

Hermiston reinstates cash contribution to SHIP project

Mayor thanks the city, the city council and property owners for working together

By ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Herald



Hermiston Mayor David Drotzmann, on Monday, April 11, 2022 compliments the Hermiston City Council for responding to complaints from South Hermiston Industrial Park property owners.

Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald

The Hermiston City Council voted unanimously to approve a plan that reinstated the city's cash contributions to new infrastructure at the South Hermiston Industrial Park.

Mark Morgan, assistant city manager, explained the situation last week.

The city in 2019 estimated new infrastructure for SHIP would cost about \$3 million, Morgan said. A grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration would cover half the cost, Umatilla

County would pay \$50,000 and property owners at the industrial park would be on the hook for about \$1.4 million.

To ease the burden on

property owners, the city offered \$250,000. Total cost to property owners would be closer to \$1.16 million.

Construction, though, proved to be less costly than

expected. The final price for the project was under \$2 million.

As the city saved on the project, it extended savings to the property own-

ers. One lot, for example, which would have owed \$39,673 would only be paying \$30,619 under a revised plan. The total cost to all the property owners would have been \$947,734.

At the March 28 city council meeting, the city proposed removing its \$250,000 contribution. This angered property owners who showed up at the meeting and argued this was an unfair breach of promise.

City councilors agreed with the property owners and voted unanimously for the creation of a plan to reinstate the \$250,000 from the city and reduce costs to the property owners.

Morgan shared the new plan on April 8. The plan reinstated the city's promised contribution and reduces costs to property

owners to a total \$697,734.

The aforementioned lot, which was previously expected to pay \$30,619 will only have to shell out \$22,542 under the latest plan. The Port of Umatilla is the largest beneficiary of the latest adjustment; it stands to save \$91,185.

At the April 11 meeting, the Hermiston City Council approved the new plan.

After the vote, an email from a couple of property owners was read. It states satisfaction with the new plan and gratitude to the city for its work in developing the park.

David Drotzmann, Hermiston mayor, expressed his approval, too.

He said that this example showed how well the system works. When people speak, government listens and responds, he said.

Smith spearheads \$1.5 million for construction center

Hermiston Herald

The Hermiston School District received an investment from the Oregon Legislature in a local pre-apprenticeship construction center in Eastern Oregon, according to a press release from Greg Smith, Oregon Representative, District 57. This center is intended to support a wide range of trade

craft opportunities for students.

The \$1.5 million general fund capital construction appropriation during the 2022 Legislative Session will create a bridge between the current career technical education (CTE) offerings and BOLI certified pre-apprenticeship programs, according to the press release.

"Investing in CTE programs will make sure all students have a

pathway to a career or further education following their K-12 education," Tricia Mooney, Hermiston School District superintendent, said.

"Rep. Greg Smith has been a vocal advocate for these programs and we're thrilled to be able to add new opportunities for students," she added.

The press release goes on to

praise the Hermiston School District for being "a leader in innovating CTE programs for K-12 students" and states "the center will expand opportunities for students in western Umatilla County and Morrow County."

"Providing pre-apprenticeship training allows high school students to try out skills and trades to figure out what they like and then

find a tangible pipeline from their education directly into careers with family-wage salaries and opportunity for growth," Smith said.

Mooney will work with Smith to establish an advisory committee that will oversee the construction of the center, as well as an advisory committee that ensures the program meets the needs of the local and regional workforce.

Boardman corn grower wins national contest for 300 bushel yield

Hermiston Herald

The National Corn Growers Association named the winners of its annual Corn Yield Contest on March 23, with Eti Ena of Boardman placing first in his class and other area farmers recognized as well.

"This is quite an honor," Linda Lambur, contest manager, said.

There were 7,213 entries representing 47 states for the contest, which judged yields from 2021. It is the 58th year of the contest.

Lambur said Ena

received special distinction for having a yield of nearly 300 bushels per acre with his Pioneer P1185AM hybrid. Though this yield is less than the average of other national winners, over 376 bushels per acre, Ena's yield was much higher than the projected 2021 U.S. average of 177.

"(Ena) is over 100 bushels over the national average, which is very good for Oregon," Lambur said, also noting Oregon is "not a huge corn-growing state."

The NCGA press release that announced Ena's award

explained the purpose of the contest, quoting Lowell Neitzel, chair of NCGA's Member and Consumer Engagement Action Team.

"The National Corn Yield Contest provides a special

two-fold opportunity — contribute to the knowledge that will help corn farmers thrive in the future while enjoying good-natured competition and comradery with their peers today," Neitzel

stated in the press release. "At its core, NCGA shapes dynamic, change-driven farmers, from the grassroots activists speaking up on policy issues to the dedicated farmer leaders who lead our

organization."

The press release invites people to join the NCGA, which represents nearly 40,000 members, and take part in the 2022 contest. More information is at ncga.com.

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HIV isn't just a big city issue.

More than half of Oregonians with HIV live outside of Portland, often in suburbs and small towns like this one.

Good neighbors chip in to get the job done. And we've got work to do on HIV prevention. People in rural Oregon are more likely to get a late-stage diagnosis, and a lack of HIV treatment may harm your health, or your partner's. Detected early, HIV is more easily managed and you can live a long, healthy life. Getting tested is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Learn more and find free testing at endhivoregon.org

FREE EVENT

MORROW COUNTY SUICIDE AWARENESS WALK

Saturday, April 23 • 10am
Boardman Marina Park Shelter

We invite everyone to walk with us and show your support to those who have been affected by suicide or suicide ideation. Veteran or non-veteran, we welcome everyone!

Call to register for this free event and get a t-shirt on the day of the walk. Call 541-256-0400, leave your name & phone number. We only have a limited supply of t-shirts - please register early.

Sponsored by Morrow County Veteran Services, Oregon Dept. of Veteran Affairs, Community Counseling Solutions, Walla Walla VA Medical Center and other community partners