

Umatilla moves on without mayor

By **JADE McDOWELL**
Staff Writer

The Umatilla City Council addressed city business without a mayor March 7 after David Trott resigned from the position the previous week.

Council president Mary Dedrick will preside over the council until a new mayor can be elected in November. Both she and councilor David Lougee voted against accepting Trott's letter of resignation.

The letter came after Trott called a special executive session meeting that he stated beforehand was to address several concerns that had been brought to him about city manager Russ Pelleberg. The council emerged from that meeting without taking any action, and later councilor Mel Ray asked for a second closed-door meeting to discuss

Trott's behavior.

After Trott's request that the meeting be conducted in open session was met with resistance from some councilors, Trott resigned, writing that "a majority of the council appears unwilling to discuss recent issues in an open public forum and would rather conduct their discussions behind closed doors ... attitudes like this show a disdain and lack of respect for the public that the mayor and council represent."

Councilors were split in their assessment of Trott's resignation. Lougee stated that while he did not always agree with Trott, he thought as mayor he had provided experience and a balance to the council that was important.

"I believe him to be an honorable man who was trying to do what was best

for the city," Lougee said.

He said that while he would presume Pelleberg was innocent of any allegations against him until proven otherwise, Lougee did believe that there should be a third-party investigation when there were claims against city staff.

Lougee also stated that he, too, felt that too much city business was discussed outside of open public meetings. He said when it was publicly stated that "the council" wanted former city manager Bob Ward to retire early, it was the first he had heard of it, suggesting that it had been discussed beforehand by certain councilors instead of going through appropriate channels such as a committee meeting or council work session.

"We need to do things openly," he said.

Roak TenEyck took a different view of Trott's resignation. He called Umatilla his "own personal paradise" he loves coming home to. He said he can't stand idly by, then, as a "self-serving person" with an agenda tries to publicly destroy the career of a city manager who "has done more in a year than some people have done in total" for Umatilla.

"Mr. Trott most definitely needed to resign and that's about the only thing he and I agreed on," TenEyck said.

He said the information that had been made public was only one side of the story and he stood by the council's decision to promote Pelleberg to city manager.

"I thought then and still do now that he is the right person for the job," he said,

stating that Umatilla was on the cusp of growth and deserved a chance to grow.

His speech was met with applause from several members of the audience.

Despite the consternation caused by Trott's resignation, the rest of the meeting moved through typical city business without disruption. The council authorized Pelleberg to sign a lease renewal with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for portions of the Lewis and Clark Trail, authorized Dedrick to sign an intergovernmental agreement with the Department of Energy, passed an ordinance officially adopting the Youth Advisory Council as a city committee and approved a contract with Portland State University graduate students who are helping Umatilla create a downtown revitalization

plan as a class project. The students hosted an open house Friday at Umatilla High School from 3-7 p.m. to solicit feedback from the community on what residents want Umatilla to look like.

Pelleberg reported he is working with cities from the west side of the county to pursue funding for a trail along the Umatilla River stretching from the Columbia River to Stanfield or possibly Echo. He said he was delaying creation of a Community Development department for a month or two until he could give the council a detailed presentation about his plans for the department and how duties across city departments would be reorganized.

Contact **Jade McDowell** at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

IN BRIEF

Teen hit by car near high school

A 13-year-old boy sustained minor injuries but declined medical treatment after he was hit by a vehicle near Hermiston High School.

The incident occurred about 4:18 p.m. Tuesday at the intersection of South First Street and Highland Avenue.

The boy, a Hermiston resident, was crossing north on West Highland Avenue at the crosswalk, when he was struck by a vehicle driven by Rebecca Kruse, also of Hermiston, who was driving west on West Highland.

Kruse was issued a citation by the Hermiston Police Department for careless driving.

Hermiston Police did not release the name of the teen who was struck.

College Night Oregon is tonight

Hermiston High School will host its College Night Oregon event tonight, Wednesday, March 15. at 5:30 p.m..

Students and parents can learn more about choosing a college, navigating financial aid and scholarships.

Pizza will be provided at the event, and students can enter a drawing to win one of three \$500 scholarships, which will be announced at the end of the night.

The event is open to

all students and families, and is at Hermiston High School, 600 S. 1st St., Hermiston.

Hospital auxiliary offers scholarships

Students pursuing higher education in the field of medicine are eligible to apply for \$1,500 scholarships for the 2017-18 school year.

To be eligible for the Good Shepherd Medical Center Auxiliary scholarships, a student's home residence must be within the areas served by Good Shepherd Health Care System.

Those communities include Hermiston, Boardman, Echo, Irrigon, Stanfield and Umatilla.

Also, applicants must have successfully completed at least one year of study in the field of medicine at a college or university.

The deadline to apply is Friday, April 28. Application forms are available at the hospital gift shop, 610 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston, or by calling the director of volunteer services at 541-667-3690.

BMCC sets auditions for 'Odd Couple'

A "male" and "female" version of the popular Neil Simon comedy "The Odd Couple" will be staged by BMCC's College Community Theatre.

Auditions for the May

production are today and Thursday at 7 p.m. in Bob Clapp Theatre, located in Pioneer Hall at Blue Mountain Community College, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton. The auditions are open to all community members.

The story centers around two friends — one a total slob, the other an obsessive neat freak — who unexpectedly find themselves as roommates. Between the two versions, the casts call for eight men and eight women. No advance preparation is needed for the auditions.

The performance dates are May 11-14 and 18-21. For more information, contact 541-278-5928 or cct@bluecc.edu.

Spray Rodeo seeks queen

Tryouts for the 2017 Spray Rodeo queen will be held Saturday, March 25, at 1 p.m. at the Spray Rodeo Grounds.

Contestants are welcome from throughout the region, they do not have to be Wheeler County residents.

Those applying must be at least 15 years old and never have been married or had children.

In its 70th year, the rodeo, which is held in conjunction with the Eastern Oregon Half Marathon, is May 27-28 in Spray.

For more information or to request an application, call 541-468-2442.

Students to perform Hawaii concert

Students traveling to Hawaii over Spring Break to perform a concert are presenting the music to local audiences Friday.

Musicians from high schools in Stanfield, Ione, Irrigon and Echo will present the concert at 6:30 p.m. in the Stanfield High School cafeteria. The event is open to the public and admission is free.

For more information, contact Ione music director Bryan Bates at bryan.bates@ionesd.org.

Program targets diabetes risk

If you are 45 or older, are overweight, have a family history of type 2 diabetes, or had diabetes while you were pregnant, you may be at risk for pre-diabetes and type 2 diabetes.

PreventT2, a program proven to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes, is being offered at Good Shepherd Wellness Center in Hermiston, located behind Good Shepherd Medical Center, 610 N.W. 11th St.

The year-long program, led by a lifestyle coach, is free.

Classes begin March 20 and run each Monday from 4-5 p.m.

For more information and to sign up, contact Helena Wolfe at 541-561-5443 or hwolfe@capeco-works.org.

Local classified staff honored

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**
Staff Writer

The Hermiston School District honored several people on Monday who make the schools run — even though they sometimes go unrecognized.

The school board handed out awards to its Classified Employees of the year from all eight schools, as well as at the district level.

The award winners are as follows:

Hermiston High School: Lindy Thompson, athletics and activities secretary

Joyce Wright, campus monitor

Armand Larive: Delia Lopez, custodian

Sandstone: Shou Yun Foun, special education assistant

Desert View: Serena Barker, special education

assistant

Highland Hills: Sharla McDonald, special education assistant

Rocky Heights: Nicole Malmberg, special education assistant

Sunset: Jennifer Morrell, special education assistant

West Park: Gaby Chora, special education assistant

District office: Nancy Coria, home liaison.

The classified staff members were honored at this week's school board meeting, with commendations from each school's principal, the school board and Superintendent Fred Maiocco.

"Our support staff are second to none," Maiocco said. The honors come on the heels of Classified Employee Appreciation Week, which was March 6 to 10.

Happy St. Patrick's Day! Be safe!

SOUND ADVANTAGE HEARING CENTER

Photo, left to right:
Verna Taylor, BC-HIS
Ric Jones, BC-HIS
Forrest Cahill, HAS

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Press Position

Press person needed at East Oregonian newspaper. Our operation prints an array of weekly, bi-weekly and monthly publications. To join our team, you'll need web press operation skills, an eye for color, mechanical ability, be a good communicator and work well with others. Must be able to lift 50# and go up/down stairs on a regular basis.

Benefits include Paid Time Off (PTO), insurance and a 401(k)/Roth 401(k) retirement plan. Send resume and letter of interest to EO Media Group., PO Box 2048, Salem, OR 97308-2048, or fax: (503) 371-2935 or email: hr@eomediagroup.com.

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