

EDMISTON:

continued from page A1

to be good, solid decision makers.”

He said, however, when officers encounter situations beyond their responsibilities or expertise, they are trained to consult with their supervisor.

“We don’t like bureaucracy in the sense of memos done in triplicate and up the chain, down the chain and sideways,” he said. “None of us are for that, but there has to be some structure to what we do.”

DOWN THE CHAIN

As chief, Edmiston said he looks at the “big picture,” where the department is going and how it is going to get there.

He said he is “constantly critiquing” the department to ensure it is operating efficiently internally and performing outreach to improve external relations.

“As far as what I do, it’s meetings — it’s trying to build those relationships,” he said. “It’s setting the tone for the department, i.e. goals and objectives. It’s looking at different programs, you know, are we effective at X, Y and Z, or is there a way that we can be more efficient with the limited resources that we have?”

Edmiston said he analyzes trends and adjusts the department’s structure to meet goals. He said he determines the community value of potential programs — such as a canine unit currently under consideration — and makes departmental decisions to better serve the community.

With a large Spanish-speaking population in Hermiston, he said HPD is “ahead of the game” because 23 percent of the department and 38 percent of patrol officers are bilingual.

“To me, it’s not a matter of ‘What should be the official language of the United States?’” he said. “It’s a matter of ‘Who is it that we’re serving, and are we effectively serving those people?’ The only way we can get there is to make sure that we have some sort of balance percentage-wise internally for bilingual folks with those that we serve externally.”

Another important part of the department’s external relations, he said, is meeting with different people and organizations.

“There’s a lot of meetings,” he said. “Nobody likes to go to meetings just to go to meetings, but the critical part about meetings for me is it enhances those relationships that we know that we need to have in order for us to be successful. In essence, those meetings are with entities that represent those we serve.”

“We don’t like bureaucracy in the sense of memos done in triplicate and up the chain, down the chain and sideways. None of us are for that, but there has to be some structure to what we do.”

— Jason Edmiston
Hermiston police chief

FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP

Edmiston was born and raised in Hermiston and began working as an HPD patrol officer in 1997. He was promoted to sergeant in 2004 and, in 2005, to lieutenant — a position title that has since changed to captain.

“That promotion from

sergeant to lieutenant was interesting because that typically doesn’t happen in just one year,” he said. “Normally, you would want a person to be a sergeant for a while before promoting them to the next step, but there was some turnover personnel-wise, and that’s just kind of the way everything lined up.”

He was named acting

chief in August of 2011, when former Chief Dan Coulombe was placed on administrative leave during an investigation following allegations of staff mistreatment, and was officially appointed in May of 2012. He said, although the position is what he expected it to be, being a chief has positive and negative aspects.

“Nothing has really been a surprise to me,” he said. “Perhaps the biggest challenge is, obviously, making personnel decisions. I’ve had to make some decisions where people have gotten out of law enforcement and encouraged them that it was probably time to get out of law enforcement, and I don’t take those decisions lightly. Those weigh on me heavily internally.”

Edmiston said the easiest part of the job is “empowering people” with trust and resources. He said, in his first year, he was able to promote four officers to the supervi-

sory sergeant position, which is a rare opportunity. He also said being able to provide a career to new recruits with little or no police experience is fulfilling.

“The last several people we have hired, basically they’re balls of clay, and we are shaping them the way that we do business for those that we serve here in Hermiston,” he said. “There’s something very exciting about that because, regardless of who you are, every single one of us knows who the chief was that hired us, and that will always be that person’s chief. When you’re in a position to be able to give somebody an opportunity to achieve a goal or a dream that they’ve had to become a police officer — that not only impacts them but impacts their family — there’s something extremely rewarding about that.”

CHARTER:

continued from page A1

He said only five cities in Oregon elect a municipal judge.

An attorney who would not provide his name said he was concerned the city would experience liability issues if the judge were appointed rather than elected, especially because the draft charter does not require the judge to be an attorney.

“If the municipal judge is elected, obviously the City Council doesn’t bear any responsibility for what that person does, but if the person is appointed, then the City Council, at least in theory, could be sued for negligent hiring if they hire a person who is a non-lawyer and that person goes off the rails.”

He said an appointed judge would be more independent and that people have more confidence in an elected official than an appointed one.

“A judge’s authority comes from people’s belief in his authority,” he said. “If a judge is believed to be bought or corrupt, a judge can say whatever he wants, but, at the end of the day, his credibility is going to suffer.”

Smith said an elected judge could face the same credibility concerns due to the campaign process and that other cities, most of which have appointed judges, have dealt with the potential liability problem.

Creasing, an attorney and the current elected municipal judge, said he would recommend adding a requirement that the judge

be an attorney because attorneys who serve as judges are still subject to the rules of the state bar.

Drotzmann said the City Council would probably require the judge to be an attorney by passing an additional ordinance but wanted to leave flexibility in the charter. Creasing, however, said an ordinance could be repealed.

“I think the city ends up safer (by requiring the judge to be an attorney),” Creasing said. “I think you’re always going to be able to find an attorney.”

City Council members previously discussed the option of placing any controversial changes in the charter, such as the judge or mayor term changes, on the ballot separately as amendments, so the entire charter was not voted down over one issue.

Creasing recommended placing the judge change on the ballot as an amendment because Hermiston residents “have had the right for 50 years” to elect their judge, he said.

Although few people were at Thursday’s meeting, Smith said people also expressed their concern about the judge issue at a presentation at the Lions Club on Wednesday but were “pretty comfortable” with the other changes. He is also scheduled to present to the Noon Kiwanis and Rotary clubs next week.

Another community meeting about the proposed charter revisions will be held at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 20 at the Hermiston Conference Center.

Bundle up this holiday season with a new iPhone and iPad.

Get up to \$200 back when you activate any new iPhone and iPad on a Shared Connect Plan. All on a network with national coverage where you need it most.



Substitute Motor Carrier needed in Hermiston Route #245, Heppner, Lexington & Ione.

211 SE Byers Ave., Pendleton
333 E. Main St., Hermiston
541-276-2211 or 1-800-522-0255

EAST OREGONIAN
HermistonHerald

U.S. Cellular
Hello Better.

Things we want you to know: New Retail Installment Contracts and Shared Connect Plan required. Credit approval required. Regulatory Cost Recovery Fee applies (currently \$1.82/line/month); this is not a tax or govt. required charge. Add. fees, taxes and terms apply and vary by svc. and eqmt. Offers valid in-store at participating locations only, may be fulfilled through direct fulfillment and cannot be combined. See store or uscellular.com for details. \$200 Offer Comes As: (1) \$100 Prepaid Card: Valid with purchase of iPhone 6, 5s or 5c and any iPad model. Requires account to add two new lines of service on the same day to the same account. Both iPhone and iPad require Retail Installment Contracts and Shared Connect Plan. Card is in the form of a U.S. Cellular MasterCard® Debit Card issued by MetaBank® pursuant to a license from MasterCard International Inc. Cardholders are subject to terms and conditions of the card as set forth by the issuing bank. Card does not have cash access and can be used at any merchants that accept MasterCard debit cards. Card valid through expiration date shown on front of card. Allow 10-12 weeks for processing. One \$100 debit card per account. (2) \$100 U.S. Cellular® Prepaid Card: Issued by MetaBank, Member FDIC; additional offers are not sponsored or endorsed by MetaBank. Valid only for purchases at U.S. Cellular stores and uscellular.com. New line activation is required. One per account. Enrollment in Device Protection+ required in all markets except North Carolina. The monthly charge for Device Protection+ is \$8.99 for Smartphones. A deductible per approved claim applies. You may cancel Device Protection+ anytime. Federal Warranty Service Corporation is the Provider of the Device Protection+ ESC benefits, except in CA and OK. Retail Installment Contracts: Retail Installment Contract and monthly payments according to the Payment Schedule in the Contract required. If you are in default or terminate your Contract, we may require you to immediately pay the entire unpaid Amount Financed as well as our collection costs, attorneys' fees and court costs related to enforcing your obligations under the Contract. Kansas Customers: In areas in which U.S. Cellular receives support from the Federal Universal Service Fund, all reasonable requests for service must be met. Unresolved questions concerning services availability can be directed to the Kansas Corporation Commission Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Protection at 1-800-662-0027. Limited-time offer. Trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners. Additional terms apply. See store or uscellular.com for details. ©2014 U.S. Cellular