

Several changes in local leadership

by Cindy Glasson

Shortly before 8 p.m. Tuesday night, unofficial election results were released from the Hot Springs County Clerk's office.

The results will put a few new faces in local offices come January, while we will see some familiar ones stay on board.

Wyoming will have a new Governor in January as Republican Mark Gordon won the race in something of a landslide.

A majority of the other state races came out pretty much as predicted. John Barrasso will continue in the US Senate, Liz Cheney

was elected US Representative and Edward Buchanan will serve as Secretary of State.

Locally, we will be represented in House District 28 by John R. Winter who will begin as the junior legislator at the first of the year.

Jack Baird will join Tom Ryan and Phil Scheel as the newest Hot Springs County Commissioner.

Jill Logan will be serving as the new Hot Springs County Attorney.

Jerimie Kraushaar won the sheriff's position in spite of 696 write in votes.

Mike Chimenti is our new Mayor for

Thermopolis.

Two incumbents retained their seats on the Thermopolis Town Council, John Dorman, Sr. and Tony Larson.

There will be two new faces on the Board of Trustees for Hot Springs County School District No.1, Rick Engelbrecht and Ronda Freel. They will be joined by incumbent Jennifer Axtell.

Following are the unofficial General Election results for Hot Springs County as

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photo by Dennis Nierzwicki

Observers

Kelly Wood, a ranger and educator from Yellowstone Rangers paid a visit to Ralph Witters Elementary on Friday to present valuable information regarding Yellowstone National Park to the fourth grade classes. Jonah Coleman, Hayden Johnson, Lane McMartin, Ayden Coleman-Weisz and Hayden Franklin take part in a segment using visual clues to get scientific information about some native animal skulls.

Council approves funding for downtown lights

by Mark Dykes

At their regular meeting Tuesday evening, the Thermopolis Town Council approved paying the utility costs for some new lights planned for the downtown area.

Forrest Coleman-Weisz, who has been working to eliminate 14th Street as a route around the town from GPS mapping systems, explained he and Thermopolis Main Street have discussed putting up string lights downtown, running from the black lampposts to the building and back to the posts. The lights, which will be clear and Edison-style, will not cross the streets.

Businesses have already pledged funds for the project, and now that traffic is being diverted from 14th Street the goal is to create more interest in the downtown. "We're one of the few cities in Wyoming where our Main Street is not our main street," Coleman-Weisz said. The first phase of the project would include the 500 block of Broadway.

Shurie Scheel with Main Street Thermopolis said the lights would be LED so utility costs would be minimal, and they would be on a timer to only come on when it gets dark.

Director of Public Works Ernie Slagle expressed concern about how the lights would be attached to the poles, as they

are spun aluminum and can break easily. The plan is to attach the lights to the poles and buildings with zip ties. Coleman-Weisz brought an example of the wires to demonstrate the weight of them, and Slagle appeared to approve.

Coleman-Weisz also provided a brief update on the work he's done in having GPS providers update their maps to not include 14th Street as a through route. He has gotten four of the five major providers to update, but is still working on Google Maps, with the response being that they will get to it when they do. He noted he will continue to work on the company until it gets done.

Coleman-Weisz said they would like to expand the lights further, though lighting the first block will be something of a "litmus test" to see how well it goes. Also during the meeting there was some brief discussion of possibly putting in more lights along Highway 20 on the south end of town, to better indicate to people that they are coming into a town.

In other action, the seventh pay estimate, \$432,476.32, was approved for the pipeline replacement project. Town Engineer Anthony Barnett said paving is complete, and punch list

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Student expelled

by Cindy Glasson

Hot Springs County School District's Board of Trustees held a special board meeting Nov. 1 to determine the course of action to be taken with a high school student.

Once the meeting was called to order, the board went into executive session from 5:01 p.m. until 7:03 p.m.

During the executive session, board members heard from administrators, parents and community members regarding the student and his past as well as future within the district.

At the end of the executive session, the board voted to expel the student for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school year.

However, because of the outstanding discipline record, remorse, honesty regarding the situation and the character of the student to own his actions, the superintendent recommended flexibility to the board.

The board created the following stipulations to allow the student to be reinstated at semester: The student must successfully complete the current semesters' work, off campus, which will be provided by the school, successful completion of probation period and requirements, successful completion of the requirements of his employer.

In addition, the student may not have any infractions, after returning, that the principal deems cause to follow through with expulsion, the student will work in conjunction with the principal and counselor to build a presentation that will be personally presented to his class, the student body, the wrestling team and seventh and eighth grade health classes.

The student will be allowed to participate in wrestling once re-enrolled in school, but will not be allowed to participate in any other extracurriculars, including senior skip day and prom.

If any of the items above are not met, the student will be immediately expelled.

Funding issues presented at commissioners meeting

by Cindy Glasson

The Hot Springs County Commissioners tackled a couple of items that are going to need addressed soon at their meeting on Tuesday morning.

County Assessor Dan Webber told the commissioners he would like to begin looking at a new county vehicle for the assessor's use soon as the 2006 Trailblazer they are currently using has been having a lot of issues.

Apparently, the engine light has been on for years but no mechanic has been able to figure out why. It began overheating on them this summer and a complete maintenance job was done on it, including flushing and refilling all the fluids, but the problem still remains.

At this point, sending an assessor out to a rural property to do an assessment makes him nervous, worrying the employee could be stuck in the middle of nowhere with no cell service and a broken down vehicle.

The commissioners gave Webber a contact to the governmental pool so he can start the process of looking for a new vehicle and suggested as well that he speak with Emergency Management Coordinator Bill Gordon about getting a radio in the vehicle in case of an emergency.

Judy Carswell will be retiring from the assessor's office at the end of the year and she has been the one taking care of the mapping for the county's website.

While she has begun some minimal training with another employ-

ee, Webber has been looking for a full replacement and discovered anyone qualified to hold the position is looking for a salary in the \$50,000+ range.

It would also be possible to contract someone at \$75 per hour if necessary.

Another possibility would be creating a shared position between the town and the county, a GIS Coordinator, who's responsibilities could be separated among the town and county entities such as road and bridge and the county planner. Combining resources could quite possibly make it feasible to hire a full time coordinator.

Dusty Spomer with TO Engineers spoke with the commissioners about the future of Black Mountain Road, questioning whether they want to apply for CRIP funding to refurbish 8.6 miles of road.

If they were to do the funding, it would require them to take on all future maintenance of the road, a long-term commitment they may not want to take on.

In reality, Spomer said the county doesn't have a really good chance of getting the \$5 million grant as there are a lot of projects out there and very little money being allotted. He pointed out 20 years of maintenance would probably well outweigh the initial funding.

Commissioner John Lumley said his concern is the boom and bust cycle

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