



Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald

Elizabeth Doherty, 16, stands in front of the Hermiston City Council and city officials at the end of her first city council meeting Monday, March 28, 2022. Doherty is one of the city's new youth advisers.

YOUTH ADVISER

Hermiston City Council opens door for input from select high school students

By ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Herald

The Hermiston City Council at its meeting Monday, March 28, welcomed its first youth adviser.

Hermiston City Manager Byron Smith and a teacher at Hermiston High School arranged for the new youth adviser program. Twelve students were chosen to comprise this group, and up to three youth advisers would be invited to each city council and every committee meeting. They have a table right next to city councilors.

A few days earlier, Hermiston Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan explained the new advisers would be a fixture in future meetings. While they would not be allowed to vote, they would have ring-side seats to witness council proceedings and have the opportunity to speak and advise city government.

Morgan called it a learning opportunity for both government officials and the students.

Beginning with just one

As the meeting started, Hermiston Mayor David Drotzmann looked out at the youth advisers' table and wondered aloud if the advisers had been scared away. Only one member, Elizabeth Doherty, was present. She is an



Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald

Elizabeth Doherty, youth adviser, thanks the Hermiston City Council for allowing her to be part of the meeting Monday, March 28, 2022.

active student who takes part in the FFA, Key Club and HOSA — Future Health Professionals.

Smith said attendance likely would be inconsistent because a student's life is busy. On March 28, Hermiston High School was hosting student conferences. Likely, councilors stated, the missing advisers were tied up with their conferences or performances at the high school.

Granddaughter of a former Umatilla County commissioner, Doherty said she is familiar with the politics of the area. She knows the people and the region

itself, she said, as her family has lived in the area for four generations.

Doherty, born in Arizona, was brought here when she was only a year old to join other family members already long established here.

Now 16, she said she has taken part in many school and community activities. In the 4-H, she serves as the vice president of the Hermiston High School branch and the president of the Blue Mountain group. In addition to participating in other clubs and sports, she takes advanced placement classes — physics, language,

precalculus and U.S. history.

And she was the recipient of the Outstanding Young Citizens Award this year at the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce's 52nd annual Distinguished Citizens Awards.

Drotzmann said she also would learn a lot about how government operates, and Doherty concurred.

"Being a youth adviser will be good for me," she said.

Objections to SHIP

The first real action of the night came in discussion of the South Hermiston Industrial Park.

A few property owners, one after the other, stood before council and objected to fees charged to them for an enhancement project that they did not feel benefited them.

The property owners claimed the "city was not honoring its part" of a deal that would reduce costs to SHIP lot owners. They called it unfair, and they called for the city to revisit past promises.

The city council and the mayor agreed with the property owners and agreed to write a new ordinance, rather than pass the one set before the council. This new ordinance will be presented at a future meeting.

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Judge orders Two Rivers to follow its own mask rules

By CONRAD WILSON
Oregon Public Broadcasting

A federal magistrate judge this week found some Oregon prison staff at the Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla have not followed the prison's own pandemic-related mask rules. In a court order signed March 21, the judge required prison officials to follow their policies.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Stacie Beckerman largely ruled in favor of Aaron Hanna, a prisoner at Two Rivers. Hanna asked the court in October to force prison officials and correctional officers at Two Rivers to comply with the Oregon Department of Corrections policy on masks.

Specifically, Hanna alleged prison leaders "acted with deliberate indif-



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

A federal magistrate judge in a court order March 21, 2022, required officials at the state prison to follow their mask policies.

ference to a substantial risk of serious harm in violation" of the Constitution's Eighth Amendment against cruel and unusual punishment "by failing consistently to comply with and enforce ODOC's mask policy." The ruling comes as Gov. Kate

Brown lifted the statewide mask mandate for indoor, public spaces beginning March 12, though masks requirements still apply to settings such as health care facilities.

Corrections officials also "acknowledge that a mask man-

date continues to apply inside most areas of Oregon's correctional institutions," Beckerman wrote in her opinion.

The Department of Corrections declined to comment on the ruling. In early March, DOC Deputy Direc-

tor Heidi Steward noted in an agency-wide email that masks were still required in all prisons.

"Our goal is to move away from mask-wearing in our institutions as well, but our plan must be approved first, and it will be a phased-out approach," Steward wrote.

In her ruling, Beckerman requires corrections leaders and officials at Two Rivers to comply with their own mask policy, saying it's in the public's interest.

The Department of Corrections argues "that although their masking compliance may be imperfect, they have acted reasonably under the circumstances," Beckerman wrote. "Defendants set the bar too low."

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