



**Linn
County**

NEWS



Contact: Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, 541-967-3825 or email: apaul@co.linn.or.us

Commissioners updated about COG programs

ALBANY — Some 1,113 Linn County residents enjoyed 140,681 meals delivered by Meals on Wheels in 2022, Ryan Vogt, Executive Director of the Cascades West Council of Governments told the Board of Commissioners Tuesday morning.

Vogt said there also were 7,634 congregational dining meals and more than \$93,000 in donations to the program.

In Linn, Benton and Lincoln counties, some 240,103 meals were served, of which 228,841 were home-delivered.

Vogt said the program can always use more volunteer drivers.

Vogt said there are 16 Foster Grandparent volunteers in Albany, Lebanon and Sweet Home and 40 people are taking advantage of the Money Management program.

Business lending has seven active loans in play totaling \$1.12 million.

Vogt said COG does not compete with banks and only makes loans to companies that have been turned down by banks. He said interest appears to be picking up and in five years, there have been no defaults on loans.

In 2022, COG assisted 1,885 Linn and Benton county residents with care services. Of those, 1,166 received in-home care, 514 received community-based care and 205 were in nursing homes.

517 seniors received one-on-one coun-

seling concerning their Medicare benefits through the Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance program and there were four Medicare 101 presentations, live and virtual.

In other business, the commissioners:

- — Were told by Veterans Services Director Dee Baley-Hyder that her office has seen continued growth in veterans helped. A year ago, her office assisted 8,900 veterans and that has increased to 9,190. “We are averaging 715 calls per month,” she said. Her staff has helped veterans, or their families, recover \$389,152 in claims in the first quarter of the year and \$1.6 million from July 1, 2022 to March 21, 2023. She said her staff is excited to transport Honor Flight participants to the Portland airport later this month.

- — Approved creating a new job position within the Health Department: Developmental Disabilities Assurance Specialist. The position will provide investigations and oversight of activities and services focused on ensuring health and safety of clients, plus ensure compliance with county, state and federal requirements. The position does not involve General Fund monies.

- — Were updated on work to complete a new 20-year contract between the Linn Benton Juvenile Detention Facility out of the Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility and the Oregon Youth Authority. The current contract

was extended until August 31, 2023.

- — Finalized the conveyance of half-interest in mineral rights on about 18 acres to Oak Basin LLC for \$909 and property near Halsey to Tom and Marci Herndon Trust for \$20,000 from a sealed bid sale on March 21.

- Directed Linn County staff to connect with staff from the City of Millersburg concerning the March 14 denial of a comprehensive plan map amendment involving property in and outside Millersburg’s Urban Growth Boundary. A Linn County ordinance allows for such a meeting “to attempt to work out differences in position ...” Mayor Scott Cowan said the paper-making company that wants to come to Millersburg could mean up to 1,000 jobs and a \$1 billion investment. Cowan said the city would like to discuss whether there is room for a compromise on concerns that were brought up in the land use process. Commissioner Nyquist emphasized that bringing this matter before the Board after the commissioners have already made their decision could be problematic. But Nyquist and fellow Commissioner Sherrie Sprenger said they were willing to listen, as long as the process does not run afoul of the legal land use process. Commissioner Will Tucker left the meeting early to make a speaking engagement in Salem.

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