

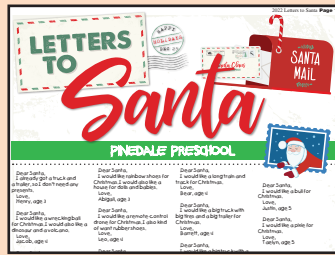
LOCAL
**Holiday
cheer**

See **A3**



LOCAL
**Letters
to Santa**

See **C1-C6**



Pinedale Roundup

Newspaper of the Upper Green River Valley, Est. 1904

DECEMBER 23, 2022

One Dollar

Ugly Sweaters on Ice



Joy UFFORD PHOTO

The Pinedale Glacier Hockey Club girls dress up as Santa's elves for their Ugly Christmas Sweater Skate Party on Dec. 20 at the Sublette County Arena. The event brought 100 people with food donations for the Community Bak Pak program – and with some amazing sweaters.

Seated, from left, are Marie Noble, Maci Holland and Kandis Johnston. Standing, left to right, are Reese Noble, Sydney Jensen, Seren Noble, Amelia Gaffney, Molly Murphy and Erica Seehafer.

See more pictures on page A4.

Merger a reality

Hospital District awarded \$10-million ARPA grant

By Robert Galbreath
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MARBLETON – Years in the making, the merger between the Sublette County Hospital District (SCHD) and the Sublette Center became a reality on a frigid winter night in Marbleton.

At 6:45 p.m. on Dec. 21, SCHD trustees voted unanimously on a motion to approve and “execute” the membership substitution agreement with the Sublette Center, officially kick-starting the merger process.

SCHD trustee Kenda Tanner made the motion and trustee Jamison Ziegler offered the second.

Attorneys for both the SCHD and Sublette Center proposed the membership substitution agreement this summer as a phased approach to the merger. Under this agreement, SCHD trustees will replace the Sublette Center board of directors one at a time, permitting the Sublette Center to retain a degree of control in the leadup to the final step in the merger – a full transfer of assets.

Members of the Sublette Center board of directors announced the impending signing of the merger at the Sublette County Board of Commissioners’ meeting on Dec. 20.

Sublette Center board chairwoman Patty Racich traveled with board members Kerry Majhanovich and Marilyn Jensen to Marbleton on Dec. 21 to

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Affordable housing returning to Town Council agenda in New Year

By Robert Galbreath
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PINEDALE – The Pinedale Town Council will discuss affordable housing options at its Jan. 9 meeting, Mayor Matt Murdock said at the council’s December meeting.

The council tasked the mayor with forming a work group back in January to discuss different ideas for creating affordable housing in Pinedale. The work group consists of the mayor, community leaders from churches and nonprofits like Bridges Out of Poverty and the Pinedale Food Basket, realtors and engineers, Murdock told the Roundup.

Rev. Melinda Bobo, rector at St. Andrew’s in the Pines Episcopal Church, and a member of the affordable housing work group, spoke before the council on Dec. 12.

St. Andrew’s plays a role in providing mortgage and rental assistance to people in the community struggling to find a roof over their head as housing prices “explode,” Bobo said.

Bobo is also chairwoman of the Sublette Prevention Coalition, and explained that housing instability and a lack of housing are significant “risk factors” in compounding issues like alcohol and substance abuse and can negatively affect people’s mental health.

“We definitely need to move forward on affordable housing,” Bobo said. “This is critical to people’s lives, especially during the

cold winter months.”

The work group studied examples of affordable housing in other communities around the state, Bobo added. A variety of options exist, from for-profit developments to housing operated by a nonprofit.

Bobo encouraged a nonprofit approach. Removing the “pressure to make a profit” could better allow people to acquire housing, build equity and “help people climb the housing ladder,” Bobo said.

Included among the many options for affordable housing was a land-trust concept, said Murdock. In this situation, a local nonprofit, rather than the Town of Pinedale, would own and manage the land under a trust. The idea “worked well” in several communities in Wyoming, Murdock added.

The work group also explored different funding possibilities and sources from local, state and federal agencies, Murdock said.

Murdock emphasized the desire to host at least one public meeting in January to address affordable housing.

“This is something we need to be proactive about,” he told councilmembers.

Councilman Tyler Swafford agreed, stating that affordable housing was “on people’s radar.” He discussed Rep. Albert Sommers’ presentation to the Town Council in November when affordable housing was

See ‘HOUSING’ on page A4



APRIL JERUP PHOTO

Hoback Basin’s younger generation loudly sings Christmas carols to try and bring Santa and Mrs. Claus to the Bondurant Christmas Party at St. Hubert’s Episcopal Church on Dec. 11. See more holiday photos on page A3.

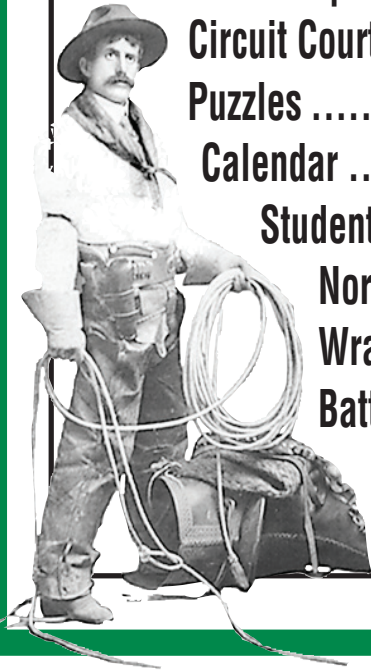


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THE ROUNDUP, ROUNDED UP

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JOAN MITCHELL PHOTO

Sublette County Hospital District Board of Trustees Chairwoman Tonia Hoffman, in front, center, and Sublette Center Board of Directors Chairwoman Patty Racich, in front, right, sign documents to officially begin the merger process on Dec. 21. Also pictured in front is SCHD trustee Kenda Tanner. Pictured in back, from left, are SCHD trustee Jamison Ziegler, Sublette Center board member Kerry Majhanovich, Sublette Center board member Marilyn Jensen, SCHD trustee Dave Bell and SCHD administrator Dave Doorn.

MERGER

Continued from 1A

attend the SCHD board meeting. Racich and SCHD board chairwoman Tonia Hoffman formally signed the document following a brief executive session for SCHD trustees and their attorneys to review the final draft.

Hoffman thanked SCHD and Sublette Center staff, administrators, board members and attorneys for the “monumental” work they put in to bring months of negotiations to fruition.

“We are on our way with the merger,” Hoffman said. “It feels good to say that. It has been a lengthy process.”

SCHD administrator Dave Doorn called the Dec. 21 signing a “good night.”

“This is good for both organizations and is a long time coming,” he added.

SLIB grants \$10 million award

SCHD administrators received the much-anticipated announcement that the Wyoming State Loan and Investment Board (SLIB) had awarded it a \$10-million grant on Thursday, Dec. 15.

The grant consists of federal funds that are available for health-care infrastructure projects through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and administered by the SLIB Board.

Kari DeWitt, SCHD public relations director and grant writer and newly hired Sublette County Health executive director, called the SLIB Board’s decision a “game changer for our community” after receiving the news on Thursday.

SCHD Board Chairwoman Tonia Hoffman said she was “thrilled and humbled” by the SLIB Board’s approval of a “notable grant” for the district.

“This is a testament to the power of the cumulative efforts of so many, and I am overwhelmed with gratitude to all who have supported and helped us get to this point,” Hoffman told the Roundup. “We have been entrusted with a gift that carries a significance beyond the evident monetary value.”

The \$10-million grant will be used

“directly for the construction of the new critical access hospital,” Hoffman added.

The funds will offset “some of the significant increases in both building materials and labor” that were not anticipated when the process to build the hospital began several years ago, Hoffman said.

“The (ARPA funds) will provide some stability in the budgeting process as we begin to really target final anticipated costs,” Hoffman remarked.

Hoffman highlighted several individuals who were “instrumental” in helping the SCHD achieve its goal.

“Rep. Albert Sommers and Senate President Dan Dockstader tirelessly worked to get us into the lenses of those who needed to hear our story,” Hoffman said. “I would also like to thank Gov. Mark Gordon for his gracious willingness to hear our voices repeatedly for several years, and to Kari DeWitt, who worked so hard to get our application ready for submission.”

SCHD board treasurer and secretary Kenda Tanner stated that the \$10-million award is a “huge step in the right direction” to “help cover the increase in construction costs of the project” caused by inflation.

“The decision also shows the state’s recognition and support of the need for a hospital in Sublette County,” Tanner added. “Once again, this was a truly wonderful collaboration of efforts from the Sublette County Health administration and board members, the Sublette County Board of Commissioners, Star Valley Health (the SCHD’s management partner) as well as Albert Sommers and other local lawmakers.”

“This grant is a significant stepping stone to the successful completion of the hospital,” said trustee Ashli Tatro. “I am very appreciative of everyone who had a hand in obtaining this grant. Their hard work and commitment to healthcare in our county is commendable.”



Weekly Weather Forecast

Pinedale, Wyoming • Dec. 23 - Dec. 28

Today

Sunrise: 7:48 a.m. **Sunset:** 4:49 p.m.

High: **26°** Low: **17°**

RealFeel® 20° 10°

Day: Mostly cloudy and not as cold.

Night: Cloudy with a bit of snow.

Saturday	High: 39°	
Times of clouds and sun.	Low: 19°	
Sunday	High: 37°	
Mostly cloudy.	Low: 15°	
Monday	High: 38°	
Mostly cloudy.	Low: 9°	
Tuesday	High: 38°	
A little afternoon snow.	Low: 20°	
Wednesday	High: 40°	
A little icy mix.	Low: 13°	

Washakie County Planner Position Available

Full time Planner for Washakie County. Person responsible for administration of the planning department. Job description and benefits at www.washakiecounty.net. Salary dependent on qualifications and experience. Email application to clerk@washakiecounty.net. Open until filled.