

March Lexington City Council meeting

-Continued from PAGE ONE community," she added. "There's no way in the world we'd be able to please everybody."

Community member Eric Schonbachler asked how the council will enforce those who are out of compliance.

"What do you have at your disposal to enforce?" he asked.

The council replied that, if all other recourse failed, a dispute would ultimately go to court.

Another community member, Dorthy Edwards, appeared more concerned with things not covered by ordinance.

"What's worse, to have an RV on your property or having six cows, four horses, three pigs in a little old square?" asked Edwards.

The council conducted a reading of the ordinance and passed it 3-0. The ordinance takes effect immediately.

Also at the March 11 council meeting, the town council approved appointments to the newly formed Lexington Community Development Group (LCDG).

"I'm just excited that we have some positive community source outside of town council to bring some community spirit and vitality there," said Imes.

The initial members of the LCDG are business owner Carol Dougherty, Morrow County Commissioner Gus Peterson, Heppner High School Student Lita Nelson, Morrow County Assistant Administrator Vince Guerrero, community member Sam Bellamy and Imes.

The term for Board members is three years, with the possibility of re-election for a second term. Two positions remain open on the eight-member board.

The LCDG aims to promote the growth and sustainability of Lexington and surrounding areas. The private nonprofit will provide grants to support community projects and development initiatives.

Initial funding for the group comes from the Columbia River Enterprise Zone (CREZ). The town recently received a disbursement of \$102,566, which is already in the bank.

"So the group will be starting with a good amount of funds to start awarding projects around Lexington," said Imes. "It's pretty exciting."

Imes said she hopes to have the grant framework in place by June so applications could open by summer. The LCDG board, not the Lexington council, will decide on those grant awards. However, Imes said the council would be kept updated by its representative on the board.

Key responsibilities of the new board include setting long-term strategic goals, ensuring effective community programs, supporting the organization's financial health and maintaining the board's efficiency.

The board's time commitment will range from 30 to 40 hours annually, with additional hours for specific leadership roles.

An evaluation panel was formed to select the first board members. Members of the panel were Susan Christensen, Executive Director of Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation, K'Lynn Lane, Field Coordinator for the Ford Family Foundation, Alison Hart, Founder and Chief Strategist for A. Hart

Associates, Imes and Miller.

A process was put in place to evaluate each application and consider the balance of skills and experience for the Board. Imes said that, when Lexington council applications were considered, they left the room so the other three panelists could review their applications.

The only apparent unknown to the board was Guerro. Peterson, who was at the council meeting, said he thought Guerro would be a good addition, bringing an outside perspective.

Imes added that his application showed a lot of experience with various nonprofits. She also agreed that an outside perspective would be good.

"Because we get in our little bubble sometimes," she said.

The panel recommended the six board members, who were approved unanimously at the March council meeting.

The next step for the LCDG will be its inaugural meeting and board training, which will take place April 4 at 10 a.m. at Lexington Town Hall. The meeting is open to the public, but Imes said it will be a long day.

"It's our big meeting," she said. "It's that big, heavy lift, and after that there will be a monthly meeting that won't be as long."

In other business at the March 11 meeting, Crumpton provided the mayor's update that the easement for the A Street property was approved. She also noted that the town received a survey packet with the list of income survey non-respondents and hopes to have a door-to-door survey done by April 1.

Lexington Maintenance Director Larry Hess reported that a fire hydrant was struck by a tire in January, causing it to rotate on the pipe, though no internal damage was reported. Hess is also currently exploring options for widening Tom

Street to accommodate increased semi-truck traffic.

Hess was contacted by Verkada, a security company that serves much of the area, regarding a potential camera system for the town. While not an immediate priority, Hess is considering the option for the reservoir.

"It may be an avenue we have to explore later on," he said.

Verkada will provide a demo camera for the town to test for 30 days, including internal and cloud storage, though the latter would require internet at the site.

Additionally, Hess was approached by a company offering data storage solutions for organizing planning documents. He expects a demo video to be sent, which he plans to share with the council.

Imes agreed it might be something to look into.

"It seems to be a recurring issue for the Town of Lexington, is having all that documentation in one place," said Imes.

Hess hadn't received a cost estimate, but said it probably wouldn't be cheap.

"Since we're so small, it would be a basic program," said Hess. "You can expand it out."

In terms of weed control, Imes noted that weeds

are already starting to grow. Hess said spraying is scheduled to begin the week of March 17. While the council had previously discussed hiring additional help for this task, Hess is reviewing the budget before proceeding. He is also continuing to work on his applicator certifications.

In her report, Crumpton told the council that the first budget committee meeting will be May 5. Right now, the budget committee consists of Miller, Beard, Bobbi Gordon, Schonbachler and Crumpton. There is one community member and one alternate that needs to be contacted.

The OGE website has been updated with the current council positions. Crumpton is currently working on the local tax option, which will appear on the November ballot. She is also continuing her collaboration with the CPA to complete the 2024 financial report, with the deadline set for the end of March.

Regarding the May Day event, donor letters have been sent, and contributions have already begun to come in. Pinegate Renewables has generously funded the May Day "swag," including hoodies and t-shirts.



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