



# Linn County NEWS



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## Commissioners OK Knife River Enterprise Zone extension

ALBANY — John Pascone, president of the Albany-Millersburg Economic Development Corporation, asked the Linn County Board of Commissioners Tuesday morning to extend a three-year Enterprise Zone agreement with Knife River Training Center for an additional two years.

Knife River has already invested \$6 million into its new Training Center on Kennel Road east of Albany and plans to invest another \$2.6 million.

Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker unanimously approved. Their support will provide the company with tax relief for two more years, since the project will expand employment with jobs that pay at least 150% of Linn County's average annual wage.

The Training Center includes a 200-foot by 400-foot dome where employees from across the country can learn how to operate heavy equipment year-round, regardless of weather conditions.

Students can practice in a simulated town — learning to avoid overhead power lines etc. — as well as how to operate maritime equipment. Facilities include working on dirt, asphalt and concrete.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Were told by Dr. William Muth, Linn County Health Officer, that there were 63 births (32 girls and 31 boys) and 140 deaths in January. Of

those deaths, tobacco use could be a factor in about 19%, diabetes in about 13% and alcohol in about 6%.

- Reappointed Kathryn Henderson and Robin Wilson to the Linn County Mental Health Advisory Board.
- Talked about what should be done with a broken walk-in refrigeration system at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center. Manager Randy Porter suggested buying stand-alone commercial grade coolers instead of repairing the walk-in unit, which is 25 years old. Porter was directed to gather more information, determine if units are available and total costs.
- Approved hiring retired deputy Craig Lyman to work 30 hours per week providing Linn County Sheriff's Office services with contract cities. Approved accepting a COVID-19 rapid testing machine provided by the Oregon Health Authority.
- Approved a contract amendment with Barran Liebman for an Equal Pay Act analysis not to exceed \$150,000.
- Approved a change order with North Santiam Paving amounting to \$16,606 for the Mill City Downtown Revitalization Project and a completion date change for the Mill City Pedestrian Bridge Project.
- Gave General Services Manager Russ Williams permission to seek

bids to roof the Armory Building. Williams said the current roof is 26 years old and leaks.

- Approved accepting an \$11,000 grant from the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs by the Linn County Veterans Services Department. The funds will be used to pay transportation costs for local veterans who get treatment at the VA Hospital in Portland.
- Approved a Comprehensive Plan Map amendment and Zoning Map amendment for James Olsen's 67.19-acre property. The owner will be allowed to change his property zoning from Farm/Forest to Non-Resource and 5-acre minimum.
- Were asked by Josh Victor of Sweet Home to delay recording of the deed for the former Willamette Industries mill site in Sweet Home until he can complete a Phase I environmental study. Staff said the \$800,000 transaction is complete, but Victor would like the deed recording delayed until he can get an environmental insurance policy. The commissioners asked Victor to provide his request in writing and to work with County Administrative Officer Darrin Lane, County Attorney Gene Karandy and Property Manager Rachel Adamec.

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