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Tuesday, November 10, 2020

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\$1

ML ice rink opening delayed; public skate uncertain

By EMRY DINMAN
 Staff Writer

MOSES LAKE — Temperatures may be falling, but not quickly enough for the city's ice rink to open Friday as previously scheduled, according to city officials.

Ice skating lessons and the Moses Lake Parks and Recreation Department's beginning hockey program will be postponed, and make-up dates will be provided, department officials wrote in a social media post.

"We expect to start building ice on Monday, November 16th, which takes days to complete," the post added.

While health officials and state guidelines have already allowed for hockey and ice skating lessons at the rink, it's still unclear whether public skating will be permitted.

However, city officials expressed some confidence that the rink will eventually open to the public this season and are working to prepare safety measures to minimize the risk of coronavirus transmission.

"Once approved,

See RINK, Page A5



Kurtis Larson and Feliz Espino huddle in their tent Monday afternoon in Moses Lake.

Emry Dinman/Columbia Basin Herald

Some still skeptical of Moses Lake's camp for unsheltered

By EMRY DINMAN
 Staff Writer

MOSES LAKE — With the thermometer just north of freezing Monday afternoon, Kurtis Larson and Feliz Espino were huddled in their tent behind a local grocery store trying to stay warm.

"I mean, you see," Larson said, pointing at the small fire pit next to the tent. "We're surviving."

With Grant County's first managed camp for unsheltered

people, made up of a few dozen "tiny homes" with just enough space for a bed, set to open in the next week or so, Larson said he's skeptical about the program the city is setting up.

"I heard that there's little shacks that they're building and there's no heat in there, which would be basic, I would think, for getting out of the cold," Larson said.

While there will be external heating units, the tiny facilities themselves won't be hooked up to electricity or

heating, said Taylor Burton, Moses Lake's coordinator for housing and grants, in a recent interview.

This could be an issue in the middle of winter, Larson said, if he is even guaranteed a unit in the first place.

The units are technically allotted on a first-come, first-served basis. There will be 20 units available when the site opens later this month, Burton has previously said, but a total of 35 will be available soon after.

At the start of 2019, local organizations tallied 82 unsheltered people countywide, of whom 52 were living in the Moses Lake area.

"Why don't they just build one building where everyone can go in, like the warming center they had a couple years ago?" asked Larson, who hasn't had a home for around three years. "Now you're going to have to turn away people, and that's not what a warming

See CAMP, Page A4

Stratford Road widening, repaving project moves into final phase

Paving crews lay down asphalt Monday at the intersection of Stratford Road and Mart Road. The Stratford Road project is scheduled for completion by the end of November.



Cheryl Schweizer/
 Columbia Basin Herald

By CHERYL SCHWEIZER
 Staff Writer

MOSES LAKE — Paving crews were laying down fresh asphalt at the intersection of Stratford and Mart roads Monday morning, as a two-year project to upgrade Stratford heads into the final phase.

Rick Morris, from Central Washington Asphalt Inc.'s Moses Lake office, said the paving should be completed by Tuesday afternoon.

The first portion, from the Mart Road intersection to Valley Road, took about 900 tons of asphalt and the second section, from Valley Road to the end of the project, will require about 400 tons.

Crews were working on a morning with below-freezing temperatures and a brisk wind making it even colder.

"It's still warm enough to pave," Morris said. "Most years we pave right into Thanksgiving."

When the project is completed, Stratford will have an additional northbound lane from Valley Road to the project's end, just past Mart Road. A second left-turn-only lane has been added at the Valley Road intersection.

Traffic lights have been upgraded with new electronics and poles, and the light at Valley Road has been replaced. Sidewalks at the intersections were demolished to make room for the traffic light work and still need to be replaced. In addition, crosswalks are being reconfigured to make crossing easier.

Cheryl Schweizer can be reached via email at cschweizer@columbiabasinherald.com.

>> LOCAL

Turkey drive

Health care providers team up. **A2**

>> STATE

Governor's race

Culp refuses to concede. **A3**

>> NATION

Mask mandate

Biden forms task force to look at options. **A4**

Basin Briefs... **A2**
 Classifieds ... **B4**
 Comics..... **A6**

Crossword ... **B2**
 Horoscope... **A6**
 Obituaries **B2**

Weather..... **A2**

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Nation

Trump, Republicans push election lawsuit challenging mail-in ballots

By RICK SOBEY
Boston Herald/TNS

President Donald Trump is refusing to concede to Joe Biden after news outlets called Pennsylvania for the former vice president on Saturday.

Trump and his surrogates have claimed there were “fake votes” and that Democrats are “stealing” the election.

Republicans pushed forward with lawsuits Monday, including Republican state attorneys general supporting a challenge to Pennsylvania’s decision to count mail-in ballots that arrived through Friday.

The 10 AGs filed an amicus brief at the Supreme Court, saying they must “ensure that every legal vote cast is counted, and that every illegal vote cast is not counted.”

The attorneys general argue that the Pennsylvania Supreme Court had unconstitutionally “overstepped their bounds” when the court upheld the three-day mail-in ballot extension. The state Legislature should be deciding the timeline for elections,

the AGs argue.

“The integrity of our elections are at stake,” Missouri AG Eric Schmitt said during a Monday press conference.

The Pennsylvania decision can lead to fraud and abuse, the AGs repeated several times. Oklahoma AG Mike Hunter brought up “whether someone is trying to dump ballots into Pennsylvania” after 8 p.m. on Election Day “in a nefarious way.”

Courts have rejected Republican demands in Pennsylvania and other battleground states to throw out ballots or stop vote counting.

Also on Monday, Trump tweeted, “Pennsylvania prevented us from watching much of the Ballot count. Unthinkable and illegal in this country.” Twitter flagged the tweet, writing that the claim about election fraud is disputed. State election officials say that poll watchers were certified in every county.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Monday did not congratulate Biden, nor say that Trump should concede.

Biden’s new coronavirus advisers debate mandating masks across the country

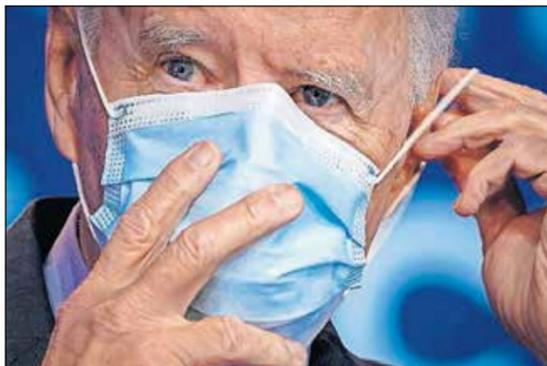
By MICHAEL WILNER
McClatchy/TNS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Joe Biden announced Monday the formation of a coronavirus advisory board that will consider a national mask mandate amid rising cases and deaths.

“It doesn’t matter your party, your point of view,” Biden said after receiving his first briefing from the group. “We could save tens of thousands of lives if everyone would just wear a mask for the next few months. Not Democrat or Republican lives — American lives.”

The 12-member task force is building out policies to end persistent shortages of personal protective equipment for front-line workers and increase the precision, speed and availability of testing. It is also debating just how far Biden should go in urging Americans to wear masks.

Public health experts who for months advocated for a more centralized, disciplined national pandemic plan expressed relief at the naming of the new task force, and encouraged its members to immediately begin



Drew Angerer/Getty Images/TNS

Joe Biden puts on a face mask after attending a virtual coronavirus briefing with medical experts on Oct. 28 in Wilmington, Delaware.

reaching out to state and local government officials to coordinate their plans.

The Trump administration repeatedly deferred to the states to issue pandemic restrictions within their own jurisdictions, insisting that the federal government had no authority to override local officials.

“That is a part of what I think the biggest challenge is going to be, period, for the Biden administration, and that’s really a communication challenge,” said Angela Rasmussen, a virologist at Columbia University. “Over 70 million people voted for Donald Trump, and they themselves are probably going to be very resistant to a lot of the recommendations that are made, so communicating clear messages out to the public — having everyone be on the same page — is going to be crucial,” Rasmussen said.

Over 237,000 lives have been lost in the United States to COVID-19 since

the outbreak began in March.

As a candidate for president, Biden said he supported the idea of a national mask mandate but acknowledged it would likely face legal challenges.

“One of the policy proposals that Biden included in his COVID plan was to implement a nationwide mask mandate, which is something that he can effectively do on day one by executive order,” Rasmussen said. “I think in order to make sure that’s implemented across the board, that’s going to require establishing these collaborative relationships with some of those governors.”

An executive order could be limited to mask-wearing on federal lands, in federal buildings and on federal transportation.

Other public health experts who have worked closely with members of the new advisory panel expect them to recommend such a move to the

president-elect.

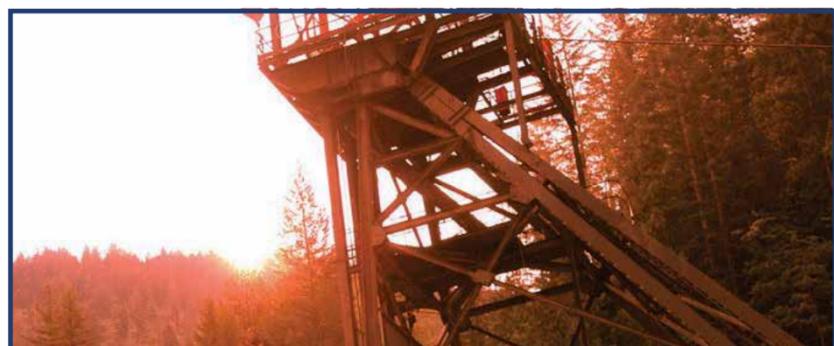
“This should be an obvious place to begin for the new administration, and the president-elect, very importantly, has led by example on this issue for months,” said Dr. Howard Koh, former assistant secretary for health under President Barack Obama and now at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. “His message has been consistent and clear on this for months. I anticipate that will go forward.”

Outside experts who are in touch with members of the task force and advised Biden’s campaign, told McClatchy to expect “rings” of advisers that expand beyond the core coronavirus advisory group.

The Biden team will reach out to expert vaccinologists, virologists and epidemiologists, who will serve the advisory group, a Biden aide said.

David Kessler, former head of the Food and Drug Administration, Marcella Nunez-Smith, a leading epidemiologist at Yale University, and former U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy will lead the new advisory group.

Celine Gounder, a member of the advisory group, said its most imminent priority is unifying the country behind a plan. President Donald Trump, who has called into question the need to wear masks and has rarely worn one in public, said in the closing days of the 2020 campaign that the country was rounding the corner on the pandemic.



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LEGAL NOTICES

ORDINANCE 20-06

The City Council of the City of Royal City has adopted Ordinance 20-06 AN ORDINANCE OF THE ROYAL CITY CITY COUNCIL ESTABLISHING A UTILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING ECONOMIC HARDSHIP DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OR DESIGNEE TO DISTRIBUTE GRANT FUNDS OF UP TO \$350 PER QUALIFYING INDIVIDUAL RECEIVING CITY OF ROYAL CITY RESIDENTIAL UTILITY SERVICE. This ordinance was passed on the 20th day of October 2020 and shall be in full force and effect five days after the publication of this summary as provided by law. Any person may obtain the full text of this ordinance by mail without charge by request to City Hall, P.O. Box 1239, Royal City WA 99357, or in person at 445 Camelia Street NE, Royal City, WA.

#11040/418640
Pub: November 10, 2020

ORDINANCE 20-07

The City Council of the City of Royal City has adopted Ordinance 20-07 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 9.10 TITLED "SPEED REGULATIONS" OF THE ROYAL CITY MUNICIPAL CODE. This ordinance was passed on the 03rd day of November 2020 and shall be in full force and effect five days after the publication of this summary as provided by law. Any person may obtain the full text of this ordinance by mail without charge by request to City Hall, P.O. Box 1239, Royal City WA 99357, or in person at 445 Camelia Street NE, Royal City, WA.

#11041/418646
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Emry Dinman/Columbia Basin Herald

While it had been deprioritized by local law enforcement since a 2019 Circuit Court decision, police will be able to resume enforcement of illegal encampments on public land once the new managed camp opens its doors – so long as it and other resources aren’t completely filled up.

CAMP

from A1

center should be, turning away homeless people.”

However, city officials have previously expressed skepticism that all available units would be filled, particularly when an additional 30 emergency shelter units are opened in a converted hotel sometime this winter.

Regardless of capacity, all people staying at the managed camp will be asked to leave by 8 a.m. City officials have also expressed that after the winter is over, people will be asked to leave by

6 a.m. and will not be allowed to return until 10 p.m.

“That’s a little ridiculous, because it starts getting cold if we’re outside at 5 o’clock at night, and by the time people are froze, they’re not going to want to get out of their tent and go over there at 9 o’clock at night,” Larson said.

But, Larson and Espino were quick to add they were grateful that shower services will be provided on-site.

Another woman sleeping in a dilapidated tent wreathed by thorny Russian olive trees, who asked not to be named, said that she’s been liv-

ing on the streets for about a month and has been freezing at night in recent weeks. She said she was grateful for any kind of shelter more substantial than the summer-weather camping tent she’s living in now.

She is nervous about other people walking near her tent, she said Monday, because her clothes and other belongings have been stolen before. While she hopes to be able to access laundry services through the new shelter, mainly she just wants rules at the managed camp to be enforced so that others don’t cause her any more trouble, she added.

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