

Heppner City Council Jan. 13

-Continued from PAGE ONE



New Heppner City Council member Joe Armato.
- Contributed Photo



Dane Maben from Anderson Perry engineering firm.
- Contributed Photo

"I would suggest we just put that in their hopper so we don't miss that deadline," he said.

Maben said a draft master plan would take about a month after the council's selection of projects, so the final master plan should be ready for presentation in February.

Meanwhile, the council decided to move forward with an application to Safe Drinking Water.

In other business, Heppner resident Janet Greenup asked the council to enforce city code regarding garbage and obstruction on sidewalks. The maintenance and upkeep of sidewalks are the responsibility of the adjacent property owner, but there are city codes addressing the condition of the sidewalks.

"I think it's very important because, growing up here, it didn't used to be that way," said Greenup. "Everybody cared what the property looked like. Any more, not that many do."

Sweeney told her the city intends to be more involved in code enforcement and she "should see a change."

In his report, Heppner City Manager John Doherty said deputies have been working on various code enforcements and that he had handled several complaints. He also viewed properties with code complaints and viewed progress on previous violations.

Heppner Fire Chief Steve Rhea reported that Heppner Fire Department sent its new tactical tender with HFD lieutenants Sta-

cy Lauritsen and Katilyn Zinter to help with the fires in California. As of Jan. 13, they arrived in Beaumont, CA and were waiting for assignment.

December activity for the fire department included three lift assists, one controlled burn, two non-injury motor vehicle accidents, a mountain rescue with EMS and the sheriff's office, a split propane tank at the museum and a garbage truck fire, for a total of 14 calls for December and 210 calls for the year. The fire department had 205 calls last year.

Rhea also said they received reimbursement for the Pilot Rock and Battle Mountain fires, which was split between the city and an auxiliary account to pay for training.

Heppner Public Works Director Chad Doherty reported a busy month that included installing water meters, filling potholes and putting down gravel during a minor snow event.

John Doherty reported that the city received payment for the Chase St. properties.

He also told the council that the city has been locked out of the SAM.gov website since before former city manager Kraig Cutsforth's departure. Doherty said he has been working hard to regain access, since the city cannot receive payments from federal agencies while it is locked out.

"It is the biggest pain in the behind," he said. "They're not accepting the documentation that the City of Heppner is the City of

Heppner."

Doherty also said he met with Morrow County Planning Director Tamra Mabbott, property owner Kyle Robinson and Dawan Hert of the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCDD) regarding annexation and Rural Growth Boundary revisions. More meetings are needed before further developments can be made.

Doherty also had a call with Eva Henes regarding Oregon iSector, to discuss Heppner's opportunities for developable properties and infrastructure improvements for housing development and access to state funds.

In other business, the Heppner City Council:

- received a written report from Morrow County Sheriff's Office detailing 239.5 deputy patrol hours, 70 traffic hours and 72.5 investigation and follow-up hours in the city, one death investigation and one felony arrest;

- ratified appointments to city committees, boards, commissions and positions;
- adopted the revised 2024 Morrow County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan;

- adopted the City of Heppner's goals for 2025;
- renewed a lease with Dickenson Chiropractic;
- granted an animal permit for four hens.

Port cleared to start flood mitigation at mill site



Heppner mill site. - Contributed image

The Port of Morrow has taken a tiny step forward in getting the old Kinzua mill site in Heppner ready for development.

At the Port's last commission meeting Jan. 13, POM Chief Operating Officer Mark Patton reported that the Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) approved the Port to move forward with flood mitigation along Willow Creek.

The DEQ required the Port to conduct soil samples to ensure there were no harmful chemicals or other problems with the Heppner property. Those reports came back good, Patton said.

POM is now cleared to do all flood mitigation work

in that area. However, that's only the flood area along the creek. The rest of the Heppner mill site is also still not cleared for building.

That had been a major stumbling block to siting the Morrow County Circuit Court building on that property.

The flood plain mitigation, however, will be the first step toward future development at the site. The mill site, officially known as the South Morrow Industrial Park, is approximately 130 acres about a mile north of Heppner. The property is zoned General Industrial.

The site is already home to Blue Mountain Manufacturing, the Oregon

State University extension office for Morrow County and the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles.

Also at the meeting, Port staff asked commissioners to consider a 15 percent increase on water rates.

The increase was requested because water income to date is lower than last year, but expenditures are slightly higher.

POM Chief Financial Officer Eileen Hendricks proposed an immediate increase with the understanding that it would be increased again for the next fiscal year. The Port is also anticipating the need for additional staff.

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