

# Hermiston city council approves goals for 2019

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
NEWS EDITOR

An indoor aquatic center, new city hall and paving Gettman Road are on the city's list of goals.

After a goal-setting retreat in February, the council approved a final write-up of their aspirations on Monday. The 43 different deadlines the city set for itself in the report tied into seven categories of goals.

In public surveys citizens have named an indoor aquatic and wellness center as one of their top livability priorities, and the city plans to have a concept for the center together by Nov. 1 and put together a strategy for funding by the end of 2019. That funding could include anything



Staff photo by Kathy Aney/  
**Hermiston city hall is getting overcrowded, and the city hopes to build a new facility.**

from bonds to formation of a special parks and recreation taxing district.

"This is one of those goals that's probably five years down the road to full implementation," Smith

said of the wellness center.

Another long-term goal that the city plans to start taking steps toward is a new city hall. Overcrowding at the current facility on Northeast Second

Street has forced the city to move staff elsewhere, such as placing parks and recreation employees at the Hermiston Community Center.

This year the city plans to conduct a comprehensive review of staffing it will need to accommodate growth over the next decade, including opportunities for automation, and the facilities needed to accommodate that staff.

"Not just city hall, but do we have adequate space for the public works yard, do we have adequate space for the police department?" Smith said.

City staff plan to identify a funding structure for new civic facilities by Sept. 30.

The city also has its eye

on several road projects. It plans to go out for bid on improvements to East Theater Lane this fall, complete an overlay of West Hermiston Avenue by Oct. 31 and pursue and agreement with Umatilla County on getting Gettman Road paved. The city also plans to start looking this year at a location, design and funding possibilities for a bridge over the Umatilla River to connect Hermiston more directly to Interstate 82.

"We want to do a better in-depth engineering at the possible locations," Smith said.

To encourage new retail in Hermiston, Smith said the city hopes to create an urban renewal district along North Highway 395, similar to the one currently in

effect downtown. An urban renewal district freezes revenue from property taxes at a certain level for a limited number of years. Any additional tax collected due to a rise in property values goes to the district, which funnels the money into projects designed to raise property values further.

Other goals for the city for this year include a long list of water and sewer projects recently approved in the capital improvement plan, such as the new water tower northeast of town that will begin construction this year.

The city council also hopes to adopt a strategic plan for the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center by July 1 and create a master plan for industrial lands.

**COLUMN**

## Practical jokes lead to hilarity

I could have been born on April Fool's Day.

However, it wouldn't have been much fun for my mom — making me nearly eight weeks overdue. Although, given my personality, it would have been fitting for me to be born on the day that celebrates practical jokes and hoaxes.

Known for my affinity for tomfoolery, I've also been on the receiving end of some pretty good pranks. One of the most memorable is when a number of my co-workers persuaded my husband to be involved. Honestly, I don't think it took much convincing for John to get on board with pulling one over on me. He has been on the receiving end of a number of my gags over the years.

At the time, I was the residential manager at a facility for adults with developmental disabilities. When there were emergencies, I was to be called — regardless of the time of day or night.

Given that I have unusual sleeping patterns, my co-workers wanted to make sure that they woke me from a sound slumber. John was in contact with Suzanne Tosten, my "friend" and a group home manager.

When my phone rang in the wee hours of the morning of April 1, my head didn't have the ability to process what the date was. I don't recall what Suzanne said, other than, "I'll pick you up." That didn't send up any red flags, as we often responded to late night calls in tandem.

What I do remember is fretting over what to wear — not that I needed to be dapperly dressed. However, wherever I ended up going, I knew I would be representing the company I worked for. So, the AC-DC "Highway to Hell" T-shirt I fell asleep in probably wasn't the best choice. And, I reminded myself to grab a hat — the last time I ended up in the ER at Good

Shepherd Medical Center was like a bad hair day on steroids.

I still had a dazed look in my eyes as I finally made my way down the stairs and out the door. Suddenly, people were all around — half a dozen co-workers were shooting water pistols at me. I got soaked. They got me good — there was no emergency, it was merely the first few hours of April Fool's Day.

In a follow-up column, I will share some of my favorite pranks — including an elaborate scheme where I portrayed the Publishers Clearing House. After weeks of set-up and planning, it culminated in "delivering" a Lincoln Continental to an unsuspecting friend.

*Tammy Malgesini is the community editor. Her column, Inside my Shoes, includes general musings about life. Contact her at [tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com](mailto:tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4539.*

## Hermiston Elks honor Maxine Rice

Hermiston Elks Lodge #1845 recently announced that Maxine Rice, inner guard, was honored as the officer of the year by the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

The Hermiston woman has served in the capacity for nine years. Rice has been a member of the Elks for several years. In addition,

she has been a member of Hermiston Emblem Club #215 for 30 years, where she currently serves as financial secretary.

"Maxine is a great member and team player," said Teresa Moncrief, Emblem Club president. "She always goes the



Rice

extra mile and participates in all areas of the club."

An active citizen in the community, Rice also has served with the Good Shepherd Medical Center Auxiliary since 1998 and is a member of Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church.

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## Inland chorale to present free concert in Grant County

The Inland Northwest Chorale will present a free concert in Canyon City.

An ensemble of the Inland Northwest Musicians, more than half of its members reside in west Umatilla County. The performance is Saturday, March 30 at 4 p.m. at the Canyon City Community Center. A reception will follow the concert.

Under the direction of R. Lee Friese, the program includes "Gloria" by Antonio Vivaldi. The piece will include soloists RaNiel Dunn and Erin DeCarlow, both of Hermiston, and Becky Henshaw, Arlene Thompson and Mary Finney, all of Pendleton. In addition, the chorale will present

excerpts of "The Peaceable Kingdom" by Randall Thompson. The piece was written with inspiration from a painting by Edward Hicks (1780-1849), an American folk painter and a Quaker minister with the Society of Friends in Pennsylvania.

The Inland Northwest Musicians are celebrating their 20th season. A special celebration reunion concert is planned in June, which will include a commissioned orchestral/choral piece. Additional details will be announced at a future date.

For more information, contact 541-289-4696, [inwm@machmedia.net](mailto:inwm@machmedia.net) or visit [www.inlandnorthwestmusicians.com](http://www.inlandnorthwestmusicians.com).

## Landing Days seeks vendor applications

Organizers are getting a jump start on the annual Umatilla Landing Days festival.

A celebration of Umatilla's heritage, the event is June 21-22 — with most activities taking place at Umatilla Marina Park. The

Umatilla Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center is accepting applications for arts and craft vendors (\$40). There also are limited spots available with electricity for additional (\$10) as well as food vendors (\$150-\$200). Applica-

tions must be submitted by June 1.

For more information or vendor forms, call 541-922-4825, visit [www.umatillaorchamber.org](http://www.umatillaorchamber.org) or stop by the chamber office at 100 Cline Ave., Umatilla.

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