



the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

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Vandals tear up Heppner practice field, reward offered

Williams resigns from Boardman council

City signs off on CREZ agreement with Lamb Weston

By Andrea Di Salvo

The Boardman City Council learned of the resignation of city councilor Isaac Williams at its Sept. 5 meeting. While no reason was given publicly, the councilor's resignation comes in the wake of charges filed against him for a misdemeanor sex crime.

Boardman Mayor Paul Keefer said in a public statement that the city was notified of the charges against Williams on Aug. 25.

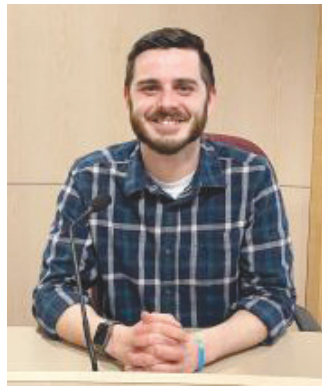
"Council member Williams is allowed due process according to the Constitution of the United States," said Keefer. "The council just can't remove council members."

Keefer went on to say that Williams had handed in a written letter of resignation, which the mayor had accepted.

Due to Williams's resignation, the city council now has a vacancy. The council will accept letters of interest until Sept. 26 and intends to decide on Williams's replacement at its Oct. 3 meeting.

The Boardman City Council also put its formal stamp of approval on an agreement between Lamb Weston and Columbia River Enterprise Zone (CREZ) III. The agreement is for a long-term rural tax abatement for expansion and development Lamb Weston is planning at one of its Boardman plants.

Stokoe, who had been Boardman City manager pro tem before Hammond's



Isaac Williams

hiring, said the agreement had to be formalized by both the city and Morrow County for it to take effect. The county and the Port of Morrow are the two CREZ III sponsors. While the City of Boardman is not one of the enterprise zone's sponsors, the Lamb Weston property does fall within the city's area of influence, giving Boardman a seat at the table when it comes to negotiations.

Keefer said the agreement is most exciting because of the bonding language. Under the terms of the agreement, Lamb Weston will pay on all bonding that takes effect in affected taxing districts after the agreement is signed. "They didn't have to do that," said Keefer.

The Boardman City Council also approved the second reading and adoption of an ordinance establishing the North Urban Renewal Plan. The council has been working on the new urban renewal area (URA) for several months. The first reading was conducted at last month's council meeting.

The city council also passed a resolution setting a new fee schedule for the City of Boardman. The new fee schedule had been discussed at length at a previous meeting but had been tabled so staff could investigate the fees more. Stokoe and some council members had been concerned whether all of the fees were reasonable, especially planning fees.

Boardman City Manager Brandon Hammond said city staff had looked over the fee schedules and found that the city brings in about \$25,000 in fees annually, while the cost to the city for services is around \$8,000.

"And it's not always just about apples and oranges," added Hammond. "Sometimes it goes up and down based on the postings or what is being asked."

He said that during his time on city council, he was never in favor of charging fees if they didn't have to, but there was also the consideration of people taking commitments more seriously if there is a fee involved. Boardman Planning Official Carla McLane gave the example of having better attendance at a class if people had to pay more for it.

"To bring that forward to this, the conversation with most of the developers we deal with," said McLane, "they're accustomed in most of the jurisdictions they work in to pay fees that are upwards of 10 times what we charge."

Boardman Councilor

Richard Rockwell said he understood both sides but voiced again his concern over finding ways to lower the city's costs—in particular, the cost of publishing public notices.

"Where we send our money to. That's all I'm saying," he said. "That's something where I think we can go, 'Hey, let's find a cheaper way of doing this.'"

Boardman Councilor Cristina Cuevas also questioned whether new fees would be publicized so residents would be aware of them.

"Just so the public is aware that there is now a fee for that," she said, "so that they're not later cited."

McLane responded that many of the fees had already existed but were not on the fee list, which was one reason the council was redoing the list.

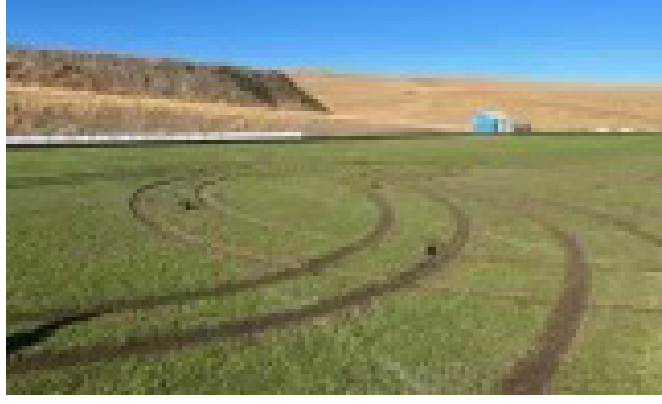
"There were a lot of inconsistencies, where fees were being charged, but it wasn't clearly delineated on our fee schedule," said McLane.

In other business, the council appointed councilor Brenda Proffitt as the voting delegate for the October meeting of the League of Oregon Cities.

Also at the meeting, Boardman Chief of Police Rick Stokoe introduced new hires Jason Navarro, Thomas Way and Zachary Stutzman.

Navarro was born and raised in the Boardman

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HJSHS seeks information regarding the substantial damage caused to the practice field between the evening of September 7 and the morning of September 8. A reward is being offered for any information leading to the conviction of those responsible. Please contact HJSHS AT 541-676-9138 or MCSO at 541-676-5317 with any relevant details. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Wilson sworn in as MCSO deputy



Parole & Probation Lieutenant Gina Wilson was sworn in as a Morrow County Sheriff's Office deputy by Morrow County Undersheriff Brian Snyder. Wilson began her career with MCSO as a dispatcher, then moved over to P & P to become a deputy. Today she is the head of the MCSO P & P Division. "Congratulations Lieutenant Wilson. Your hard work paid off. So happy for you," said a MCSO news release.

Heppner Yard of the Month for August



Cheri Alston

Receiving Heppner's Yard of the Month recognition for August is Cheri Alston for her corner lot home and yard at 325 E. Matlock.

There have been a lot of improvements in and out of the place Cheri has owned for 29 plus years. She has done much of the improvements herself inside the 1888 house, including learning how to hang, tape, and mudsheetrock, and gradually restoring the charms of the home's original details.

The front walk inside the fenced yard is lined with boxwoods, meticulously shaped by Cheri, a nice remembrance of her grandparents' front walk which was also between two rows of boxwoods.

Since the house and lot lasted through the infamous 1903 Flood, working the ground has yielded some discoveries: two ladies rings, clay marbles,



Cheri's home and yard 325 E. Matlock.

old pennies, square nails, and old toys. Finding the soil to be lacking in nutrients, Cheri routinely adds compost, kelp based products, and other amendments to build it up.

The first fence she built to separate her meditation garden from the herb garden fell over in a strong wind, but the sage green picket fence she replaced it with stands strong, now with a climbing rose twining through. A Koi pond was added and visited by lots of big and little frogs and a salamander. This shady area of the yard was a favorite of furry family member, a beautiful St. Bernard named Greta, who sadly passed away this summer at age 9-1/2 years old.

Two areas are fenced off to keep out deer; one grows berries and rhubarb and Cheri has plans to expand the second enclosure that grows vegetables.

Other plans are continuing to reseed the lawn and plant another pine tree. She laughingly states that each year she adds more to the list of plants she wants for her yard.

A partial list of current plantings are Russian Sage, butterfly bush, lupine, dianthus, iris, a blue and white flowered bed, lilacs, plum tree, coral bells, woodruff, peony, snowball shrubs, heather, marigolds, coneflowers and her favorite, gaura. Rocks found in the yard are used throughout the landscape along with collectibles and yard ornaments, including a camp trailer-shaped bird feeder, a gift from a friend. A back porch is a quiet spot to enjoy her private yard. Nearby original steps have an iron forged boot scraper embedded in the concrete.

Before retirement, Cheri's work as a medical transcriptionist took

her to Idaho and Southern Oregon. She recommends to newcomers to gardening to at least try it, accept starts from neighbors and friends, ask questions about plant preferences, like sun or shade, and time of bloom. She states her love of gardening comes from growing up where there were year-round flowers and beautiful front lawns, so nicely landscaped places feel like home and make her smile. "Having a yard that smiles back at you gives a feeling of joy and boosts your spirit."

Yard of the Month is co-sponsored by the Heppner Volunteers, MCGG Green Feed & Seed Store, and the City of Heppner.

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