

Bounds no longer candidate for judge

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
STAFF WRITER

Hermiston native Ryan Bounds will not become a judge on the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals after Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell withdrew his nomination shortly before a scheduled vote on Thursday.

McConnell did not appear to have enough votes, according to national media outlets, after



Ryan Bounds

Republican Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina expressed reservations.

Bounds' nomination had come under fire after the liberal advocacy group Alliance for Justice brought to light college writings from the Stanford Review in the mid-1990s, when he criticized student groups for eth-

nic minorities, mocked the idea of "sensitivity" after a gay pride statue was vandalized and argued that universities should discipline students accused of sexual assault unless it was proven "beyond a reasonable doubt."

After the Alliance for Justice report Bounds apologized for the "overheated" writings and said they did not represent the views he held as a grown-up. But Democratic senators Ron Wyden and Jeff

Merkley declined to return a "blue slip" of approval customary from home-state senators and took to the Senate floor last week to speak out against Bounds' nomination.

Bounds, who graduated from Hermiston High School, drew local support and endorsements when he was nominated. Mayor David Drotzmann said in an email Thursday night that it was "unfortunate" to hear Bounds was being pulled from consideration as a

"victim of the ugly, partisan politics" in Washington, D.C.

"The senate had an opportunity to appoint a good person to the 9th circuit with a long history of great, and moderate decisions," he wrote. "Hermistonians and all Oregonians lost today. A circuit court justice should be able to interpret the spirit of the law that best respects the points of view of ALL people in that region. Mr Bounds would have done that fairly and honestly."

HERMISTON

City may loosen rules for food trucks

Extra licenses, food pod approval headed for council vote Aug. 13

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
STAFF WRITER

City staff are drawing up changes to the city's mobile vending rules and looking at options for a food truck pod after the Hermiston City Council decided it's time to allow more food trucks in town.

The council directed staff to bring back an updated ordinance for a vote at the next meeting that would increase the number of licenses for mobile vendors from the current cap of three.

The number of basic year-long licenses available would be raised to six, with an option to appeal to the city council for an additional license if the six are already in use.

The city would also add temporary 90-day licenses, which would be available for food trucks but also allow for push-cart operations like a hot dog stand. And city planner Clint Spencer said the license cap would not apply to public property, meaning a food truck "pod" (a gathering of mobile vendors in one place) on city property would not count toward the license maximum.

"We've had people express interest," Spencer said of the pod idea.

He said staff were looking at the city-owned lot on Orchard Avenue across from the post office for a possible pod, and would like to put out a request for proposals to have a third party manage the pod instead of the city, similar to how Mitco Investments is running the farmer's market this year.

Mayor David Drotzmann said he liked that idea, so that people could bring in some different business plans for the council to consider.

"We're flexible, if it's reasonable and affordable," he said.

The recommendations were based on the results of an online survey that had more than 900 responses. Eighty-six percent of respondents were in favor of increasing the number of mobile food vendor licenses, and even higher percentages of people were in favor of the other suggested changes.

Water tower financing

On Monday the city council only had four of its eight members present, plus the mayor, which gave the council enough of a quorum to conduct some business but not enough to pass an ordinance. Two ordinances on the agenda — a new noise ordinance and an ordinance regulating accessory dwellings — were tabled until the council's next meeting on Aug. 13.

The council was able to authorize the mayor and city manager to sign a \$4.5 million loan, however.

The funds will be used to build a 1 million gallon water storage tank north-east of town off Punkin Center and add approximately two miles of transmission mains. According to infor-



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Alex Benitez (left) and Javier Diaz fill orders in a Tacos Xavi food cart on in Butte Park during the Fourth of July Celebration in Hermiston.

mation provided by the city, the project will increase the city's water storage capacity by 25 percent and make housing development more affordable on more than 300 acres of developable residential land.

Assistant city manager Mark Morgan said the 15-year loan will be paid off much earlier than 15 years because the city and Umatilla County have pledged to each contribute their \$500,000-per-year payments in lieu of taxes from Lamb Weston's expansion (which should start in 2019). The county will contribute \$2 million over four years under that plan and the city will cover all expenses beyond that, estimated at about \$2.5 million.

County commissioner George Murdock couldn't make the meeting due to illness but expressed in an email to the *East Oregonian* that the county was "solidly behind the project" that will use Lamb Weston funds to promote economic development in the community where the food processor is expanding.

"Both the City and the County clearly identified housing as the major issue, which is why we were able to forge an agreement that as we see it will begin with infrastructure and capacity and then lead to hundreds of new homes," he wrote.

Councilor resignation

One absence on the council dais Monday was a reflection of the resignation of councilor Clara Beas Fitzgerald, who submitted a letter of resignation earlier this month. She stated in her letter that she had become overwhelmed with her duties, including a full-time job, various committees and caring for an ailing family member, and decided to step back early from the council to make way for someone who could give the position more of their time.

The council voted to accept her resignation, and Drotzmann said he knew that Beas Fitzgerald would

continue to represent the city of Hermiston well on other committees she is on, including the Oregon Commission for Women.

"We're always sad to lose a city council member that has been a good, hard worker for the city," he said.

City manager Byron Smith said usually the council would take applications for two weeks and then have a committee review them before choosing someone to fulfill the remainder of the term. However, in this case there are only about five months left in the term, and voters already chose Roy Barron to fill the seat for the new term starting Jan. 1. As a result, he suggested voting to suspend the council rules and name Barron to fill the remainder of the year.

Councilor John Kirwan said he wasn't comfortable suspending the council rules with so many councilors absent, and the council

agreed to hold off on a vote until the next meeting.

Smith said he had met with Barron and Barron had said he was willing to fill the seat early. The two had another meeting set for Barron to take a tour of city facilities and get up to speed on city issues.

City finances

On Monday the council also listened to an informational presentation by city finance director Mark Krawczyk about the 2017-2018 fiscal year, which ended June 30. He said the city had until the end of August to settle outstanding bills but not much should change.

Krawczyk, who started with the city in December after former finance director Amy Palmer left, said he was extremely impressed with the city's handling of its finances.

"I would put our results

at year end — regardless of size of operation — against anyone in the country," he said.

The city's investments are performing well, it brought in more revenue than projected and every department in the general fund spent under what was budgeted.

"Everyone is under budget. Nobody is over that's made up for by somebody that was under," Krawczyk said, noting that was extremely rare for a city. "... That tells me we have an exceptional staff."

The general fund's ending balance came to about \$3.37 million — well above the \$1.7 million minimum the city has set, despite the city shelling out hundreds of thousands of dollars extra in 2017-2018 toward the new senior center and for equipment at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center. Smith said the city couldn't afford to spend like

that every year but had the money available to spend down some of the general fund this past year while still staying comfortably above the minimum reserve.

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

WILDHORSE
RESORT & CASINO

5 Theater Cineplex

Check
wildhorseresort.com
for showtimes

\$5 Matinee Classics
Every Wednesday

Credit & Debit Cards
accepted
Cineplex gift cards
available

541-966-1850
Pendleton, OR I-84 - Exit 216

MEDICAL DIRECTORY

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

Call Today!
541-289-5433
1060 W. Elm, Suite #115,
Hermiston, OR
(across from Good Shepherd Medical Center)
www.apd4kidz.com
Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8am-4pm

Advanced
PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

CareCredit
Discover | American Express | Visa | Mastercard

Find us on Facebook

MENTAL HEALTH

LET US BE THE ONE THAT HELPS!

LIFEWAYS
HELPING PEOPLE

- Adult, Child and Family Therapy
- Psychiatric Evaluation and Treatment
- Mental Health and Crisis Services
- Confidential and Professional Care

LIFEWAYS PENDLETON 331 SE 2nd St., Pendleton, OR 97801 Office: 541-276-6207

LIFEWAYS HERMISTON 595 NW 11th St., Hermiston, OR 97838 Office: 541-567-2536

Crisis Phone: 866-343-4473

VISION CARE

EYE HEALTH & VISION CARE

Robert D. Rolen, O.D., LLC
Optometric Physician

115 W. HERMISTON AVE. SUITE 130
541-567-1837

URGENT AND FAMILY CARE

HERMISTON FAMILY MEDICINE & URGENT CARE

Sports & Dot Physicals • Minor Injuries • Family Care • Minor Surgeries
We accept Medicare & some Advantage Medicare plans

NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY

HOURS: Mon.-Sat. 7:30am-7:00pm

541-567-1137

236 E. Newport, Hermiston (across from U.S. Bank)

FAMILY DENTISTRY

DESERTDENTAL

Family Dentistry
~New Patients Welcome~

541-567-8161
995 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston

Ryan M. Wieseler, D.D.S.

To advertise in the Medical Directory, please call:
Jeanne at 541-564-4531 or
Audra at 541-564-4538