



# the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

50¢  
VOL. 141 NO. 26 8 Pages Wednesday, June 29, 2022 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

## County administrator terminated in front of packed conference room

*'I'm struggling to understand why I'm sitting here,' said county administrator Darrell Green*

Before a large crowd, both online and in person, the Morrow County Commissioners, by a 2-1 vote Tuesday, terminated Administrator Darrell Green. The vote was Jim Doherty and Melissa Lindsay in favor and Don Russell opposed.

Although neither Doherty nor Lindsay spoke during the termination hearing, saying they were told by attorneys not to, Green said he understood his firing was for violating the county's nepotism rules even though he was never formally told that a complaint had been filed against him.

Tuesday's hearing was held so Green could give evidence in defense of the charges against him, but since no one in the county would talk to him, Green says he was at a loss to defend himself. "I am struggling to understand why I am sitting here," Green told commissioners. He also asked county Human Resource Director Lindsay Grogan if a nepotism complaint had been filed against him. "Was there a complaint lodged against me or not?" he asked. "Nobody wants to tell me." Grogan refused to say, replying she was not at the meeting to discuss it.

The nepotism charges date back to April of 2021 when Green's wife, Debra, who works for the county health department, said she discovered the department was allegedly falsifying documents relating to the COVID-19 vaccines. Debra said Health Department Director Nazario Rivera, who is no longer with the county, had allegedly falsified medical documents. When she discovered this, Green said she reported it to her supervisor, who was also Rivera, and then up the ladder to next in command, her husband, Darrell.

Debra Green said she never received a response after reporting the alleged

falsifying incidents and, in fact, the county began to retaliate against her for being a whistleblower. She subsequently filed a complaint with the state Bureau of Labor and Industries about the supposed harassment. In response the county brought in an investigative attorney to supposedly get to the facts, mainly by interviewing everyone at the health department.

Commissioner Don Russell, who did speak at Tuesday's hearing, said after the attorney's investigation he was approached by a county employee who told him he should listen to the interview recordings as they were veering off subject of the falsified document investigation. "I was approached by one of our employees that was interviewed, and it was strongly suggested I listen to the audio tapes of the interview," Russell told the crowd at Tuesday's hearing. "I was told the questions were leading, and it seemed there was already an answer looking for a narrative to support it. I did not seek this employee out, but I did ask for those recordings and have asked multiple times, both in writing and verbally, and I have been denied." Russell said he was never told about the complaints against Green and was under the impression the investigation was to determine if the health department, as it was accused, had been violating state COVID regulations, not investigating Green for nepotism violations.

Russell says the interviews with Health Department employees by the investigative lawyer could be very important to his making a decision on Green's future employment with the county. "But you have to have the information to make a decision and that information has not been provided to me," Russell pointed out.

Green said the process

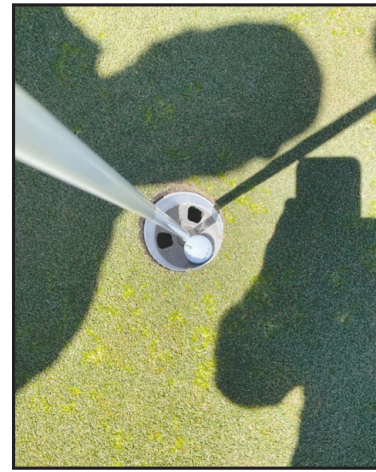
to arrive at his termination, such as the long time lapse between the alleged violation and his being made aware of it, was wrong. Green said it was Rivera who filed a nepotism complaint against him with human resources in August of 2021 and then, it was not until seven or eight months later that he even heard about it. Green contends if a nepotism complain had indeed been instigated, why didn't the board of commissioners bring him into executive session immediately to discuss it. "My questions is 'Wouldn't a complaint against me trigger an executive session to discuss my performance?'" Both Doherty and Lindsay refused to answer his question. Green said in all his previous employments he had never received any verbal or written warnings for poor job performance or policy violations.

The meeting Tuesday lasted about 15 minutes with no members of the audience being allowed to speak. The original agenda put out for the meeting allowed for a public comment time, but that item was stricken from a subsequent agenda published by chairman Doherty.

In addition to the 62 people online for the zoom meeting about the same number of people were in the conference room for the hearing at the Bartholomew Building in Heppner. Most seemed in support of Green. Following the meeting many members of the audience were upset, one even getting into a loud verbal argument with Commissioner Lindsay as she left the meeting room. Former Commissioner John Wenzel said he was upset and commented, "In 12 years as a commissioner I have never seen anything like this." Others called it a "witch hunt", and that the process was "ridiculous."



Darrell Green



It's in there.



### Curtis Cutsforth gets hole in one

At the Men's Invitational Golf Tournament this past weekend at Willow Creek Country Club, Curtis Cutsforth got a hole in one on hole five. Curtis was playing in a group with Jeff Cutsforth, Cliff Harris, Mark Schlichting and Mike Gorman. Hole five's green is elevated from the tee box and only the top portion of the flagpole is visible. Curtis' tee shot went straight for

Cutsforth being recognized and receiving his prize for the hole in one

the flag and though no one saw it actually go in the hole, everyone in the group was sure it was close. After driving to the green and not seeing Curtis' ball on or around the green, the group was sure of it. Curtis however, was reluctant to believe his shot was a hole in one. Mike Gorman went to the cup and sure enough, Curtis' ball was in the hole.

## Dawn and Jeff Eynetich selected Ione Fourth of July Grand Marshals

Dawn and Jeff Eynetich were selected as the 2022 Ione Fourth of July Celebration grand marshals.

Dawn, 42, the daughter of Jim and Marie Boor, is a life-long Ione resident, graduating from Ione High School.

Jeff, 49, the son of Jim and Gayle Eynetich, graduated from Arlington High School and moved from there to Ione around 2002. The couple met each other in Heppner. They have two children, Carson, 17, a senior at Ione High School this year, and Carter, 14, a freshman at IHS.

Jeff operates IRT, a trucking business, and also has rental units. Dawn is



Jeff and Dawn Eynetich

on the Morrow County Fair Board, is a 4-H leader, the Ione High School Booster Club president, on the school bond committee and also coaches high school volleyball.

"We love Ione," said Dawn. "We raised our kids here and wouldn't want to live anywhere else."

### Ione's 4th of July Celebration

Sunday, July 3, 2022		
Golf Tournament	Willow Creek Country Club, Heppner	July 3rd, 9 am
Monday, July 4, 2022		
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
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: Jeff & Dawn Eynetich	Main Street 1:00 pm
Duck Races	Main Street	After Parade
Free Swimming	Ione Swimming Pool	1:00 - 5:00 pm
BINGO	Legion Hall, 2nd Street	2:00 - 4:00 pm
Bag of Hammers	Amphitheater Stage	2:00 - 3:00 pm
Cory Peterson Band	Amphitheater Stage	3:30 - 4:30 pm
Talent Show	Amphitheater Stage	4:00 pm
Featured Entertainment	Amphitheater Stage	6:30 pm
James Dean Kindie	6:30 pm	Blue Tattoo 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

## G-T closed July 4

The Heppner Gazette-Times will be closed for the Independence Day holiday on Monday, July 4. The deadline for all news and advertising for the July 6 issue will be Friday, July 1, at 5 p.m. Normal business hours will resume Tuesday, July 5. The G-T wishes everyone a happy and safe 4th of July weekend.



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