



# the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

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## Commissioners propose moving Irrigon Justice Court to Boardman Circuit Court annex

By Annalynn Black

At the November 6th Board of Commissioners meeting, Patrick Keely presented a proposal for the approval of MCPT 5310 and 5311 Grants aimed at funding the purchase of a “right-size” vehicle. Keely provided a detailed explanation of the grant applications, stating, “before you guys, I put our grant applications as they stand currently, with both our 5310, 5311 grants. These are formula grants provided based on payroll and some other pieces that come down through ODOT. They are a fixed sum.”

Keely continued by breaking down the specifics of each grant, noting that the first grant, 5310, amounted to \$125,754, and was set aside for right-size vehicles that are not ADA compliant. He explained, “We made the choice with this lesser sum to set it aside to right-size our vehicles that are not ADA compliant. We are utilizing our other ADA compliant vehicles to transport one ADA accessible person at a time. To right-size these vehicles will allow us to utilize this newer vehicle to take up to two. This will allow us to put vehicles on the road that can facilitate more passengers.”

As for the 5311 grant, Keely shared that it was a larger sum amounting to \$415,262 and would be used to fund administrative costs. He stated, “Looking at our total for those we are able to fund most of our administrative funds through that which includes the managers’ salary, dispatching salary, and some of the other pieces that fit under that administrative umbrella.”

The motion was carried to approve the use of the grant funds, thereby advancing the initiatives to improve transportation services through the right-sizing of vehicles and supporting administrative operations.

Finance Director Kevin Ince brought to light the issue of unauthorized distribution of funds as outlined in ORS 210.180. During a routine audit, it was discovered that an authorized accounts payable packet was altered after approval but before the checks were issued. Ince reported, “Essentially about \$12,500 of payments that went out of the county that didn’t get reviewed and audited prior to the distribution.”

Ince elaborated on the steps taken to prevent such an incident from occurring again. He and his team revisited the existing pro-

cess and collaborated with their software vendor to implement stringent controls. Ince explained that they have hard system controls now that won’t allow anybody to modify any payments once distribution has been approved, before the checks are cut. He added that any modification would require re-review and approval, with the only exception being himself having the authority to bypass this process. Ince clarified that there was no need for board action as this was an internal operational issue, but he was open to addressing any questions from the board.

Commissioner Drago inquired about how the incident happened in the first place. Ince responded, “You typically would go through an exercise where you validate that there is a complete segregation of duties, I’m guessing when Incode was implemented a number of years ago that system security was never fully built out. And that’s not uncommon when there is maybe one or two staff, and segregation of duties is impossible.” He noted that previously there were only detective controls in place to review transactions post-factum, which did not prevent inappropriate

transactions but helped in detecting them.

Ince reassured the board that they have taken corrective measures with their software vendor to add extra steps to ensure such an oversight does not happen in the future. With these new controls in place, the risk of unauthorized fund distribution has been significantly mitigated.

Working Out of Classification was brought up by Human Resources Director Lindsay Grogan and Vincent Guerrero Assistant County Administrator. They discussed implementing a class policy that provides employees who temporarily assume the duties of a department head with temporary assignment pay.

Grogan explained that the previous Transit Manager resigned in October, leaving Patrick Keely to take on both the roles of transit supervisor and transit manager. To address this, Grogan and Guerrero proposed that Keely receive the temporary assignment pay, which would be either the base rate of the higher-level position or 5% above their regular pay, whichever is greater.

Vincent Guerrero praised Keely’s performance, stating, “He’s

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## Morrow County Courthouse targeted in statewide bomb threat hoax



Morrow County Courthouse

Over the past weekend, courthouses across Oregon, including the Morrow County Courthouse, received bomb threats that quickly mobilized law enforcement agencies statewide. In response to the threats, police conducted comprehensive sweeps, utilizing K-9 teams and support from local fire departments to ensure the safety of these public buildings. By the end of the search efforts, no suspicious items were found, and authorities confirmed the threats were hoaxes.

An initial statement from the Morrow County Sheriff’s Office detailed the

immediate response to the threat, with the courthouse and nearby Bartholomew Building placed under intense scrutiny. The search involved a coordinated effort between the Morrow County Sheriff’s Office, local fire departments, and K-9 units, who conducted thorough inspections of both the interior and exterior of the courthouse grounds.

Streets surrounding the Morrow County Courthouse were temporarily closed to allow for a secure investigation. Lt. Melissa Camarillo of the Morrow County Sheriff’s Office confirmed the threats were directed at all courthouses statewide, leading to a synchronized response across multiple counties. By Sunday afternoon, authorities concluded their search with no suspicious items found in any of the buildings.

## HHS pays tribute to service members and veterans



Local veterans gathered at the Heppner High School to be recognized for their service on Monday the 11th, Veterans Day. -Photo contributed.

Heppner Jr/Sr High School Veterans’ Day Assembly began at 8:30 a.m., with students gathered in classrooms to listen to veterans share their personal stories. At 10:30, everyone assembled in the gym to hear Representative Greg

Smith, the guest speaker. The school band and choir performed for the audience, and Mr. Grant read the roll call of veterans in attendance. Following the ceremony, a meal was served, allowing guests and veterans to connect and converse.

## Mustangs defeat Waldport Irish 58-0 Mustangs win OSAA 2A championship first round



Heppner scores a touchdown against Waldport. -Photo Contributed

The Heppner Mustang football team scored early and often as they won their OSAA 2A State Football Championship first round game. The Mustangs (10-0) defeated the Waldport

Irish by the score of 58-0 to advance to the next round. They will host the Lost River Raiders in a quarter-final matchup on Les Payne Field at Greg Grant -Continued to PAGE SEVEN

## Morrow County Election Results: Full Breakdown by Precinct

### Voter Turnout

64.38%  
Ballots Counted 4,695  
Active Registered Voters 7,293

### Morrow County Commissioner, Position 1

Gus Peterson: 62.73% (2,570 votes)  
Roy Drago Jr: 36.27% (1,486 votes)  
Write-in: 1.00% (41 votes)  
Total votes: 4,097

### Morrow County Clerk

Bobbi A Childers: 99.25% (3,722 votes)  
Write-in: 0.75% (28 votes)  
Total votes: 3,750

### Morrow County Sheriff

John A Bowles: 97.72% (3,563 votes)  
Write-in: 2.28% (83 votes)  
Total votes: 3,646

### Morrow County Treasurer

Jaylene Papineau: 99.11% (3,470 votes)  
Write-in: 0.89% (31 votes)  
Total votes: 3,501

### City of Boardman Council Member, at Large

Heather Baumgartner: 32.63% (545 votes)  
Brenda Profit: 28.62% (478 votes)  
Cristina Cuevas: 33.35% (557 votes)  
Write-in: 5.39% (90 votes)  
Total votes: 1,670

### Mayor

Paul Keefer: 93.47% (630 votes)  
Write-in: 6.53% (44 votes)  
Total votes: 674

### City of Heppner Councilor, Position 1

Ralph Klock: 99.44% (530 votes)  
Write-in: 0.56% (3 votes)  
Total votes: 533

### Councilor, Position 2

Ian Murray: 99.28% (549 votes)  
Write-in: 0.72% (4 votes)  
Total votes: 553

### Councilor, Position 3

No Candidate Filed: 0% (0 votes)  
Write-in: 100% (80 votes)  
Total votes: 80

### Mayor

Corey Sweeney: 98.44% (567 votes)  
Write-in: 1.56% (9 votes)  
Total votes: 576

### City of Ione Councilor, Position 1

Jason R Carson: 97.06% (132 votes)  
Write-in: 2.94% (4 votes)  
Total votes: 136

### Councilor, Position 3

Jim Eynetich: 56.21% (86 votes)  
Jesse Shoemake: 43.79% (67 votes)  
Write-in: 0% (0 votes)  
Total votes: 153

### Councilor, Position 6

Mark Patton: 97.81% (134 votes)  
Write-in: 2.19% (3 votes)  
Total votes: 137

### Mayor

Michael T Skow: 92.48% (123 votes)  
Write-in: 7.52% (10 votes)  
Total votes: 133

### City of Irrigon Councilor, at Large (Vote For 4)

Melvin L Lambert: 23.60% (351 votes)  
Hector Cano: 24.61% (366 votes)  
Marlina Serratos: 23.60% (351 votes)  
Thomas Roberts: 25.96% (386 votes)  
Write-in: 2.22% (33 votes)  
Total votes: 1,487

### Town of Lexington Mayor

Sheila Miller: 93.16%

### Councilor, Position 1

Bill Beard: 53.79% (71 votes)  
Ryan Olds: 45.45% (60 votes)  
Write-in: 0.76% (1 vote)  
Total votes: 132

### Councilor, Position 2

Will J Lemmon: 92.68% (114 votes)  
Write-in: 7.32% (9 votes)  
Total votes: 123

### Councilor, Position 4

Carol Dougherty: 65.79% (75 votes)  
Write-in: 34.21% (39 votes)  
Total votes: 114

### Morrow County Soil and Water Conservation District Director, Zone 3

Brian Doherty: 99.04% (3,496 votes)  
Write-in: 0.96% (34 votes)  
Total votes: 3,530

### Director, at Large 1

Duane A Neiffer: 99.05% (3,531 votes)  
Write-in: 0.95% (34 votes)  
Total votes: 3,565

### Director, at Large 2

Jim McElligott: 98.73% (3,410 votes)  
Write-in: 1.27% (44 votes)  
Total votes: 3,454

### Ballot Measures

25-103: City of Boardman New Home Rule Charter  
Yes: 63.04% (493 votes)  
No: 36.96% (289 votes)  
Total votes: 782

### 25-102: North Morrow Vector Control District, Four-Year Local Option Levy Renewal for Vector (Mosquito) Control

Yes: 79.62% (2,156 votes)  
No: 20.38% (552 votes)

### Total votes: 2,708

### Breakdown of Precincts - Unofficial Results

#### Heppner

Morrow County Commissioner, Position 1  
Gus Peterson: 805 votes  
Roy Drago Jr: 173 votes  
Write-ins: 5 votes  
Over Votes: 0

#### Under Votes: 147

Total Ballots: 1,130

#### Morrow County Clerk

Bobbi A. Childers: 946 votes  
Write-ins: 3 votes  
Over Votes: 0

#### Under Votes: 181

Total Ballots: 1,130

#### Morrow County Sheriff

John A. Bowles: 907 votes  
Write-ins: 17 votes  
Over Votes: 0

#### Under Votes: 206

Total Ballots: 1,130

#### Morrow County Treasurer

Jaylene Papineau: 872 votes  
Write-in: 8 votes  
Over Votes: 0

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