

STANFIELD:

continued from page A1

a lot of years — but this used to be a busy area. It seems like Stanfield is drying up. The small communities aren't vibrant anymore."

Barton said she lives between Stanfield and Hermiston, where she works and does most of her shopping. Without the antique store, she said there wasn't much in Stanfield to bring her to town.

Jason Sperr, a city councilman and school teacher in Stanfield, said, however, the building is in an ideal location for another business to locate. Situated at the southeast corner of the only stoplight in town, he said the structure is one of the main things people see while driving through Stanfield.

"It's a sad day for the business that's closing, but it's an opportunity to bring in another business that could thrive like the Elephants Trunk," he said. "Hopefully, this building will go to something Stanfield residents can enjoy and also highlight the town to non-residents."

City Manager Blair Larsen said the city has no financial stake in the building, but he is interested to see what will happen to the property.

"I think it represents a tremendous opportunity for the city and whoever is willing to make the investment," he said. "That building is an incredible building. It has a lot of space. It's a great old building that could be put to a lot of great uses. For the city, it's particularly important because it's seen as the anchor of whatever downtown we have left."

He said the property is in a commercial zone, so the main floor must be dedicated to a commercial use, but the upper floor could be used residentially. An alley behind the

building would provide access for a drive-through window, he said, adding he is optimistic about the future.

"The city is happy to do whatever we can to work with anyone who would like to invest in the community with these spaces that are available," he said. "There are a number of commercial properties that are for sale, and the city is willing to do whatever it can to grease the wheels, to put people in contact with the right people."

The storefront to the west of the former antique store is one of the other vacant properties in downtown Stanfield after Echo Bike and Board recently moved to Pendleton. Except for a martial arts studio, the only remaining business on the block is Fun Fashions Boutique, which opened in October.

Owner Kathy Baker said business has been going well at the boutique, and she hopes the building on the opposite side of the block will not remain vacant.

"I'm hoping somebody will come and buy it and maybe open up a place to eat or a pub or maybe something for the community," she said. "There's a lot of potential here. It's a great little place."

Baker said many people drive through Stanfield every day. She said many people do not "give it a chance" despite many great features, such as the library and schools.

"I think any business could do really well here," she said. "It's just getting our town built up again that's really, really important. We used to have a lot of business here. ... It used to really be busy, and I think we just need to let people know that we want businesses back in here because they can attract a lot of business with (Highway) 395 going through here."

CANDIDATES:

continued from page A1

broker, has operated a Pendleton-based private appraisal business for 36 years, appraising light industrial and commercial real estate. He has appraised property for the Port of Umatilla and Port of Morrow and numerous other agencies and served on the Pendleton Planning Commission for 10 years.

Below are each candidate's answers to a few of the questions asked by moderator Tamra Mabbott during the forum Monday.

• **What do you see as the greatest challenge for the Port of Umatilla?**

Franell: "The Port of Umatilla is compared almost daily with the Port of Morrow, and the two are not the same. You know, one's above the dam, one's below the dam. One is pretty much almost completely flat and sandy and easy to build on. The Port of Umatilla is rocky and sloping toward the water; it's much more difficult to build on. While some of the facilities at the Port of Umatilla are actually better than the facilities at the Port of Morrow, this comparison, I think, is counterproductive. So, instead of always pointing the finger over in the county of Morrow and saying, 'Why can't we be like them?' I think we ought to look at what assets do we have and begin to leverage those, and there are significant assets. Again, the potential at the Port of Umatilla is significant. So I think that that's the biggest barrier we see. The biggest challenge that the Port of Umatilla faces is this unfair comparison between the two ports."

Imsland: "The port is split up between —

they've got the land (for development) that they have helped set up that's available in a variety of communities. Pendleton has the properties down there around Keystone. Out here, where UPS and FedEx is, you've got that. You've got the properties that are south of Hermiston here... that they work closely with the city and get the infrastructure ready and as close to turn-key as it can be. Then you also have the river. So, back to the challenges, I think one of the — being a port and being a shipping center at the crossroads of the railroad, Interstate 82, 84 and the river. Right now, I think if we can get things cleaned up down in Portland, that might be one of the bigger challenges because we want to continue, I assume, to keep that port active here. It doesn't have to compete directly with the Port of Morrow, but we're going to be recognized for being in that area."

• **The port has a limited amount of resources. ... Given those limited resources, how would you prioritize the functions of the port?**

Imsland: "I'm not real happy with increasing our real property taxes, but in this case, it wouldn't hurt to have a new tax base. Like our community colleges and whatnot, to at least have some seed money to get up to step two on some of the projects that they do. Again, Mr. Franell's much more familiar than I am being with the port there even for the few months, so he probably knows how the budget is set up, and I'm not privy of how their budget is right now or where they have shortcomings, but this may be one of the ways. It's been talked about, and it's a tough sales pitch. I put together

a bond to completely rebuild City Hall in Pendleton, and we were able to get it passed by about 60 percent, which was unheard of back then."

Franell: "Limited resources are just the way things are pretty much everywhere, so, as a businessman, you look at where can you get your biggest bang for your buck. So when you start prioritizing, that's the thing because everybody has an idea of what they can do to drive economic development and leverage port resources. Clearly, the biggest bang for our buck comes with the water rights that the port has and wise use of those water rights. That's where we can get the biggest economic lift for the least amount of money. And then, I think the next thing really is marketing what we have. Even though I've lived here, and I've been involved in economic development, I learned things about the port the first time I actually attended one of the port commission meetings about the capabilities: largest refrigerated container capability along the Columbia-Snake River, the most capable crane for offloading, the fuel port — there's actually three facilities there, one for grain, one for fuel and one for containers. Getting the word out about what that's capable of and then leveraging some of the land resources that we still have up there through that effective marketing so that we can begin to see new industry move into the area. But water first, good marketing second."

• **What do you see as the appropriate role of a port commissioner: to be involved with day-to-day operations, to set policy or something else?**

Imsland: "I'm going to go with something else. At one time we had Marge Roff on there. We had Tim Mabry. Both fairly familiar with real estate in the general area. Some of the assets that I think I can bring to it is I worked on a variety of appraisal assignments. Some of them are too large for me. With that, I have a network from Lewiston, Spokane, Boise, Idaho, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, and they're specialists that come in to appraise certain items like that. With that is some knowledge on what the general trends with real estate are, development trends, what I'm seeing with some of the land leases and land sales of port properties in other areas and anything that I could contribute for the development of those properties and regional connections."

Franell: "One of the, I think, opportunities, at least for me, as a port commissioner and being a part of the commission would be in the area of advocacy. You know, we talked about the marketing delta between the Port of Morrow and the Port of Umatilla and how their, I think, perception is less than what reality is, as far as the opportunity at the Port of Umatilla, and so advocacy, I think, is a role of a port commissioner. The port manager can't spend his entire day marketing, so that's — he's operating, he's looking to the future. And then it's a public entity, and it uses public funds and public resources, so I think the port commission is responsible for oversight just to make sure that everyone feels comfortable that the port resources are being used to the best and highest use for the members of the port district."

STUDENT:

continued from page A1

started," Evans-Renteria, who primarily sings tenor, said. "They kind of showed me the ropes and taught me most of the stuff I know today, and I'm extremely grateful for it."

Evans-Renteria said he got to sing as a member of a high school choir as a junior, when his family moved to Hermiston, and he has further developed his love for singing under the tutelage of HHS teacher Joshua Rist.

"It's not that I like choir more," he said. "I enjoy music in general, but I guess with the voice there's a more personal connection to it."

At HHS, his vocal chops have improved to such a point where he will perform in the state choral competition May 2, singing "Ideale," a piece by the Italian composer Paolo Tosti, and "Love Sounds the Alarm," a Baroque composition by Handel.

Evans-Renteria said he realized the full impact singing could have on an audience when he attended a performance of the opera "Carmen" in Portland and was touched by what he heard.

"I just think it's a really neat opera because it's set in Spain, sung in French and performed by Americans," he said.

Evans-Renteria said his love for opera developed when he started listening to different types of music.

"Musicals led to opera, and opera just has some of the most beautiful music in creation," he said.

Despite his fondness for choir, Evans-Renteria said he hopes he will never have to abandon his musical instruments.

He intends to pursue both at Oregon State University, which he will attend this fall. Evans-Renteria said both Rist and band director Paul Dunsmoor went to OSU, and he is impressed with the quality of musicianship there and hopes to hone his musical skills even further.

He said he intends to pursue a music degree and has already begun studying a bit of music theory in preparation. As a freshman, he wants to try out for the undergraduate vocal performance program, as well as the Meister Singers and the wind ensemble for both trombone and euphonium. As a music major, he will be required to take piano lessons, and his instrument lesson will be in voice, Evans-Renteria said.

"But in the rare free time that I have, in practice sessions, I'll definitely be working on the trombone and euphonium," he said.

After college, Evans-Renteria said he would like to attend a premier music conservatory, such as Juilliard, and receive his master's degree or perhaps join an opera company.

His ultimate goal with music, however, is to touch people the same way he was affected by hearing "Carmen," and he prefers to do that singing.

"If I can't be an innovator then I want to be someone who people turn to for inspiration," Evans-Renteria said.

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