

SUBLETTE EXAMINER

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‘No intent of ever losing the Marbleton Clinic’ SCHD board reiterates plans amid hypotheticals, rumors

By Brady Oltmans, holtmans@subletteexaminer.com

SUBLETTE COUNTY – Sublette County Hospital District Chairwoman Tonia Hoffman reiterated, in no uncertain terms, the hospital district’s intent.

Hoffman addressed the Sublette County Board of Commissioners, members of the public, Dawn Walker of the Sublette Center and Janna Lee of Sublette County Public

Health—all gathered at Marbleton Town Hall for the commissioners’ March 15 meeting. Through transfer agreement talks, which are meant to safeguard conditions in the event of worst-case scenarios and hypotheticals, the Sublette County rumor mill churned.

So, with everyone in attendance, Hoffman said it plainly.

“We have no intent of misplacing Public Health, we have no intent of ever losing the Marbleton Clinic,” she said. “I see that as something to put finances into growing and making it stronger down the road. We’ve never had a conversation about what to do with the Marbleton Clinic, we just want to improve it.”

Hospital District administrator Dave Doorn said the district is, in fact, working with the state to meet requirements (as they will be applied in 2025) to provide emergency room services in the day and clinic services.

Commissioner Doug Vickrey brought See **SCHD**, page 5

From winter into spring

*Winter parking, Arbor Day
on Big Piney agenda*

By Joy Ufford,
jufford@subletteexaminer.com

BIG PINEY – Enforcement of the town’s winter-parking ordinance, to help town staff clear the streets of snow and ice, was the “new business” topic at the Big Piney Town Council’s March 15 meeting.

Parking is limited or not allowed on main streets and when people park vehicles on the street after snowfall, they might get blocked in – or get ticketed with a warning.

“We can warn them and that’s it,” Greg Eiden said. “We have to plow around them. Do we need to nominate someone to take care of it?”

Sometimes people ignore warnings and leave vehicles and trailers parked where they are, he said. The town doesn’t have an authority such as a town marshal to write the actual citations and impose fines.

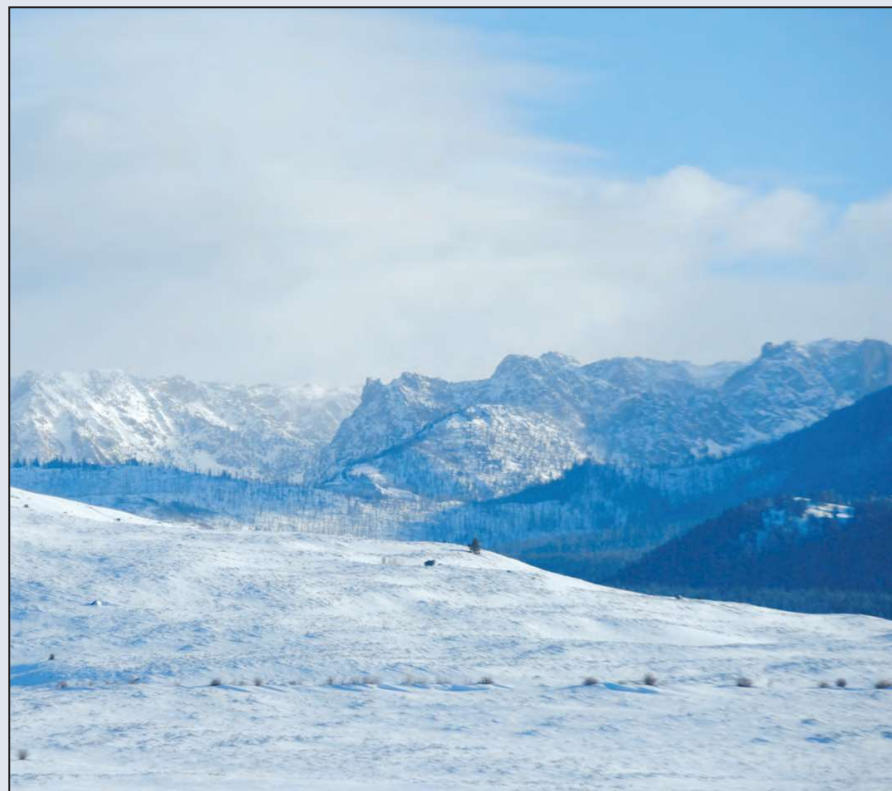
Sheriff KC Lehr said violators “have to be notified of the violation for the ordinance to be enforced or cited.”

Once personal notice is given to the person illegally parked, a deputy can write the citation, according to the sheriff. That personal notice can come from any town employee, he said in answer to councilmember Tawnya Miller’s question.

In other business, recreation manager Eddy Delgado updated Mayor Pro Tem Stafford Polk IV, Miller and councilmembers Sierra Banks and Sherri Redden about the rec center’s new tanning bed and Three Thistle’s

See **Council**, page 2

Fingers crossed for a timely melt



BRADY OLTMANS PHOTO

Warmer temperatures have come to Sublette County with the arrival of spring. A few snow systems may still be in store for us but the days of prolonged freezing seem to be over. In the Wyoming Range, however, there’s still plenty of snow waiting to melt. Local ranchers will be eager for some of the precipitation to combat existing drought conditions. A story on runoff in western Wyoming can be found inside on Page 9.

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Pediatric Clinic
OF SWEETWATER MEMORIAL

Commissioners review county audit

By Brady Oltmans, boftmans@subletteexaminer.com

MARBLETON – Paul Stille of Riley & Co. presented the Sublette County Board of Commissioners with a copy of the county’s audit from the last fiscal year during the March 15 meeting at Marbleton Town Hall. He went over the basics of the 57-page report, showing commissioners where each component of money was spent.

Stille went through federal funds the county received and where they were spent. He reiterated to commissioners that some of the federal funds the county has received but has not spent yet were listed as liabilities because those funds go back to the federal government if they are not used.

The audit concluded the net costs to Sublette County taxpayers for the primary government amounted to \$38 million. Stille underlined the unrestricted investment earnings, which were a little less than reported because of a timing difference, he said.

According to the audit there was a decline of nearly \$8 million in county net assets. Also, property taxes and sales taxes dropped about \$12 million in a year. So net revenues

declined significantly while expenditures stayed essentially the same during the last fiscal year.

Bousman said that made sense; as the price of natural gas went down so did the county’s property taxes.

Mapping

Rich Greenwood of Greenwood Mapping asked commissioners if they were interested investing in new aerial photographs, which would be used by the county planning & zoning and treasurer departments.

Greenwood said the last large-scale batch of photos was taken in 2018. So, based upon the historical frequency of photographing the county, it’s about time to do that again.

He said that because the state requires oblique photography, the state would cover expenditures for this biennium, although Sublette County may not receive its money until the next fiscal year.

Bousman suggested getting an idea on pricing for infrared photography, so Greenwood Mapping could show water sources and drought conditions. Bousman said he

hoped to consult the BLM and U.S. Forest Service on the project and ask if either of them would be willing to pitch in, as knowing water conditions could help with wildfire mitigation.

Bousman also suggested consulting the U.S. Department of Agriculture because infrared photographs would also gauge drought conditions.

They agreed to get pricing options, consult other agencies and meet again next month.

Other items:

- The board, which was absent commissioner Sam White due to a work emergency, agreed to expand spacing for a proposed migration underpass. Road & Bridge supervisor Billy Pape said he didn’t anticipate that being an issue.

- Present commissioners also signed a deal agreeing to split costs on a chip-seal project with the Town of Pinedale. Costs would also be shared with a local homeowners’ association, which would reimburse the county.

- Commissioners will join Upper Green River Cemetery board members in talks with the Bureau of Land Management to purchase land expanding the Pinedale Cemetery. Board members originally asked for 140 acres, which commissioners suggested they condense to as little as 20 acres.

- Tegeler Insurance’s Mark Pape went over county insurance renewals, which covered everything but health insurance. He went over numbers and suggested it was time to take advantage of a Travelers’ Insurance policy at its current pricing. The present commissioners voted to do so.

- County administrator Matt Gaffney discussed federal funding options. Commissioner Tom Noble said he’d like to see department heads get together to make a list of wants and needs. Gaffney said he didn’t have new info on the infrastructure bill that passed late last year as the Department of Treasury is still working on wordings, but Gaffney remained confident there should be plenty of money the county could use for various purposes.

Rep. Sommers announces re-election campaign

Hello Sublette County and LaBarge, this is Albert Sommers announcing my intent to run for re-election to House District 20. For the last 10 years, I have proudly served the citizens of Sublette County and HD 20 in the Wyoming House of Representatives. This is the last time I will ask the citizens of Sublette County to support my re-election to the Wyoming House of Representatives, and the first time I will ask the good folks in LaBarge to vote for me. During the once-a-decade redistricting process this year, I worked hard to ensure that the redistricting plan approved by the Legislature had all of Sublette County and

LaBarge linked together in the new HD 20.

During my time in the Legislature, I have steadfastly supported K-12 education, worked to balance the budget, supported the industries/businesses of Sublette County and sought ways to diversify our economy. If re-elected as your representative, I will continue to examine issues you bring to me and try to direct pertinent issues to the appropriate committee, or draft a bill in response. I have had the good fortune to be able to help local government and county citizens navigate the bureaucracies of state agencies on numerous occasions, and hope to continue that work.

By bringing common sense, hard work and integrity to the state legislature, I have gained the respect of my colleagues and had the privilege of being elected to legislative leadership as majority whip, speaker pro tempore and, this last term, as majority floor leader. If elected to a sixth term in the House, I will likely run for speaker of the House. All representatives work to represent their constituents, but these leadership positions allow me to better garner support for issues of importance to Sublette County, LaBarge and Wyoming.

Issues facing HD 20 and Wyoming will

change over time and if elected I will continue to seek and articulate solutions to these challenges. I believe politicians at all levels need to maintain civility and work together to find solutions to the issues facing government and the people. I see the best government as that closest to the people. I will continue to look for guidance from the leaders and elected bodies of Sublette County and LaBarge, and value the opinions of all HD 20 citizens. I look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve each of you as your representative and ask for your vote in the Aug. 16 primary election.

Council *Continued from page 1*

infrared sauna installed recently. Their use will be a separate monthly membership from the rec center itself.

Delgado reported not many vendors have signed up for the Spring Fair on April 2, noting that most are probably unaware that the Spring Fling is not taking place this year at the Sublette County Fairgrounds. That usually happens during the Wyoming High School Rodeo’s competitions starting April 22.

Donkey basketball will entertain people at the rec center on April 6, with Student Council taking on Big Piney school staff. Also, Friends of the Big Piney Rec Center and the Big Piney Library plan an Easter Breakfast and Easter Basket Silent Auction there beginning at 9 a.m. on Saturday, April 16.

Besides the winter parking problem, Eiden said he’d dealt with a few stray cats and skunks.

Water-sewer manager Mike Wagstaff reported that the town is still producing more water than is being piped to the Marbleton wastewater facility. In the previous month, the town pumped 6.036 million gallons and sent 3.207 million to Marbleton, and town meters showed 2.75 million gallons were sold.

“That’s our water loss situation right now,” Wagstaff said. “This has been ongoing since before 2015. So this isn’t a new problem; it’s just new to me.”

The council discussed possible leak. Wagstaff said with water pressure of 38 gallons a

minute a small discrepancy of 2 or 3 percent in a lot of small leaks could add up quickly.

“Ten leaks at 2 gallons a minute could really add up.”

Polk asked if the well meters have been calibrated. Wagstaff said that will be done between the wells and meters. Also, some customers still pay an extra \$11 a month instead of repairing their water problems, he said.

Parks-streets manager Kara Losik reported that Big Piney students will again participate in the April 22 Arbor Day celebration by planting trees, probably at the Big Piney Rec Center.

The town’s street-sweeping contractor is planning to come in early May and just before July Fourth and Chuckwagon Days,








she said. Marbleton public works supervisor Todd Brown, who attended the meeting, said they would work together to save transportation expenses.

She also reported that a very well-known local artist presented a “perfect” painting to wrap the Farm Bureau building and Losik is waiting on quotes.

Big Piney received a \$2,500 grant and will make a 10-percent match; Pinedale Fine Arts Council donated another \$2,000 for the project.

Councilmembers said they would like to see the concept before it is approved; Losik said the artist and “building wrap” business are both very local and she hoped to have the quotes soon.

Weather for Sublette County, WY Mar. 22 - Mar. 28

Today	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
 42° 19°	 48° 26°	 48° 24°	 46° 26°	 51° 31°	 57° 33°	 48° 27°
Precip: 1% Wind: WNW 8 mph UV Index: 5 Moderate						

Growing brassicaes in Sublette County

By the Sage and Snow Garden Club

Sublette County has the perfect climate for growing plants in the Brassica family for their leaves, heads or roots. Brassicae flourish with our sunny days and cool nights. Although most will grow in partial sun, they grow best in full sun in our cool climate. Members of the Brassica family are familiar vegetables, such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens, kale, kohlrabi, mustard greens (which includes many Asian greens), pac choy, radishes, rutabagas and turnips.

Seedlings

Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and cauliflower are best grown from seedlings, which can be started indoors, or purchased from a nursery. The best time to start seeds indoors for these plants is early April. Germination is improved if the seeds get a bit of extra heat from a heat mat or a warm location in the house.

However, once the seeds have germinated, it is important to remove the extra heat source and grow the plants in a cool location, about 60 to 65 degrees. As soon as germination occurs, plants must be moved to a good light source or they become leggy quickly. Grow lights are placed about 2 to 3 inches from the tops of plants. These plants need about 14 hours of light per day, as well as about 10 hours of darkness per day, and they prefer a cooler nighttime temperature (about 55 to 60 degrees).

Seedlings must be hardened off before planting outdoors to avoid shock to the plants. To harden off seedlings, place plants outdoors in a shady location for about an hour a day, gradually increasing exposure to the sun over a week. The most harmful enemy to a young transplant is exposure to the wind. After planting outdoors, protect young transplants from wind by adding a cloche, upside down milk jug or other protection, gradually exposing the plants to wind as they grow and mature.

Cabbage transplants can be sown outdoors from mid-May to early June.

Broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cauliflower can be sown outdoors from early June to mid-June. Young transplants are susceptible to frost and must be protected if nighttime temperatures go below freezing.

Seed choices

The best seeds to grow for broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and cauliflower are "short season" varieties. DeCicco, Packman, Premium and Green Magic are good choices for growing broccoli. These species produce a main head which is harvested first (about mid-July) and continue to produce side shoots until mid-October. Good seed choices for Brussels sprouts are Churchill and Jade Cross. Brussels sprouts



JOY UFFORD PHOTO

Celebrating Springtime in Sublette County means gardeners might have to wait a bit longer.

are best harvested after frosts in late summer and early fall. Cauliflower varieties that mature in midsummer are Snow Ball and Snow Crown. When a cauliflower head first appears in the bottom of the plant, the leaves must be clipped together (blanching) to avoid sunburn to the head.

Good cabbage varieties for our climate are Red Express (a red cabbage that stores well), Early Jersey Wakefield, Tiara and Copenhagen (green cabbages). Napa cabbages and Savoy cabbages grow well and mature earlier than the red and green cabbages. However, they are very susceptible to brown rot if watering is inconsistent or inadequate.

Kale is another member of the brassica family, and it is easy to grow from seed planted outdoors in late May or early June. Popular varieties are Vates (with curly leaves), Russian (with smooth leaves) and Toscano or Lacinato, also called dinosaur kale.

Collard greens, mustard greens, and Asian greens are easy to grow and have about the same growing conditions as kale. Tokyo Bekana, Tatsoi, Mizuna and Osaka Purple are popular Asian greens.

Root crops

Root crops that are members of the Brassica family are kohlrabi, radishes, rutabagas and turnips. These seeds can be planted directly outdoors in late May or early June and have plenty of time to mature in our short growing season.

The traditional purple globe turnips, as well as the Japanese turnips (Hakurei), grow quickly and are best harvested before they get too large for good flavor and texture. Rutabagas mature later than turnips and are a great root crop for fall harvest.

Radishes must be harvested when the roots are about an inch or less in diameter. Cherry Belle radish is the last to mature in our climate and provides a delightful root crop after the turnips have been harvested.

Both white and purple kohlrabi grow well here. Kohlrabi is the last to mature in our climate and provides a delightful root crop after the turnips have been harvested.

Protect plants

All the members of the Brassica family require protection from gophers, rabbits, moose, deer and antelope. These plants can also be susceptible to insect pests, particularly the larvae (green worms) from the white cabbage butterfly. Netting can be placed over the plants when they are planted and tightly secured to prevent the cabbage butterfly from laying eggs on the leaves. If green worms appear on the leaves, they can be handpicked and destroyed or an organic spray can be applied to the worms, *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt). Good companion plants to deter insect pests are peppermint, garlic, nasturtiums, rosemary and sage.

Containers

All of the above-mentioned plants can be grown in containers. An excellent container

for growing the larger plants are lick tubs from local ranchers. The Sage and Snow Garden Club collects these tubs in the spring and they are available for pickup at 217 South Lincoln in Pinedale.

Planting more than one large plant in a container may inhibit the growth of the plants.

Brassicae require consistent water and nutrition. For inground garden beds or containers, a good combination of fertilizers at planting time are alfalfa pellets, fish and kelp meals and mature compost (manure and/or plant-based). Worm castings help plants develop a strong immune system and encourage microbial growth in the soil. However, all fertilizers and soil amendments must be used sparingly and according to package direction.

Brassicae also appreciate an application of midseason nutrition, such as worm castings tea, diluted liquid fish and kelp oils, and/or manure or compost tea.

Sage and Snow

All questions are good questions, and the members of the Sage and Snow Garden Club are happy to answer them. Questions can be directed to Arlinda McLaughlin at 307-231-9402, through the Sage and Snow Garden Club website or social media sites. Questions on the website will be forwarded to members for a quick response.

Our local Sage and Snow Garden Club is a fun way to get gardening information, meet local gardeners and help make our community beautiful. The next Sage and Snow gathering will be on Tuesday, April 19, for a showing of the film at the Pinedale Library, *Kiss the Ground*, which features ways to capture carbon with regenerative agricultural practices. Then, on Thursday, April 21, there will be a swap of gardening tools, seeds, artificial flowers and other gardening knickknacks at 5:00 p.m. at the Pinedale Library. At 6:30, Arlinda McLaughlin will give a presentation on "Easy Flowers and Vegetables to Grow in Sublette County," also at the Pinedale Library. These events are free and open to the public.

Wyoming Property Management has private office suites available for lease in The Summit Building.

If interested please call Julia at 307-224-2516 or email at jspence@wyomingpropertymanagement.com

The opinions expressed on the editorial pages are not necessarily those of the *Sublette Examiner*. Letters will be run and edited at the discretion of the *Sublette Examiner*. Letters to the editor should be limited to 350 words, be signed, state the town/city you live in and include a phone number for verification. Letters are due Fridays by noon. No thank yous.

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"To sin by silence, when one should protest, makes cowards out of men."
—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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CALENDAR

Upcoming Events

To submit a calendar item, contact Joy Ufford at jufford@subletteexaminer.com or 307-367-3203.

Tuesday, March 22

K-2 After-School Program, 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Big Piney Library at Big Piney Rec Center.

Mystery Print Gallery hosts Georgia Roswell's "Layer, Fold, Unfold: Stories of Wyoming through Fabric," through April 30, open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 1-6 p.m. at 221 S. Sublette.

Wednesday, March 23

Aquila Theatre: The Great Gatsby, brought by the Pinedale Fine Arts Council, 7 p.m. at the Sheppard Auditorium. Tickets at www.pinedalefinearts.com.

Food Bank of Wyoming mobile pantry will be at Marbleton's Encana Picnic Shelter, 1-3 p.m., first come, first served. No qualifications. For more, call Kay at 307-360-8173.

Wyoming Game and Fish hunting seasons-setting public meeting, 6 p.m. at the Pinedale Regional Office. Virtual option at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81898984778pwd=THkxT0RwOEtQZkpWskU5QUhqY1hBdz09>. Comments due by April 1, 5 p.m. Visit <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/GetInvolved/PublicMeetings>.

Authentic Thai-Curry Cooking with Shelly Sison. Register at sublette-boces.com.

After-School Program, 3rd-5th grades, 3:30-4:30 p.m. at the Big Piney Library at Big Piney Rec Center.

Conservation Conversation, 12-12:30 p.m. at Sublette BOCES. "A look back at Catastrophic Wildfires: A collaborative approach working in Southwest Wyoming" with Mike Henn. Free; grab and go snacks.

Thursday, March 24

Sublette Community Band invites musicians of any age and instrument to weekly rehearsals, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Pinedale High School Music Room. Goal is a May 23 concert. Visit the Facebook page.

Jump Start Your Business free class, 7-9 p.m. on business structure, at the Sublette County Chamber of Commerce boardroom. No registration, just stop by.

Friday, March 25

Last day to register for a vendor space at the April 2 Spring Fair at the Big Piney Rec Center.

Wind River Skate Club presents its Spring Ice Show, 7 p.m. with guest

skater Scott Smith. Bake sale, raffles and fun at the Sublette County Ice Arena, Pinedale. Admission.

Wyoming Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) virtual town hall to explain benefits to landlords, 1:30 p.m. at dfs.wyo.gov/ERAP.

Bondurant Sip & Paint (for over 13) in oils with renowned artist Kathy Wipfler, 6-9 p.m. at St. Hubert's Church and Community Center. Space limited; register at www.subletteboces.com.

Saturday, March 26

2022 Daphne Platts Film Festival free series closes with an as-yet-unannounced blockbuster, 7 p.m. in the Pinedale Library's Lovatt Room.

Wind River Skate Club presents its Spring Ice Show, 4 p.m. with guest skater Scott Smith. Bake sale, raffles and fun at the Sublette County Ice Arena, Pinedale. Admission.

38th Aniel Daniel Chili Cookoff, live dessert auction and fundraiser. Red and green chili checkin 4-5 p.m. (entry fee), judging 5 p.m., dinner 6 p.m., donated desserts live auction 7 p.m. at the Daniel Schoolhouse. Prizes! More info at 307-360-8438, 307-859-8602 or Facebook.



Diesel and Tiny pull a load of hay to feed older calves. JOY UFFORD PHOTO

Tuesday, March 29

K-2 After-School Program, 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Big Piney Library at Big Piney Rec Center.

Sublette County Hospital District asks for participation in its Community Health Needs Assessment Survey to gauge what residents want to see for

health care. Take the survey at <https://www.sublettehospital-district.org/>.

Intro to American Sign Language classes with Candis Hill. Register at subletteboces.com.

Wednesday, March 30

After-School Program, 3rd-5th

grades, 3:30-4:30 p.m. at the Big Piney Library at Big Piney Rec Center.

IF: Bondurant at Heart2Heart Ranch — registration, \$25, is open for May 6-7 global non-denominational ministry sessions, speakers, food and more. Go to www.bondurantfellowship.org.

Ongoing Meetings

Sundays

AA meetings in Pinedale Sunday and Wednesday 7 p.m., at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 512 N. Tyler (across from PAC).

Mondays

Upper Green River Cemetery District, first Monday, 4 p.m. at

the District Office at the Pinedale Cemetery.

Marbleton Town Council, second Monday, 5 p.m. at Marbleton Town Hall.

Pinedale Town Council, second and fourth Mondays, 5 p.m.,

Pinedale Library, Lovatt Room.

Veteran's Family Support Services every Monday, 4-6 p.m. at the Veterans Service Center by Public Health, 615 E. Hennick, Pinedale. Call Linda Romasko at 719-213-0764.

VFW Post 4801, third Monday, at VFW Club, Pinedale.

Tuesdays

American Legion Post, second Tuesday at VFW Club, Pinedale, 7 p.m.

Big Piney Town Council, third Tuesday, 6 p.m., Big Piney Town Hall.

Sublette County School District No. 9 Board Meeting, third Tuesday, Big Piney Fine Arts Center, 7 p.m.

Sublette County Fair Board, fourth Tuesday, 7 p.m. at the Sublette County Fair Office in Big Piney.

Franklin Lodge No. 31, first Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Pinedale Masonic Hall, 23 N. Tyler.

The Community Food Closet is

open for food distribution second Tuesday monthly 5-7 p.m. at 111 Rakestraw Ave. in Marbleton.

Women's Advocacy Group meets 6 p.m. second Tuesday at the Pinedale Library, 155 S. Tyler Ave. Meeting room may change. Follow the Facebook page for updates.

Wednesdays

Pinedale Travel & Tourism Commission, third Wednesday, noon, call for location.

The Pinedale Airport Board meets the first Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. at the Pinedale Airport conference room.

AA meetings in Pinedale Sunday and Wednesday 7 p.m., at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 512 N. Tyler (across from PAC).

Sublette County Hospital District, fourth Wednesday, 6:00 pm at Sublette Courthouse or Marbleton Town hall.

Mountain Man Back Country Horsemen, 5:30 p.m., at the Lovatt

Room, Pinedale Library.

Thursdays

Sublette County Prevention Coalition, second Thursday, 12 p.m., at Public Health. Contact Trisha Scott at 307-749-5004.

American Legion Auxiliary has its quarterly meetings the first Thursdays of March, June, September and December. Call Nancy Shaffer at 307-859-8862 for locations and membership.

Bingo at the VFW Club, every other Thursday, 7 p.m.

Order of Eastern Star, Pinedale Chapter No. 39, second Thursday, 7:30 pm, Pinedale Masonic Hall, 23 N. Tyler

High Meadow Ranch Water District, third Thursday, 6 p.m., at New Wellhouse.

Sublette County Conservation District, third Thursday, 6 p.m., SCCD conference room, 217 Country Club Lane.

Sublette County P&Z, third Thursday, 6 p.m., Sublette Courthouse.

The Pinedale Lions Club meets every first and third Thursday, 6 p.m. Rendezvous Pointe.

Big Piney-Marbleton Community Development Committee, third Thursday, 12 p.m., location to be determined.

Sublette County School District No. 1, second Thursday, 6:30 p.m., Central Administration Building, 655 S. Tyler Ave.

Narcotics Anonymous meets every week at 7 p.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Pinedale, downstairs.

Alanon Support Group starts Oct. 24 and meets every Thursday, 8 p.m. at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 521 N. Tyler, Pinedale.

Saturdays

Narcotics Anonymous meets every week at 7 p.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Pinedale, downstairs.

HEALTHY LIVING

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ERAP town hall for landlords

WYOMING – The Wyoming Department of Family Services encourages landlords to join the Friday, March 25, virtual town hall to learn more about the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP).

During the town hall, landlords will learn how to increase their cash flow by helping eligible renters apply for ERAP. The town hall will cover eligible renters and expenses, the application process, how to receive up to 18 months in advance rent and the authenticity of letters of intent for those without a current residence.

Get the direct link for the March 25 town hall, which starts at 1:30 p.m., at dfs.wyo.gov/ERAP.

“We understand that many landlords count on rental payments to cover their mortgage, operating expenses and other bills,” Department of Family Services Director Korin Schmidt said. “ERAP helps pay landlords past and future rent and in some cases deposits and security fees while keeping Wyoming families and individuals in stable housing.”

ERAP pays landlords and utility companies for unpaid bills on behalf of eligible Wyoming households, including those who are homeless or without a current residence. As of March 11, landlords have directly received \$18 million for rental properties located in Wyoming.

SCHD Continued from page 1

up the Marbleton Clinic specifically at the March 1 meeting, saying there were citizens concerned about its future. That sparked some discussion about what would happen if the Hospital District, hypothetically, intended to sell the building. Hoffman, Doorn and Dr. David Burnett were all present at last week’s meeting and, while comfortable with the safeguards, said there was no truth that the district was looking to get rid of the Marbleton Clinic.

“Another word that came up last week was we’re going to sell the Sublette Center as soon as we get our loan,” Doorn said. “I just wanted to make sure and publicly state that was not our intention to ever do that. I’m not sure where that came from but it was out there.”

Hoffman reminded the board that, over the past year, it’s been the hospital district’s intent to maintain the Sublette Center as an assisted living facility. Commissioner Tom Noble said those discussions extended further back into history, several years ago. Hoffman said the district’s intent hasn’t changed since then.

In addition to dispelling rumors, those gathered also attempted to further discussions on potential transfer agreements. Commissioners and all present were comfortable sharing the working draft of the transfer agreements with members of Public Health and Sublette Center so all partners were on the same page – with the caveat that it is a working document and nothing is solidified.

“There are some things in there that we won’t know until there’s a loan, until there’s a number,” deputy county attorney Clayton Melinkovich said.

Because some of those questions are contingent upon potential approval of the USDA loan, no official signing or approval will be made until after the potential loan approval. Melinkovich said if the loan doesn’t happen, the transfers and agreements don’t happen. Commission chair Joel Bousman said he felt everyone involved understood that.

Melinkovich said he also felt it important that while framing conversations about the Sublette Center, questions as they were posed were based on the understanding of the merger. As it currently stands, the Sublette Center is an independent nonprofit and is neither the property of the county nor hospital district.

Bousman said there’s a continuing need for an assisted living facility in Sublette County. Hospital district plans allot for a long-term care facility (services the current Sublette Center provides) alongside the planned critical access hospital. The hospital district has talked about using the existing Sublette Center as an assisted living facility to meet the needs Bousman was talking about. Walker said that’s her understanding,

and there are about 16 units in the heritage end that would be needed to break even, financially. She also attested that the building is “certainly salvageable.”

Together, the group discussed moving county services – Public Health, county sanitarian and veterans’ affairs – out of their current location. Space needs for those services have shrunk since commissioners decided to not hire a county sanitarian and revert responsibilities of the role back to the state.

Lee, Walker and hospital district representatives toured the Sublette Center to get an idea for temporary housing of Public Health. Lee said she’d prefer to remain a county entity and maintain Public Health’s identity. Bousman said he understood her concern and values Public Health’s input. Lee said they’d need contemporary office space and storage to have enough space to physically house staff and maintain a few patient rooms. They’d also face parking issues and an inspection would need to be conducted by a fire marshal to make sure they’re within fire code and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant.

Bousman encouraged her to maintain contact with the hospital district. Commissioner Noble reminded all that, through previous board action, the hospital district would provide housing for Public Health. Because the county is required by statute to ensure Public Health services are supplied, they want to make sure Lee and those at Public Health have input and are content during a possible construction process.

Commissioner Vickrey asked what happened if, hypothetically, the hospital district was to default on its loan. Doorn said collateral includes equipment, revenue and future revenue, as far as the USDA is concerned.

Then, amid another rabbit hole of hypothetical conversation, Hoffman pulled discussions back to practice.

“We keep coming back to this conversation presuming we will fail,” she said. “We’ve done everything in our power to provide the information that says we will be successful. We have a partner behind us that assures us, the history of what they’ve been through and what we’re going through similarly, that we’ll be successful down the road.”

Doorn reiterated, “Failure for us is not an option.”

All parties agreed they’d continue to maintain communication. None of the transfer agreement is finalized, as it’s a working document that is being shared among health-care entities in the county.

The discussion will be continued at the commission’s first meeting next month on April 5. At that point, more information regarding the hospital district’s USDA loan application may be known.



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