

Board of Commissioners meeting Heppner drama presents Nov. 13th & 14th

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 done an excellent job; he's jumped in with both feet." Grogan further explained the reason they are asking for this retroactively and not proactively is due to not receiving the letter of resignation until after the deadline of the last BOC meeting.

The commission expressed their gratitude to Keely for his dedication and the motion to grant him the temporary assignment pay.

An update on the Greater-Idaho Movement was given by GIM executive director Matt McCaw. Justin Nelson provided context for this discussion, mentioning that the citizens of Morrow County had previously voted for the Board of Commissioners to revisit this topic a few times a year.

McCaw explains that over the past four years, thirteen Oregon counties have participated in votes expressing interest in moving the border to join Idaho if both state legislatures consent. McCaw mentioned an upcoming legislative session in 2025 that will specifically address this topic.

Although the 2024 election did not result in any new votes supporting the cause, momentum remains strong. McCaw relayed a positive sentiment from both sides, stating, "There is a lot of momentum among the people of Oregon to see this move forward, and there is a lot of interest from the people of Idaho to see this move forward." Additionally, he confirmed that Idaho's Governor, Brad Little, is

quite receptive to engaging in discussions about the border.

McCaw highlighted the importance of continuing to engage with legislators to maintain progress in discussions and potentially move the border between Oregon and Idaho.

County Administrator Matthew Jensen provided an update on the Circuit Court Annex Project. He reported that the Geotech test results are still pending and that the design team is considering a one or two-story building depending on the site's requirements for parking. He mentioned that moving the Justice Court to Boardman to be part of the annex is under consideration, which would consolidate work operations and reduce security needs, though it would increase costs due to expanded space.

Jensen stated that the design team would present a comprehensive update on December 4th, including revised budgetary estimates and a layout of the project process. He sought the commissioners' input on the possibility of relocating the Justice Court to the annex.

Commissioner Sykes expressed his preference for keeping the Justice Court in Irrigon, stating, "We fixed this as a circuit court annex building, we didn't say anything about expanding it into counties deal or adding other things. This is what we told the public it was going to be. I think it's kinda disingenuous now."

Commissioner Wenzholz pointed out that confusion between justice and circuit court hearings often

leads people to the wrong courthouse, which supports the idea of consolidation. Commissioner Drago noted that relocating the Justice Court to Boardman would free up space at the Irrigon courthouse.

While acknowledging the advantages Sykes remained concerned about the public's expectations, emphasizing, "it's a sensitive time moving the county offices around even if it is from Irrigon."

Wenzholz added, "As we've discussed before this is at least a 50-year building - as the county continues to grow, we add positions, providing services where the population is I see it as a benefit."

Jensen explained the implications of the decision, noting, "if they don't move forward with moving the Justice court it could be seen as a cost-cutting measure, and if they do move it can be looked at as planning forward." Sykes countered, stating that maintaining the original plan would not be perceived as cost-cutting but rather adhering to the initial budget and plan.

Commissioner Drago, recalling his deciding vote on the circuit court, reiterated, "I will make the motion to direct staff to look at the annex building in Boardman with the addition of the Justice court."

Wenzholz seconded the motion, and the motion was carried, indicating that the Board favored exploring the inclusion of the Justice Court in the Circuit Court Annex Project in Boardman.

Heppner Drama Club will be performing Drama Shorts November 13th and 14th at Heppner High School Cafetorium at 7pm. Admission is by donation. Refreshments at intermission. Drama Shorts is comprised of jokes, short skits and musical numbers.

SMCSC Scholarships Awarded

The South Morrow County Scholarship Committee has awarded \$15,500 in scholarships through their Secondary/Graduate scholarship and Trade School scholarship. The committee awarded 10 scholarships at \$500 each to Kason Cimmiyotti, Casey Fletcher, Hunter Greenup, Cody Fletcher, Kylie Boor, Madelyn Nichols, Daralynn Teeman, Megan Doherty, Eva Martin & Brooklyn Wilson. We awarded an additional 10 scholarships at \$1000 each to Madison Orem, Paul Lindsay, Zachary Orem, Trevor Nichols, Hannah Finch, Jessica Kempken, Katherine Wilson, Ian Murray, Kevin Murray & Madison Palmer. Hunter Greenup was awarded \$500 for the trade school scholarship.

~ G-T Trophy Corner ~

The Heppner Gazette Times would like to see pictures of your trophy animals from this hunting season. Please send a photo along with your name, age, town you live in, location of the hunt and a description of the animal to editor@rapidsolve.net, upload to Heppner.net or text to 541-215-2274.



Aidan Wright (R) bagged this nice buck with muzzleloader.

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Sage Center dedication ceremony Nov. 15th

Dear Guest, The Port of Morrow is thrilled to announce the dedication of the SAGE Event Center, an exciting expansion of the SAGE Center, set to provide 15,000 square feet of versatile meeting space designed to foster community development and educational initiatives.

The SAGE Event Center will serve as a hub for regional education and industry partners, offering a venue for programs and events that support continuing education, workforce initiatives, and cultural youth programs. This vital

addition to our community underscores the commitment to fostering a skilled workforce and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all residents.

The construction of the SAGE Event Center is made possible by significant state funding, with the Oregon Legislature approving House Bill 5006 during the 2021 session. The Port of Morrow has been awarded \$4.3 million to bring this vision to life, enhancing Morrow County's capacity to host impactful events and training sessions.

We would like to invite

you to the dedication ceremony that will take place on November 15th at 5:30 PM at the SAGE Center, located at 101 Olson Rd NE Boardman, OR 97818.

Celebrate this milestone with us! The event will include guest speakers, facility tours, and networking with local leaders.

To RSVP, please click this link: <https://form.jotform.com/242885429372063>

For more information, visit our Facebook event page, www.visitsage.com, or call (541) 945-2244.

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Heppner falls to Salem Academy

Loses State 2A Tournament Title



Hallee Hisler #11 blocking the Pioneers advances with Ava Gerry #10. - Photo by Susan Hisler

In a competitive bout, Heppner's Volleyball team faced off against Salem Academy, ultimately dropping the match with scores of 25-19, 25-17, and 25-14. Isa Payne demonstrated a strong performance, leading the team with the high-

est number of kills. Salem Academy showcased their prowess and subsequently clinched the State 2A Tournament title.

Not letting their previous loss dishearten them, Heppner continued their competitive play and faced Western Christian the following Saturday morning. Despite a valiant effort, Heppner fell short, losing with scores of 25-17, 28-26, and 25-12. Hallee Hisler notably contributed with 12 kills, 5 blocks, 9 digs, and 4 aces, showcasing her versatile skills on the court. Ava Gerry also played impressively, tallying 6 kills, 6 digs, and 12 assists in the match.

YOUR AD COULD BE HERE! Call 541-676-9228
 Or Email graphics@rapidsolve.net

Oregon Department of Forestry Wildfire Risk Map Released for Morrow County Property Owners

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) has published its updated Wildfire Risk Map, categorizing properties as low, moderate, or high wildfire risk. Morrow County property owners are encouraged to visit the link below and review their property's classification.

Those who believe their risk level is incorrect have 60 days from the release of the final map to file an appeal. Appeals must include supporting documentation, such as evidence of fire mitigation or property changes.

Visit the ODF Wildfire Risk Map Portal to review classifications and find more information about the appeals process at the link below.

For more information, contact the Morrow County Planning Department: Stephen Wreccics, GIS Analyst at 541.922.4624

<https://www.oregon.gov/odf/fire/Pages/wildfire-hazard.aspx>

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