

FIRE:

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Hermiston Fire & Emergency Services had leased part of the Bob Shannon Safety Center from the city for \$1 per year since the fire department became its own taxing district separate from the city. But since voters approved a new combined fire district with Stanfield in May, the district must sign a new lease.

Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan told the City Council on Monday that due to compression laws that cap property taxes in Oregon, the new fire district's higher share of the tax revenue will mean the city gets about \$130,000 per year less in property tax revenue for its own general fund. The higher rents for the first four years of the new district are meant to give the city a chance to adjust slowly to the decreased revenue.

"Make no mistake, the city will feel the effects of the new fire district," Morgan said.

In July the city proposed \$260,000 in lease payments over the first four years.

The contract also states that although the city has no intention of selling the building, but if it does put it up for sale sometime in the future the fire district can credit the \$200,000 it already spent on rent toward purchasing the building.

Morgan said Fire Chief Scott Stanton told the City Council in 2014 that the district would be willing to

look at ways to help ease the impact on the city's general fund if a new district was formed, and the lease agreement's de-escalating prices were based on later discussions to that effect.

On Monday the City Council also approved a lease with Hermiston School District for 1.19 acres of property off Ridgeway Avenue near the Hermiston Public Library. The land, along with a portion of Ridgeway Avenue and the parking lots behind the library, will be used for a new senior center known as the Harkenrider Center.

City Manager Byron Smith said the school district was not quite comfortable with selling the property, but it was willing to sign a 50-year lease with the city for \$1 per year.

The plans for the Harkenrider Center, which the City Council reviewed on Monday night, include 3,800 square feet on the main level and a 7,200 square foot daylight basement.

"The total is 11,000 square feet, which is twice what the existing senior center has available," said Larry Fetter, grant manager and parks and recreation director.

He said he continues to work with the senior center board on tweaks to things such as paint color and the number of handicapped parking spaces, but they plan to put the project out to bid on Oct. 31 and award the bid Dec. 31, which should allow construction to finish in August 2017.

SHOOTING:

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counts have been set up for the family online, including one that had raised \$20,407 for Bye and Hurtado's family by Tuesday afternoon, and Hermiston Assembly of God is collecting money as well. The Valdez family said the best way to contribute to funeral expenses for Valdez is to donate to an account set up at Columbia Bank under the name Kenneth Valdez.

Nelson said organizers of the vigil hope to have a hand-out ready for Wednesday that will let people worried about scams know which fundraisers the families can vouch for.

In the days following the tragedy, Hermiston School District also held a series of meetings for student athletes and coaches who knew Hurtado, Valdez and Huston through sports, and provided counselors at the school for anyone who needed to talk.

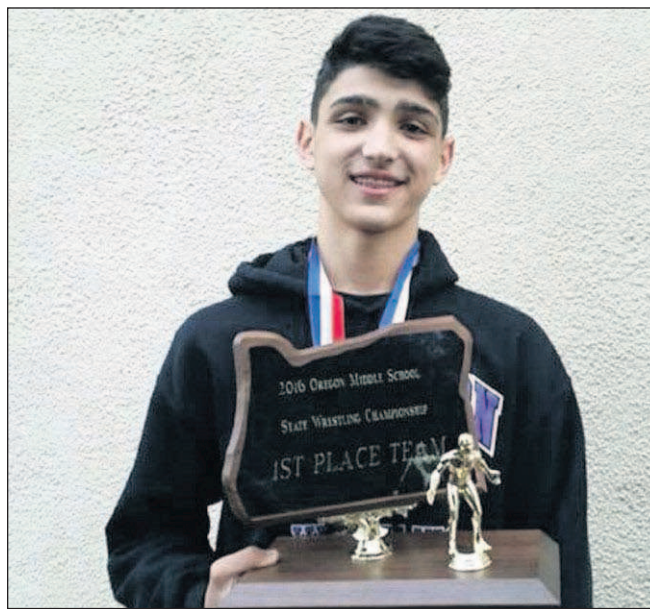
Victims remembered

Family and friends mourning Hurtado are remembering the teen as a generous, athletic boy who loved his family.

He attended Sandstone Middle School and was set to begin his freshman year at Hermiston High School next week.

Hurtado's great aunt, Terresa Baldrige, speaking on behalf of the family, described him as a "fun, happy kid."

She said he was a typical teenage boy who enjoyed video games, but he was also a talented athlete who at



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY THE HURTADO FAMILY

James "JJ" Hurtado poses with the 2016 Oregon middle school team championship trophy in wrestling, which he helped Sandstone Middle School win.

different times competed in football, baseball, wrestling and cross country. He even went to state for wrestling as a middle school student.

"He was just an athletic kid with tons of energy and lots of dedication," she said.

Baldrige said he had a girlfriend he adored and she wasn't surprised that adults remembering him on Facebook were describing him as a well-liked, polite young man.

"He was a charmer, that kid," she said.

She said he was also extremely dedicated to his family, talking with cousins and siblings almost daily via online video chats and often staying the night with his grandfather after his grandmother passed away.

A celebration of life service for Hurtado will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 27,

and "just everything."

"Even now, talking to his friends, I say, 'Really, he liked to do that?'" Tony said.

He said people have talked about what a dedicated friend Kenneth was, always willing to help someone out even if he had just worked all night. The brothers said that they appreciated people's desire to give the family space to grieve, but now they were ready to hear stories, shared on Facebook or face to face, about their brother.

"We're at the point where we would like to see some of his friends, maybe hear some memories we didn't know about," Tony said.

A celebration of life for Valdez will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 27, at New Hope Community Church, 1350 S Hwy 395, with a potluck gathering to follow in the fellowship center. Tony said if people are looking for a way to help the family they could contact New Hope to volunteer to help cook, serve food or clean up so the family can focus on speaking with friends.

Bye, who was released from the hospital over the weekend, is a nursing instructor at Blue Mountain Community College.

Nelson, one of her students, said Bye is a very kind person and a great instructor who explains things to her students in a way that is easy for them to understand. She also said it has always been clear to those who know Bye how much she loves her family.

"Her love for her children has radiated throughout her life," she said.

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