

WYDOT

from page 1

This crisis is particularly acute among snowplow drivers and mechanics, Wesby said. He described the physical and emotional toll on staff following the severe winter of 2022-23, recalling the exhaustion and fatigue he saw on the drivers' faces as he traveled across the state.

JAC co-Chairman Sen. Tim Salazar, R-Riverton, questioned why applications have dwindled. Westby said there are fewer people seeking public service jobs, noting that it is difficult to convince 21-year-olds of the long-term value of state benefits.

"I think the cost is significant financially, but it's also at a cost of losing good people that know that they can go to their county and probably not work as hard as we're requiring them to work, and that's why we use the Tri-ple R," Westby said.

WYDOT Deputy Director Taylor Rossetti provided further evidence of the pay gap, noting that entry-level maintenance employees and troopers

lag behind regional market rates by 12.3% and 27%, respectively.

Rossetti highlighted the "opportunity cost" of failing to raise wages, pointing out that training a single state trooper costs approximately \$96,000.

Tasers for state troopers

A significant portion of the meeting focused on \$7.4 million in exception requests for the Wyoming Highway Patrol, which are additional funds not initially included in Gov. Mark Gordon's proposed \$11.1 billion biennium budget.

The department is seeking \$300,000 for Tasers, a move intended to provide troopers with an alternative force.

"The Highway Patrol, culturally, has a great respect for the sanctity of life," WHP Administrator Tim Cameron said Monday, noting that without Tasers, troopers must often resort to physical force or impact weapons.

Lawmakers also discussed a \$506,000 request for new GPS mapping equipment accompanied by a recurring \$36,444 for IT services. WHP representatives testified that the current 15-year-old units are so obsolete that parts are no longer available. Rep. Ken Pendergraft, R-Sheridan, noted that during a recent major crash inside a tunnel near Rock Springs, the existing equipment failed to operate.

"This equipment should help us get to that technological level that we need to be to be more efficient," Westby said.

Further equipment requests included ballistic helmets and face shields for \$186,801 and vehicle radar systems for \$360,000.

When Rep. John Bear, R-Gillette, questioned the need for a Special Response Team, Cameron defended the unit, saying they provide essential security for the Capitol and the governor.

"The majority of troopers that you'll see when the ses-

sion opens are SRT members," Cameron said.

Airport funding

WYDOT Aeronautics Administrator Shawn Burke addressed the \$18.4 million request for the Capacity Purchase Agreement, which provides a financial backstop for commercial air service in five Wyoming communities. Burke noted that pilot costs for regional carriers have almost doubled since 2019, making the state support vital to maintaining flight schedules. While Gillette is expected to exit the program this year, the rising air travel rates mean the overall funding requirement remains high.

On the infrastructure side, Westby said that the agency's "preservation-only mode" over the last two decades has made it difficult to attract new engineers.

"A mill and overlay is not nearly as impressive to design as a new road alignment," Westby explained, suggesting that

the "non-sexy" nature of maintenance work makes the agency less competitive than the private sector. He expressed a desire to get more significant projects planned to be ready for future funding.

License plates

The meeting touched on several other issues, including the upcoming redesign of Wyoming license plates and the necessity of front license plates.

While some owners of high-end cars dislike drilling holes into their vehicles, Highway Patrol officials were adamant about their utility.

"It is a tremendous benefit for us to be able to see that front license plate for ... immediate identification of the vehicle that's coming at you," Cameron said.

As the meeting concluded, the JAC requested further data on state aircraft costs and specific salary breakdowns before making final budget recommendations.

T&T

from page 1

er to get that project rolling.

Guyon presented the board with several additional marketing opportunities that were discussed.

Guyon advised the board that 30-40 photos have so far been submitted for the organization's photo contest in 2025. The cost of the project was \$1,450

in 2025, which the board desired to reduce for 2026, by decreasing the dollar amounts of awards for the contest winners. Guyon was asked to look at any

necessary revisions to the contest rules for next year.

The board will next meet on January 20 at 1 p.m., at the state park office.

Laws

from page 1

by approximately \$6.7 million per year for the state starting in fiscal year 2027, according to the bill's fiscal note.

Complementing this relief is SF 49, which changes the way tangible personal property is valued and depreciated for tax purposes.

The law establishes a "depreciation floor" set at 20% of the reported installed cost of the property. Once the property reaches this 20% floor, its trending factor remains constant until it is removed from service.

This cap ensures that businesses do not continue to pay taxes on property that has largely lost its market value, leading to an estimated \$33.6 million reduction in total

property taxes annually for FY 2027 and FY 2028.

Tax on carbon capture

SF 61 amends the Wyoming Environmental Quality Act to refine the pollution control property tax exemption.

The new law specifies that facilities constructed for the sole purpose of capturing nonpoint source carbon dioxide do not qualify for the ad valorem property tax exemption.

Historically, exemptions have applied to property used primarily for the prevention or control of air, water or land pollution. This revision makes it so that carbon dioxide capture facilities are excluded from that

specific benefit unless they meet other statutory requirements.

License and ID requirements

HB 30 brings several revisions to driver's licenses and state IDs. Notably, it changes the expiration rules for drivers under the age of 21.

Instead of expiring on the licensee's 21st birthday, these licenses will now expire five years after issuance, bringing them in line with standard adult licenses. The act also lowers the fee for a replacement license to \$20, down from \$30, to encourage residents to update lost or destroyed cards rather than waiting for a full renewal.

Additionally, all state

identification cards that are not driver's licenses will now be required to read "FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES ONLY."

SF 33 introduces a new marking for noncitizen identification. Any driver's license or ID card issued to a person who is not a U.S. citizen but has lawful alien status must now explicitly state "Not U.S. citizen" on the card.

Two new Wyoming license plates

For those looking to customize their vehicles, the Wyoming Department of Transportation has started to

make search-and-rescue account license plates and rodeo license plates

available to the public.

The rodeo plate has a \$30 specialty fee, and drivers can opt to donate an additional \$20 or more to support rodeo programs at the University of Wyoming and community colleges throughout the state.

WYDOT is distributing only 2,300 pairs of rodeo plates, with 100 sets allocated to each county. The initial distribution to counties was selected randomly.

The search and rescue plate costs \$150 for the SAR fund, plus a \$30 WYDOT specialty fee.

Both plates are approved for non-commercial motor vehicles, meaning motorcycle and off-road vehicle sized plates will be available

for each design.

Anthrax outbreak protocols

HB 90 requires the Wyoming Livestock Board to establish a standard notification protocol for anthrax outbreaks following an outbreak in parts of the state that occurred for the first time since the 1970s.

This protocol is designed to quickly inform livestock producers, veterinarians, brand inspectors and relevant agencies when a positive anthrax test is recorded.

By formalizing this communication, the state aims to mitigate the spread of the disease and protect both animal health and those in the ranching community.

Public notices

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Croell Inc. has requested approval for a Gravel Pit Permit on a parcel of land owned by Brown Trust. The parcel is located on the NWNW Section 7 & SSW Section 6, Township 43 North, Range 96 West, and is part of a non-contiguous parcel more commonly known as 1293 Owl Creek Rd.

A public hearing on this matter will be held before the Hot Springs County Land Use Planning Commission at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 21, 2026 in the Commissioners' meeting room of the County Annex Building located at 117 North 4th Street, Thermopolis, WY. Anyone requiring additional information should call the County Planning Office at 864-2961. Those unable to attend are invited to comment in writing to: County Planning Office, 415 Arapahoe St., Thermopolis, WY 82443, or by e-mail at planner@hscounty.net.

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No. 2007

enne, or online at <https://dms.wyo.gov/external/publicusers.aspx> (Enter Record No. 18019).

6. Anyone desiring to file a public comment, statement, intervention petition, protest or request for a public hearing in this matter must file with the Commission in writing on or before January 16, 2026. Petitions shall set forth the grounds of the proposed intervention or request for hearing as well as the position and the interest of the petitioner in this proceeding. Please mention Docket No. 20000-697-EA-25 in your communications.

7. If you wish to intervene in this matter and you require reasonable accommodation for a disability, please contact the Commission at (307) 777-7427, or write to the Commission at 2515 Warren Avenue, Suite 300, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002. Communications impaired persons may contact the Commission by accessing Wyoming Relay at 711.

Dated: December 18, 2025.

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No. 2002

Public Notice HIGH PLAINS POWER DIRECTOR NOMINATIONS

The Board of Directors of High Plains Power, Inc. has selected a nominating committee. The committee will place in nomination prospective members desiring to run for election at the annual meeting to be held on March 21, 2026, at 10:00AM at the Fremont Center Building in Riverton, Wyoming.

The members of the nominating committee and their represented districts are as follows:

District 1 – Rebecca Gullion Jeffrey

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No. 2008

City, WY

District 2 – Frederick Tammany

Lander, WY

District 3 – Patrick Poppe Dubois, WY

District 4 – John Sharp Crowheart,

WY

District 5 – Bruce Westlake Kin-

near, WY

District 6 – Justin Crimm Riverton,

WY

District 7 – Josh Longwell Thermo-

polis, WY

District 8 – Dale Link Worland, WY

District 9 – Karen Heath Medicine

Bow, WY

The Director Districts holding elec-

tions are as follows:

District 4 – Crowheart Areas

District 5 – Kinnear, Pavilion, Ethete

Areas

District 6 – Riverton, Midvale Areas

Any member residing in these districts interested in serving on the High Plains Power Board should contact a member of the nominating committee. The committee will meet on January 30, 2026, at 10:00AM.

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No. 2008

Union Wireless is proposing to con-

struct a 85 ft. Lattice telecommunications tower facility located near Carter

Ranch Rd, 0.84 mi southeast of the in-

tersection at Shoshoni St. and S 8th St

in Thermopolis, Hot Springs County,

Wyoming 82443. Any interested party

wishing to submit comments regarding

the potential effects the proposed fa-

cility may have on any historic proper-

ty may do so by sending comments to:

Project 250057383PR, EBI Consulting,

21 B Street, Burlington, MA 01803, or

at (617) 715-1822.

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