

Commissioner:

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To build and maintain a stable economy, Beers focused on keeping local projects contracted to local businesses, and said she'd like to help small businesses get back on their feet and address the county's roads.

Without offering a solution, Maier said the county needs to eliminate the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) debt it has accrued.

When asked about capital projects, Maier said the county should prioritize working in streams to mitigate future flooding risks, as she's done in forming a citizen work group in response to flooding at Camas Creek.

Dorran advocated for the aggressive pursuit of grant funding, and suggested a test area for electric trucks on the westside of the county similar to how Pendleton is used as a test area for Unmanned Aerial Systems. Dorran also pushed for the county to make use of the junction of interstates 84 and 82, which a study showed receives as much daily traffic as any point along Interstate 5.

"It really boils down to a collaboration of setting priorities with all 12 cities of Umatilla County and what their needs are and how to address them," he said.

The candidates were each asked their opinions on the county's adoption of a resolution titled "Stance Against Racism, Discrimination and Social Injustices in Umatilla County" in August.

The resolution included a declaration that the board of commissioners believe



HollyJo Beers (left), Dan Dorran and Pat Maier, candidates for the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners, speak during a candidate forum at the Hermiston Community Center on Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2020. Pat Maier is running a write-in campaign.

that racism exists in Umatilla County, they respect peaceful protesting and recognize the importance of contributions by people of color.

After previously being dismissive of systemic racism as a local issue, Dorran said he's since had conversations with and learned more about the issue from leaders of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, its board of trustees and Hermiston City Councilor Roy Barron.

"The major component of the future is for everybody to listen," he said.

Maier likened the oppressions and injustices of systemic racism to her experiences as a businesswoman and being kicked off a youth baseball team as a teenager.

"Women have seen as much discrimination as anyone," she said. "I think what you have to do, whether you're white, black, pink, yellow or green, you have to stand up and be counted ... systemic racism right now, I don't really see it that way."

Following up on state-

ments made earlier in her campaign that the CTUIR were "the most racist people" she'd encountered, Beers disagreed with the ordinance because she believed it violated the Civil Rights Act, while suggesting it was "denigrating" white people.

"Lots of people are discriminated against in a lot of different ways," she said. "But you can't make ordinances — or in this case a resolution or a policy as they made — because it is not equality for everyone."

A self-described "Constitutionalist," Beers used her closing statements to assert that she would never violate the Constitution and that she wanted to be a voice for people in the county.

"I would ask that you vote for me if you want somebody who can speak for you," she said.

The forum was Dorran's first chance to speak publicly following his arrest for driving after consuming alcohol at a golf tournament and colliding with another vehicle in Umatilla on Sept. 26.

The arrest wasn't brought up during the forum, but

Dorran instead focused heavily on optimism and his "three-legged platform" of economic development, transportation and infrastructure and creating a more livable county.

"I'm the biggest optimist out there," he said. "I get accused of being over-optimistic, overconfident of this county, my passion for this county and what our future holds."

Throughout the night, Maier trumpeted her experiences as a businesswoman as reason for her being the best option, despite being a write-in candidate.

"Every day takes leadership," she said. "Every day it takes work to run a successful business that's been going for over 17 years."

Voters will have Dorran and Beers to decide between on the ballot this Nov. 3, while Maier will hope enough voters aren't satisfied enough with either choice to put her name down instead.

The winner will then start a four-year term on the board of commissioners in 2021 beside commissioners John Shafer and George Murdock.

Council:

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served on the council for 28 years, said he wanted to bring his experience to the council for one more term. He referenced the sign welcoming people to Hermiston that states the town is an "inclusive community" and said he feels Hermiston can truly say it is an inclusive community.

"I thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to serve this community," he said. "This is a community that you feel accepted when you walk through the door."

He said as Hermiston grows he would like to see an expansion of public transportation options for residents. He also said he supports the city's efforts to rebuild Funland Playground and said he hopes to see other recreational options, including a new skate park that was designed but has yet to get funding, added.

On Nov. 3, Hermiston voters will be able to vote for their top four choices for the four at-large seats up for reelection.

The top four vote-getters will be sworn into those seats in January.

BMCC offers free finance course

HERMISTON HERALD

The Blue Mountain Small Business Development Center is offering a six-week Profit Mastery program at absolutely no charge to the first 100 participants to register.

The course, usually costing \$895, is funded thanks to Small Business Act CARES Act funds.

BMCC SBDC has partnered with Profit Mastery and its founder, Steve LeFever, to offer a program to help participants evaluate a business' current financial outlook, manage business by the numbers and offer the tools to focus on the growth and the increase in revenue and capital needed to be successful.

Profit Mastery will start Wednesday, Oct. 21, and run each Wednesday

through Nov. 25. Live sessions start at 9 a.m. each Wednesday and run about 20 to 30 minutes. The live sessions are an introduction to the week's module and then it's self paced to a participants' schedule throughout the week. Those who can't view the initial live sessions can receive a recording of that session via email.

The SBDC helps clients in all stages of business, whether it's getting started with the planning process or a business that is well established, growing fast and needing some additional support.

To register, email your name and contact number to Andrea Fowler at afowler@bluecc.edu, or call the SBDC office at 541-278-5833. Spots will fill up fast, so register early.



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