



Commissioners Lindsay & Doherty face choice: resignation or recall vote

Required number of petition signatures validated

Morrow County Commissioners Melissa Lindsay and Jim Doherty have a choice to make. Either resign from office or face a recall election next month, the county clerk has announced.

Morrow County Clerk Bobbi Childers said the required number of valid signatures have been submitted and verified, so now both commissioners, as specified by Oregon law, have until 5 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 26, to either resign or face a county-wide recall vote to remove them from office.

If they choose the recall vote, they need to submit a statement of justification of up to 200 words which will be printed on the recall ballots. Childers says she has 35 days in which to hold the election. If they choose resignation, it will take effect immediately.

Petition gatherers turned in 729 signatures against Doherty and 692 for Lindsay. Doherty ended up with 648 valid signatures and Lindsay 657. Both petitions exceeded the minimum number of the 564 signatures required by state law to proceed, or 15 percent of the total votes cast in the county in the 2018



Jim Doherty

governor's election.

On Doherty's petition 94 percent of the signatures processed were valid, and Lindsay's count showed 96 percent valid. Reasons given for some signatures not getting counted were not registered, printed signature, duplicate, and signatures did not match.

Letters announcing the validation results, and spelling out their options, were mailed out to both commissioners the day of validation last Friday.

The recall effort was started in July by two Heppner residents, and the reasons they gave for initiating the process were stated on each of the circulated petition signature sheets:

Doherty: "Commissioner Doherty's decisions are not in the best interest

of Morrow County citizens. He is not open and transparent in his actions as commissioner, making decisions in secret and outside of public purview and without the inclusion of the third County Commissioner. Commission meetings are not held in accordance with public open meeting law requirements. Doherty does not cooperate with other public and private agencies to the detriment of Morrow County citizens. His decisions regarding Morrow County employees has demoralized County employees and has been detrimental to a functional County government. Decisions are not made in the best interest of County taxpayers resulting in fiscal detriment to the County."

Lindsay: "As a commissioner your primary duty is to work for and with the people who elected you into office. Commissioner Lindsay has violated that trust in many ways, one being by intimidating county employees, resulting in either their firing or leaving their jobs under duress. Commissioner Lindsay has repeatedly exhibited unprofessional behavior in her role as a public official. Commissioner Lind-



Melissa Lindsay

say's actions have created county wide disapproval with other government and charitable organizations, refusing to listen to them. Commissioner Lindsay heard from the voters in the last election, however she will serve until January 2023, at which time she will be replaced by the new Commissioner elect. The action of the firing of the Morrow County Administrator, with no transparency, refusing to let the public speak, or answer the Administrators questions about why he was sitting there, made it clear that in the remaining time of her tenure, this behavior would continue and could cause added financial burdens to our county. To prevent irreversible damage, an immediate recall is the only answer."

McEwen to speak at Nov. 10 veterans event

Veterans Day celebration is back at HHS



The Heppner High School Veterans Day Celebration will be held Nov. 10 at 10:30 a.m. in the Heppner High School gymnasium. All veterans and their families, along with the general public, are invited to attend.

Several veterans have agreed to visit classrooms and speak with students from 8-10 a.m. that morning. The event's main speaker will be Scott McEwen, Heppner High School graduate and author of the #1 New York Times Best Seller book American Sniper. The event will also fea-

ture performances by the Heppner High School band and choir, veteran roll call, and a luncheon for all veterans and their families.

McEwen will be hosting a meet and greet with attendees and signing copies of his books (which will be available for sale) after the luncheon across the hall in room 15.

"I am honored to appear at my Alma Mater, Heppner High School, and give homage to the veterans of this great republic," said McEwen. "Anything we can do as a nation to recognize their contribution and help them readjust to the civilian world after their service is not only important, it is imperative. "Thankfully, we have the strongest and most sophisticated military on the

planet," he added. "This is their day!"

Guest speaker Scott McEwen grew up in the mountains of Eastern Oregon, where he became an Eagle Scout, hiking, fishing and hunting at every opportunity. He graduated from Heppner High School as Salutatorian in 1979. He then attended Oregon State University, graduating Summa Cum Laude in 1983, and thereafter studied and worked intensively in London, England. He ultimately returned to California, where he attended law school and practiced law in southern California and internationally for 30 years.

McEwen now lives in San Diego, CA, where he began writing while practicing law. His interest in military history, patriotism, and experience with long-range hunting rifles compelled him to accurately record the battlefield experiences of Chris Kyle, the most lethal sniper in United States military history. McEwen also works with and provides support for several military charitable organizations, including the Seal Team Foundation and the Navy SEAL Fund.

Local veterans and active military members are asked to send the high school current addresses so they can be included in the celebration, especially if they have not attended before. Anyone who has any questions or updated information can contact Heppner High School, 541-676-9138, or email Jeannie Collins at jean.collins@morrow.k12.or.us or Petra Payne at petra.payne@morrow.k12.or.us.

HHS asks businesses to help honor veterans

Heppner High School is planning its annual Veterans Day celebration on Thursday, Nov. 10, at 10:30 a.m. in the HHS gymnasium. The school would like to honor current veterans by putting pictures in local businesses much like last year.

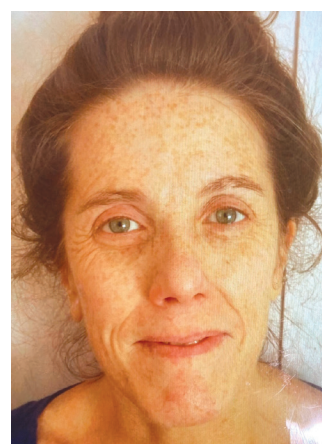
Any business that would like to participate may contact Petra Payne at petra.payne@morrow.k12.or.us or 541-676-9138 ext. 2518.

Heppner High School

will provide a picture of two or three veterans to display in each business window and two seniors to help decorate. Businesses will have to provide decorations and some direction as to where they want the display. Seniors will be available to help decorate on Tuesday, Nov. 1 through Thursday, Nov. 3.

Businesses are asked to respond by Monday, Oct. 31, if they would like to participate.

Search continues for woman missing in Heppner area



Tina Williamson

The search continues for 51-year-old Tina Williamson. She was last seen on foot in Heppner on Saturday, Oct. 22.

Tina is described as 5 feet, 4 inches tall, 90 pounds, thin/frail build with long brunette hair. She was last seen wearing a long gray cardigan, tie-dye t-shirt, jeans, and gray Vans or Keds shoes.

An extensive search of the Heppner area was completed on Saturday, Oct. 22, and again on Sunday, Oct. 23.

Morrow County Sheriff's Office is seeking public assistance. If you have seen or know where Williamson is, please contact 541-676-5317 or email investigations@co.morrow.or.us.

Heppner City Council hears sewer update, traffic concerns



A Heppner resident expressed concern Oct. 10 concerning trucks trying to get through on Chase St. despite current signage. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

By Andrea Di Salvo

Heppner City Council heard updates on the city sewer project at its regular meeting Monday, Oct. 10. City Manager Kraig Cutsforth reported that, after meeting with Anderson Perry, the city's engineering firm, it was recommended that the project be completed in two phases.

"It's going to put us back a year anyway," said Cutsforth, "but this way we can take the plant part, which we know we have to do, and run it through."

The first phase would be to rebuild the treatment plant, which is more than 60 years old and continues to have problems. This would also ensure that the reclaimed water was acceptable to apply to the land and give the city time to work on phase two.

Phase two, which Cutsforth said would also be the most difficult step, is to build retention ponds that meet DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) requirements.

The engineering firm apparently recommended the phased approach after seeing trouble Baker City had meeting DEQ requirements when it reworked its sewer system.

"Anderson Perry wants

to make sure what we have planned is kosher for DEQ," said Public Works Director Chad Doherty.

Heppner's city sewer system originally came under scrutiny because of the DEQs insistence that sewer systems not empty into bodies of water like creeks or streams. The City of Heppner is currently out of compliance with that standard but was given 10 years to complete the \$6-7 million project and get back in compliance.

The design and build of the retention ponds and release system are the important part of that DEQ compliance, but both Cutsforth and Doherty said that rebuilding the sewer treatment plant would both buy time while the city works on phase two and improve the function of the city sewer treatment plant.

"I got a bad E. coli sample," said Doherty, stressing the need for work on the sewer plant. "I've worked here 18 years and never gotten a bad E. coli sample."

Cutsforth said the sewer treatment plant should be complete in about a year and a half. The city has nine more years to bring the rest of the system into compliance.

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