



Staff photo by Jade McDowell
Good Shepherd Health Care System Chief Operating Officer Jim Schlenker, center left, and CEO Dennis Burke cut the ribbon on the newly remodeled diagnostic imaging and laboratory area at Good Shepherd.

Good Shepherd finishes remodel of diagnostic clinic

By JADE MCDOWELL
 NEWS EDITOR

Patients of Good Shepherd Health Care System who need an X-ray or mammogram will have a more private, comfortable experience after the hospital completed a major remodel of its diagnostic imaging department and lab services.

Hospital staff celebrated with a ribbon cutting on Thursday. Chief Operating Officer Jim Schlenker said they were excited about the change, which will help the hospital better serve the community.

Eric Peterson, Good Shepherd's interim facilities manager, told the audience gathered Thursday that the soft, inviting color palette and overall look of the patient staging area was "very representative of what Good Shepherd will look like in the future." The design work on the project will provide a template for future remodels to other parts of the hospital.

"We can't do it all at once, but we will

over time," he said.

Previously, patients who needed diagnostic imaging or a blood draw checked in at a desk within earshot of other patients. Now they will be able to check in in the privacy of one of three registration offices before being seated in a lobby.

Inside the lab, the number of draw stations was increased to three, with an area for patients to lie down if they need to. On the other side of the new lobby are the rooms for diagnostic imaging such as CT scans, X-rays, MRIs, ultrasounds, mammograms and echocardiography.

The increased number of registration stations and draw stations is expected to significantly decrease the amount of time it will take for patients to get blood drawn, and the offices will also mean less wait time for scans.

Good Shepherd has remodeled, expanded or added several new areas to its plaza at 620 N.W. 11th St. in the past few years, including the addition of the Good Shepherd Women's Clinic.

City adopts cybersecurity policy in the face of growing threats

By JADE MCDOWELL
 NEWS EDITOR

The Hermiston City Council turned its eye toward cybersecurity Monday, after dozens of cities had their data held ransom by hackers this year.

City Finance Director Mark Krawczyk said the 25-page policy was adapted from a template provided by the city's insurance company.

"This was put together with great care to address a very real threat," Krawczyk said.

He displayed examples of several recent emails city staff and councilors had received, attempting to scam them into giving hackers their information. In one, Krawczyk himself received an email that appeared to be from mayor David Drotzmann, asking the finance director to immediately send a payment of \$59,000 to an account. In another, the payroll staff received an email appearing to be from city manager Byron Smith, saying he had been having difficulty accessing his payroll information and needed to update his password.

Staff and elected officials who have fallen for such phishing schemes in other cities have in some cases opened up their city to ransomware attacks. At least 55 jurisdictions have been compromised so far this year, Krawczyk said, and some have paid hundreds of thousands of dollars for hackers to release their computer systems.

Criminals feel cities don't have the same wherewithal as private companies to protect their data, he said, "and they're right."

"They're picking on very small jurisdictions," he said.

"This was put together with great care to address a very real threat."

Mark Krawczyk,
 City Finance Director

Krawczyk said the city had upped their security in recent years, hiring the Intermountain Education Service District to provide IT support, scanning each incoming email for malware, backing up systems on a regular basis and generating a bright yellow notice at the top of emails that came from outside the city's network, asking staff to stop and verify the sender's email address.

The cybersecurity policy presented to the council Monday outlines best practices ranging from staff trainings to safeguards on confidential data.

Councilors unanimously approved the policy, expressing their thanks to staff and the IMESD for their work in keeping the city's records safe.

On Monday Krawczyk also presented the city's monthly financial report, which drew some questions from councilors.

During the previous fiscal year the city briefly dropped below the min-

imum reserve amount in the general fund set by city policy. Krawczyk told councilors Monday that in order to avoid that happening again he had shifted the timing of some payments to match up with periods of low cash flow for the city — for example, transferring Hermiston Energy Services' payment in lieu of taxes into the general fund all at once at the beginning of the fiscal year instead of monthly.

Drotzmann said he was concerned the change was merely a "shell game" and didn't fix the overall problem.

Smith said staff were looking closely at general fund spending and department heads had been good about keeping their expenses low. Krawczyk said he was considering starting to set aside an extra \$250,000 in revenue per year during the budgeting process to start building the city's cash reserves higher.

Councilor John Kirwan said when he first joined the council, the city's ending fund balance always was more than \$2 million above the minimum reserve, so it was never a worry. In recent years, however, the city has used up that cushion through generous donations to projects such as Kennison Field, the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center and the Harkenrider Senior Activity Center.

"We don't have that money anymore," he said. "I think those were good investments in the community, but when people come to us for money, we spent that money."



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