

Hermiston City Council OKs contract for industrial park

By JADE MCDOWELL
NEWS EDITOR



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald, File

Meyer Distributing, a distribution company headquartered in Jasper, Indiana, plans to construct a new \$11 million warehouse at this site located at 975 E. Penney Ave. in Hermiston, pictured in April 2021. The property is part of the South Hermiston Industrial Park, which is getting \$1.6 million in new roads, water and sewer lines.

The city of Hermiston is on its way to making the South Hermiston Industrial Park more “shovel ready” after city councilors awarded a bid for a \$1.6 million construction project at their Monday, May 24, meeting.

The project will extend Southeast Campbell Drive down to East Penney Avenue, pave an undeveloped right of way for Southeast 10th Street connecting to Highway 395, create a new road leading into Port of Umatilla-owned property, and add water and sewer lines in the area.

The council awarded to contract to Tapani, Inc. of Richland, Washington, which was the apparent low bidder of four bids.

“All four of these bids

were within \$100,000,” Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan said.

The city previously formed a local improvement district to help fund the project, which affects 20 property

owners, Morgan said. Half of the project will be paid for by a federal Economic Development Administration grant, 10% will be covered by the city and Umatilla County, and the remaining 40% will

be paid for by the property owners in the district, allocated by frontage.

The council had been planning to pass amendments to the city’s sidewalk ordinance and an ordinance renewing the city’s franchise agreement with Cascade Natural Gas. But according to the city’s charter, at least five councilors out of the eight must vote for ordinances to pass, and only four councilors were present on Monday.

The council did have enough people for a simple majority vote on the bid award and approval of a proposed wayfinding sign program in Hermiston.

According to City Planner Clint Spencer, the sign program started with discussions about downtown parking lots, which are free to use but often underutilized as people don’t know where

they are or who is allowed to park there. A plan to create a system of signs pointing people to free parking grew into a full-fledged wayfinding sign program that will use a system of coordinated, decorative signs to direct visitors around the city.

The proposal includes large signs marking entrances into Hermiston and downtown, pointing the way to attractions, providing informational kiosks and maps, marking trails and displaying the names of parks. Spencer said they want to make it easier for drivers to find common destinations for visitors, such as the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center, Kennison Field and Good Shepherd Medical Center.

Spencer said the estimated cost for every sign location on the list of possibilities is about \$805,000

but the project is meant to take place over five or more years and the city could choose to cut back on the number of signs as well. The city has \$48,000 in urban renewal dollars set aside for the current fiscal year to take care of all the parking signage downtown.

The city is currently redoing one of its parking lots, located at the corner of East Gladys Avenue and Northeast Second Street. City Manager Byron Smith noted that some businesses surrounding the lot will have their water or sewer service shut off for a day at a time during the project.

He said they should be better served by the resulting parking lot, however, which will feature 11 additional spaces, better paving, new landscaping, new lighting and two electric vehicle charging stations.

Hermiston High School Honor Walk set for May 27

HERMISTON HERALD

Community members will have a chance to honor graduating seniors from Hermiston High School during the Honor Walk on Thursday, May 27.

The tradition started last year as a way to allow students’ friends and family to cheer for them while crowds were not allowed to watch graduation because of the pandemic.

It returns for a second year on Thursday. According to a news release from Hermiston School District, seniors will take a class picture in their class T-shirts in the bleachers at Kennison Field at 6:30 p.m. before donning their caps and gowns and leaving the high school campus on foot at 7 p.m.

They will exit Kennison Field, led by the marching band, onto Highland Avenue heading west, then turn



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald, File

Hermiston High School graduates march during an honor walk on May 29, 2020. The event returns this year on Thursday, May 27, 2021.

north on Seventh Street to Orchard Avenue, where they will loop back around to the north parking lot of the high school. Friends, family and other supporters are invited to stand along the route with signs and cheer.

There will be fireworks at the Hermiston Butte to celebrate afterward, starting at 9:30 p.m.

Graduation itself will take place on Thursday, June 3. All seniors will gather in

the Purple Gym at the high school by 5:30 p.m. to hear speeches, which will also be livestreamed on the Hermiston School District website and HSD Communications YouTube channel and available for future viewing.

After the speeches, students will be presented their diploma one at a time in the main commons area. They will be allowed to have six guests of their choosing present.

Gov. Kate Brown announces \$1 million vaccine lottery

By JADE MCDOWELL
NEWS EDITOR

One lucky Oregon resident who was vaccinated against COVID-19 will win \$1 million, thanks to a new incentive announced by Gov. Kate Brown on Friday, May 21.

The Take Your Shot Oregon campaign will include a drawing for a grand prize of \$1 million plus one \$10,000 prize for each of Oregon’s 36 counties for adults ages 18 and up. For students younger than 18 who get the vaccine, there will be five \$100,000 Oregon College Savings Plan scholarships up for grabs.

Vaccinated Oregonians don’t have to do anything special to sign up for the lottery, according to Brown. Those eligible will be Oregonians who have had at least one dose of the vac-

cine and their information entered into Oregon Health Authority’s database by midnight on June 27. The drawing will take place on June 28.

No personally identifying information will be shared with Oregon Lottery, only the number assigned to each individual when they are vaccinated with no name attached. Oregon Lottery will then share the numbers chosen with OHA, which will match them back up with their corresponding name and notify the individual of their win.

“Vaccines are the best tool we have to protect our-

selves and our loved ones from COVID-19, and our fastest way to end this pandemic,” Brown said in a statement. “The Take Your Shot Oregon Campaign is a way to thank Oregonians for stepping up and keeping our communities safe. It’s never been easier to get a vaccine, so don’t miss your shot to enter!”

According to the news release, the campaign is a collaboration between the Oregon Health Authority, the Oregon Lottery and the Oregon State Treasury, and is funded with \$1.86 million in federal Coronavirus Relief Act dollars.

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