

CREZ III approves five new data centers

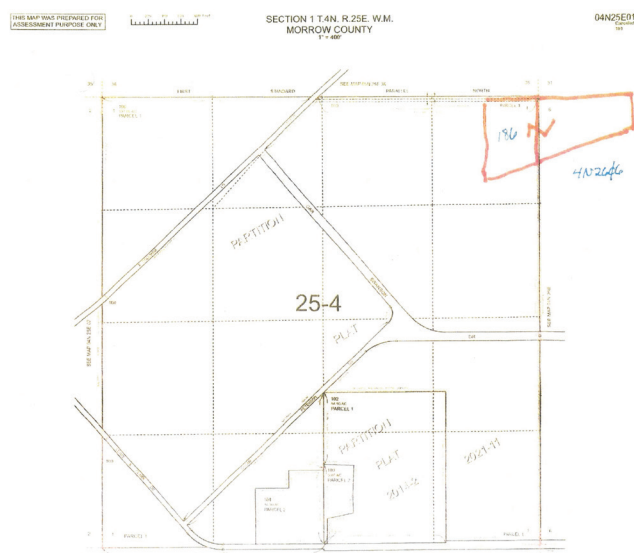
-Continued from PAGE ONE
total additional fees paid by Amazon over the 15 years would be around \$78.2 million.

The big news in these new agreements may be Amazon's agreement to future bonding. While the tech giant had previously not been included in any bonding, the 2023 agreements include Amazon's promise to be included in any future county bonds. Under that agreement, Amazon will pay an amount equal to what they would pay in taxes on any new, qualifying bond. Qualifying bonds include voter-approved general obligation bonds to finance public utilities, public education, fire, public health, park and recreation facilities and public safety.

The CREZ III board is made up of representatives from the Morrow County Board of Commissioners, the Port of Morrow and the City of Boardman. The board entered executive session to discuss the agreements before returning to open session to make its decision. Before executive session, Morrow County Commissioner Jeff Wenholtz recused himself from discussion and voting due to an ongoing investigation by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission, so alternate Mike Gorman was present to vote in his place.

Other Business

In other business at the CREZ III meeting, Sweek informed the board that he had not yet found new legal counsel for the board. He said he had contacted four law firms as possible legal counsel, but they had all either expressed a conflict or said they didn't have time to represent the CREZ.



GAR SWANSON

Patrick Gregg of Corey, Byler and Rew had originally been the CREZ III attorney but had resigned. Sweek said CREZ II counsel David Blanc was not interested in the job.

"So we do not have a legal counsel at this point and I do not know where else to go," said Sweek.

The CREZ III board directed Sweek to prepare a request for proposals to further the search.

The board also discussed House Bill 3011, which Sweek said would involve Business Oregon in putting together agreements for CREZ III.

"It's unclear what the scope of Business Oregon's authority may be in doing that," said Sweek.

The bill, if passed, would also move the exemption period to eight years with potential of an additional two years at 50 percent exemption.

"So this is government legislation being able to intervene as far as enterprise zones?" clarified board member and Boardman Mayor Paul Keefer.

"Yes," Sweek said, adding that proponents of the bill were calling it "transparency, but that it

did involve the state in local business.

CREZ III Board Chair Joe Taylor, who is also President of the Port of Morrow Commission, asked how far the bill had gotten. Sweek replied that it had a hearing in the House Revenue Committee on April 4, but no action was taken.

Sweek added that several large Western Oregon counties had testified that they saw problems with the bill and that it would need to be reworked. There was a possibility, he said, that the bill wouldn't survive this legislative session but might come back in a future session.

"They don't want to make Oregon appear to be not business friendly," Sweek added, "and that's really the only thing we have to attract businesses, is the enterprise zone."

Gorman said he was concerned because, the way he read the bill, it would affect existing agreements whose exemptions hadn't started yet.

"That could be challenging," he said, "because both the enterprise zone board and/or the business firm may have negotiated something different."

Farm Kids 4-H gets dairy tips



Isabel Ogden (right) and Jules Archer get dairy showmanship tips from Darcy Sexson of Stanfield. -Contributed photo



Members and parents in the Morrow County Farm Kids 4-H group listen to Darcy Sexson give a presentation on dairy showmanship during a recent meeting. Front L-R: Cameron Proudfoot, Mason and Madison Orem, Isabel and Olivia Ogden, Riley Archer, Cameron Proudfoot, leader Brandi Orem and Jules Archer. Back L-R: Leader Eric Orem and parents Jason Proudfoot and Jarrod Ogden. -Contributed photo

By Jules Archer

It was a cold windy day on Sunday, April 4, but that didn't stop the Farm Kids 4-H group from holding a meeting and learning about dairy.

Jules Archer, an eighth grader at Heppner Jr/Sr. High, hosted the dairy meeting. This is her fifth year in the Threemile Canyon Farms Heifer Program. She has two heifers—Primrose, eight months, and Hershey, 11 months. This is also her second year showing beef with Farm Kids and her first year with a breeding project in FFA.

Club leader Eric Orem asked Darcy Sexson of Stanfield to be the guest speaker. She and her hus-

band were two of the judges last year at the Morrow County Fair.

"With the guidance of Darcy, I even learned some new things when it comes to dairy," said Archer. "Yes we can always learn something new, but when it comes to

a project that is just making its comeback to fair, we really need to focus on the simple details so we all do well in the showing. Dairy is nothing like beef when you walk into the ring.

"I heard the sheep barn used to be fully dedicated to family milk cows at fair," Archer added. "Wouldn't that be cool to see again?"

Club members learned that dairy heifers are easy to manipulate; members can get them to set up without much effort, so they don't need show sticks. They also learned that, while showing, they will be walking backward, normally be dressed in all white, and that the only non-clipped hair is on the top line and belly.

"Darcy pointed out little things that will help us all with our livestock judging to give us that extra edge when we meet with the judge and give our reasoning," said Archer.

Members ended the meeting by discussing where their next meeting will be and talking about the community service projects they are planning.

"All-in-all I feel it was a great meeting and I hope the rest of our group enjoyed it as much as I did," said Archer.

WEEKLY SHOPPER

RESERVE YOUR SEAT
BY NOON ON THURSDAY
(541) 676-5667

the loop

Proudly Serving
Morrow County Veterans

APR 14th

**GROCERY OUTLET
ALIVE AND WELL
SAFEMART PLAZA
SHARI'S**

APR 21st

**WALL-MART
SAFEMART PLAZA
BELLINGER'S
DENNY'S**

Spring

INTO

SAVINGS

Earn 4.07%

APY*

with our 6 month CD.

Visit Our
Hermiston Branch
to Open Your CD Today!

Emilie Stockton
Branch Manager

50 E Theater Ln.
Hermiston, OR 97838
(541) 289-4480

**Community
BANK**

Member FDIC
www.communitybanknet.com

*APY = Annual Percentage Yield. CD term is 180 - 364 days. Rates effective March 24, 2023. A penalty may be imposed for early withdrawal. \$1,000 minimum deposit required to open and earn stated APY. Fees may reduce earnings on account. This promotion is subject to change or end without notice.