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Fun times at Hermiston Watermelon Festival. **A7**



The setting sun on Monday, Aug. 22, 2022, illuminates the new Hermiston City Hall in downtown Hermiston. The city anticipates opening the facility in October. Daniel Wattenburger/Contributed Photo

BY MARCO GRAMACHO
Hermiston Herald

Hermiston city councilors, staff and the public on Monday, Aug. 22, got a tour of the new city hall. Hermiston City Manager Byron Smith led the way through the building, which the city projects will open to the public in mid-October with an open-house before a city council meeting. Until then, city departments are operating out of the Hermiston Public Library basement, which was renovated for interim office space.

"The construction is 99% ready, with only a few details needed like putting glasses in doors," Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan said.

The total cost of the project is approaching \$8.7 million, including the Hermiston Public Library renovation, demolition of the old city hall, design and construction of the new city hall and movement of the municipal court out of the Public Safety Center.

"The complete construction of the new city hall is part of the goals of the Hermiston 2040 Community Vision in which the city responsibly plans and invests in community infrastructure and the built environment to support the critical needs of daily life and sustainable growth for the future," Morgan explained.

The city demolished the old building in March

2021, and the schedule of the construction of the new one didn't suffer much impact even with COVID-19 still being a challenge, he said.

Due to concerns about available staff space, maintenance costs and accessibility, the city council in 2014 directed city staff to begin reviewing options for a future home for city hall.

A heating, ventilating and air conditioning fire in December 2019 hastened the decision, and after gathering public input, the city council approved using funds from the Greater Hermiston Enterprise Zone to design and construct a more efficient and accessible city hall building on the same property.

See **City Hall / A10**

Umatilla County Fair Youth Livestock Auction sets record

Number of participants rises to 267; number of supporting businesses and individuals nears 300

BY MARCO GRAMACHO
Hermiston Herald

The Umatilla County Fair Youth Livestock Auction achieved a record in sales this year. Marie Linnell, who oversees the Youth Livestock Sale, said sales totaled more than \$1.15 million.

She explained one of the reasons for the greater success than the record of \$795,000 in 2021 is because of the higher number of youths participating. The 2021 sale had 219. This past fair, that jumped to 267.

"COVID-19 was still a big issue last year, besides the cancellation of the fair in 2020. We have achieved greater pre-COVID numbers again since the UCF Bump Program was started nearly 20 years ago," she said.



Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald, File
Sandy McKay, left, and Ellery Jones look at work that needs to be done Aug. 11, 2022, in livestock pens at the Umatilla County Fair, Hermiston. The Youth Livestock Auction on Aug. 13 set a record with sales exceeding \$1.1 million.

In addition to the prices received during the auction, many individuals and organizations choose to provide add-ons in one form or another. Donations of more than \$62,000 from 48 businesses and/or

individuals were pooled to "bump" the price/pound for youth exhibitors who leave the ring with a price that is below average.

This year the bump brought each species up to a record high

base price with lambs at \$14.69 per pound, hogs at \$12 a pound, goats at \$22.50 per pound, steers at \$4.58 a pound, turkeys to \$800 each and chickens to \$890 per pen.

"We greatly appreciate the 295 businesses and individuals who supported this year's event whether they purchased an animal, added on to an exhibitor and supported the bump program," Linnell said.

Youths selling steers were responsible for \$547,155.32. The sales of hogs represented \$429,100.23, lambs \$106,788.51, goats \$60,193.84, turkeys \$8,045, chickens \$2,250 and rabbits \$1,250. In all the sales totaled \$1,154,782.90.

Umatilla County Commissioner Dan Dorran who serves as the liaison between the county board of commissioners and the fair board, also celebrated the success of the auction with the rewarding of the youth exhibitors for their efforts by strong support from the business community, families and local supporters.

See **Auction / A10**

BUSINESS

Hermiston CrossFit gym moves to new but familiar location. **A8**

ELECTIONS

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