

HSD selects Desert View principal

Hermiston Herald

The Hermiston School District has selected a new principal for Desert View Elementary School. Lauren Jacobsma will be recommended to fill the position at the school board meeting on Monday, June 12.

Jacobsma is an instructional coach at Oakridge Elementary southeast of Eugene, and taught third through sixth grade at that school from 2006 to 2015. As an instructional coach, she has worked with teachers to help them use data to make decisions about students, and helped implement Smarter Balanced testing at the school.

“I am very excited about the next step in my career,” Jacobsma said in a statement. “I am appreciative of my time in Oakridge, but I am looking forward to joining the Hermiston School District and Desert View community.”

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY EMMA HUBBARD

A group of Echo Middle School students work on props for “The Little Mermaid,” which will be performed May 31 in the gym at the Echo School District.

Echo students make a splash with ‘Little Mermaid’

Hermiston Herald

Students from Echo Middle School have been swimming into the spring season as they prepare for a production of “The Little Mermaid.”

The familiar Disney musical will be staged Wednesday, May 31 at 6 p.m. in the school’s gymnasium, 600 Gerone St., Echo. There is no admission charge.

All students in sixth through eighth grade have a role in the production — from the stage crews to performing as the main cast. The publicity crew of Elliot Glenn, Caiden Harris and Ashley Mack provided information and photos for a press release about the show. The public is encouraged to help ensure the play is a splash by attending the performance.

For more information, contact Emma Hubbard at emma.hubbard@echo.k12.or.us or 541-376-8436. To view a behind the scenes trailer of the production, visit www.youtube.com.

Food truck rules lifted for First Thursday

The Hermiston City Council gave the Hermiston Downtown Association the green light on Monday to try bringing food trucks to July’s First Thursday event.

The city passed an ordinance in 2013 regulating mobile food vendors, including requirements that they apply for a license with the city and only park in approved areas. But councilors said bringing food trucks downtown for First Thursday would fall under the exemptions for “special events” and they were willing to give permission for the trucks to sell from a public street for four hours that day.

“I love the idea,” Mayor David Drotzmann said. “Anything we can do to stimulate interests in the First Thursday events.”

First Thursdays are a coordinated effort by downtown merchants to offer special deals, entertainment, contests and other perks to draw people downtown on the first Thursday evening of each month. Main Street coordinator Emma Porricolo said the events have been successful in drawing people downtown, but the numbers have “plateaued” and the downtown association is looking to add new features to bring more people in.

Porricolo said the association decided to ask permission from the city before formally lining up food trucks, but some members had been talking informally with local food sellers who were interested.

Hermiston budget outlines new developments in town

Senior center, trail, water meters in the works

By JADE MCDOWELL
Staff Writer

If a city budget is a road map to projects planned for the upcoming year, Hermiston’s proposed 2017-2018 budget leads to a new senior center, utility upgrades and parks projects.

Construction is already underway for the Harkenrider Center, located on Northeast Second Street, but most of the work for the new senior center will take place in the next fiscal year. The center is expected to open in spring of 2018. The city has added \$750,000 to a \$2 million federal block grant to build the center.

The parks and recreation department will also have another busy year, according to the \$57.3 million budget approved by Hermiston’s budget committee Thursday and set to go before the Hermiston City Council in June.

The department will be moving into the Hermiston Conference Center in January and taking over operation of that building, contributing to an increase in the recreation budget from \$565,808 to \$679,995.

The West Highland Trail project should also begin construction in early 2018, creating a bicycle and pedestrian path parallel to the south side of West Highland Avenue between Southwest 11th Street and Riverfront Park. As part of that project, the city is working to acquire Steelhead Park across West Highland Extension from Riverfront Park, so that the trail can loop under the bridge there instead of tempting pedestrians to cross Highland to get to



STAFF PHOTO BY JADE MCDOWELL

Work on the Harkenrider Center has begun.

Riverfront Park.

Whatever funds will be needed to acquire the property from the state would come out of the city’s \$100,000 community enhancement reserve fund used for matching funds on grants for livability projects.

“We don’t feel like the trail would be at all safe to get to Riverfront Park without it, so we wanted to make sure we had that money there,” City Manager Byron Smith told the budget committee.

If a “recreational immunity” bill passes the Oregon House of Representatives before the end of the current legislative session, protecting city employees from liability for injuries in parks, the city will also resume designing a skate park across from the police station on First Place.

Other objectives for 2017-2018 listed in the parks budget include enhancing the trails around the Hermiston Butte and redeveloping Greenwood Park, a small neighborhood park off of Beech Street.

Two of the largest projects in the 2017-2018 budget fall under the utility fund. The city is buying \$1.2 million in new water meters that can be read remotely and allow all Hermiston water cus-

tomers to track their usage patterns in detail online. The city is also installing new \$1.5 million solids-handling equipment at the recycled water treatment plant that will save \$700,000 per year on operational costs.

“Those two items rose to the top as far as projects needing to be addressed and will help us with longterm costs,” Smith said.

Other items:

- The city will save about \$85,000 per year by switching to an outside contractor for utility bill mailings
- Renovation to the basement of the old Carnegie Library will cost \$125,000
- A full-time building maintenance employee will be added to handle Harkenrider and conference center
- All city staff will receive a 2.5 cost of living increase, and the total full-time equivalent workforce will rise from about 111 to 116 through added hours to some positions
- The city will spend \$1 million of its \$1.6 million urban renewal district budget turning Northeast Second Street into a festival street.
- The city’s full proposed budget can be found online at hermiston.or.us/finance/budget.

Little Darlings!

This special section will be filled with photos of and messages for adorable little darlings from Umatilla County. Families will want to keep this special keepsake for their child and family for years to come.



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Send in, or drop by, a full color high resolution photo, your child’s name and a message to your child today!

Little Darlings

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