heppner and the County of Morrow

Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES
U.S.P.S. 240-420

Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

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For Obituaries: Obituaries are published in the Heppner GT at no charge and are edited to meet news guidelines. Families wishing to include information not included in the guidelines or who wish to have the obituary written in a certain way must purchase advertising space for the obituary.

For Letters to the Editor: Letters to the Editor MUST be signed by the author. The Heppner GT will not publish unsigned letters. All letters MUST include the author's address and phone number for use by the GT office. The GT reserves the right to edit letters. The GT is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$10.

COO Jones attends last MCHD meeting



Kris Jones

Kris Jones, chief operating officer for the Morrow County Health District, attended her last MCHD meeting Monday night in Ione via zoom. A board member said that Jones is leaving the district for an "exciting opportunity," but did not elaborate. Her last day will be August 12. "We're sorry to lose her," said the board.

Newly-hired interim CEO Emily Roberts presided over her first board meeting that evening.

At the meeting MCHD EMT Scott Ezell, Irrigon, outlined issues concerning Irrigon and Boardman EMTs and emergency response. Irrigon EMTs are part of the Morrow County Health District. According to Ezell, a Boardman subject had outlined a plan to unite the Boardman and Irrigon EMTs apart from the district, but with district funding. According to Ezell, the subject told him that his plan would require MCHD to spend "\$250,000 to \$1.2 million in infrastructure" to solve the problem. "My personal opinion is that we didn't have a problem (until he brought it up)," said Ezell, adding that "The proposed plan could also cause confusion and result in misinformation." Ezell's wife, Karma Ezell, an EMT herself, also attended the Monday night meeting.

The Irrigon Ambulance crew has two paid ambulance drivers and two paid volunteers, said Ezell, noting that the Irrigon response team covers "approximately 400 square miles". "We have protocol" (as to who responds to calls), he added.

Also at the meeting, the board approved a year-long lease in a seven-page document with South Morrow Enterprises, LLC-Thomas and Karen Wolff, Heppner, for rental of a two-bedroom-plus (third small bedroom or office) house at 175 Rock Street in Heppner. The district agreed to the \$975 a month rental home from August 1 of this year to July 31, 2022. The rental agreement also includes furnishings.

The board said that the rental will be used to house visiting physicians, or other personnel, as needed.

In other business, the board:

- heard from Patti Allstott, Human Resources director of the following new hires for the district: Tamie Norris, Irrigon Medical Clinic medical assistant; Andrew Quittschreiber, dietary department director; Karrizima Luna, Irrigon Medical screener and back-up receptionist; Joe Sherman, summer maintenance helper, David Cribbs, half-time summer maintenance helper; Wayne Wilson, lab courier; Tonya Lemmon, patient business office admitting clerk; and Samantha Van Laer of Scappoose, who has accepted MCHD's offer for the compliance/privacy officer position. Allstott said that Van Laer, who has cleared the background check, was to be in for a drug screen and to look at housing.
- learned from Allstott that two new physicians are working for the district: William Everts, DO, through Comp Health; and Peter Vivant, MD, private contracted physician.
- learned from interim CEO Emily Roberts that Mary Sheahen with Impact Communications plans to conduct meetings with executive team members and board members. Sheahen and Michelle Rathman are tentatively scheduled to be on site October 4-7.

Roberts said that the district is currently recruiting for a permanent MD or DO (doctor of osteopathy) for the Irrigon Medical Clinic and a locum MD or

DO for the Pioneer Memorial Clinic through the fall of 2022; a contract for Josh Sirucek, DO, a compliance officer and the chief operating officer. Roberts reported that Sirucek had not yet signed with district but added that "there is no indication that he is not going to." She said that Willow Creek Terrace is also recruiting for a new administrator. Samarra Van Doorn is currently serving as interim administrator at WCT.

- received a report from Chief Nursing Officer Kathleen Greenup, RN, with the following information: the district has an opening for a full time RN, with the position posted statewide. Greenup said, however, that the one RN applicant had not returned her phone calls. The district has one CNA who had been out on long-term leave and her shifts have been filled with the per diem CNA pool. Sean Andrasik, RN, is off orientation and doing well, said Greenup. She also reported that Rachel Hudson, RN, has been working with Good Shepherd Medical Center in their ER to get more exposure to a higher-volume emergency room and code situations.

- Greenup also reported about the 11 new Stryker beds for all of the hospital rooms, including the long-term non-skilled wing patient side of the hospital. She said that staff are being oriented to the new beds and are excited about the new features.

- Greenup stated that "MCHD personal protection equipment (for COVID) and testing supplies remain adequate."

- approved medical staff appointments for telestroke physicians: Hanbing Wang, Maria Recio Restrepo, Ravi U Pande, Madeline Tuang-Vi Nguyen, Mimi Shishou Lee and George Arthur Lopez.

- approved medical staff appointments for Antoinette Teixeira, licensed clinical social worker, Jamie Reed, CSWA, Kenneth Lindsay, MD, Taylor Muenchow, PA, and Edward Berretta, MD.

- approved the purchase of an AED for the Blake Ranch community with the funds coming from the district's special community fund for the \$1,814 purchase.



Emily Roberts

- approved the purchase of a commercial washing machine/extractor for \$15,485.50.

- approved a \$13,800 purchase for "strategic communications and consulting fee" with impact!communications for May through June of this year.

- learned that Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner had one admission in June, two swing bed admissions; seven admissions for observation; 581 total out-patients, 88 emergency room encounters, 1,366 lab tests, 109 x-ray/ultrasound tests, 39 CT scans, five MRI scans, 31 EKG tests and three respiratory therapy procedures.

- learned that Home Health had 137 patient visits; Hospice had two admissions; Pharmacy had 1,634 drug doses for \$151,859 in drug revenue.

- learned that Heppner Ambulance had 28 page-outs in June with 22 transports for \$34,115 in revenue; Boardman Ambulance had 40 page-outs with 19 transports for \$38,082 in revenue; Irrigon Ambulance had 45 page-outs with 23 transports for \$38,872 in revenue; Ione Ambulance had two page-outs with no transports; there were three life-flights for the month. For the year, Heppner had 369 total page-outs through June 2021 with 281 transports; Boardman had 500 page-outs with 250 transports; Irrigon had 407 page-outs with 233 transports; Ione had 20 page outs with one transport; and there were 84 life flights.

- learned that Pioneer Memorial Clinic in Heppner had 353 patient visits in June, with 26 seen by a nurse and 23 no-shows; Irrigon Medical Clinic had 368 patient visits with 92 seen by a nurse and 50 no-shows; Ione Community Clinic had 41 patient visits with 19 seen by a nurse and zero no-shows.

- no financial report was available at press time.



Scott and Karma Ezell

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Join us on Friday, August 13th from 1-4pm
Refreshments & Door Prizes!



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