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County likely to retain public health authority

Commissioners read ordinance to rescind order to have health authority transferred

CARISA CEGAVSKE
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The News-Review

The Douglas County government will likely continue to maintain authority over public health services in Douglas County.

In November, the Douglas County Board of Commissioners had approved an ordinance that would have transferred the public health authority to the Oregon Health Authority. The commissioners Wednesday held the first

reading of an ordinance that would rescind that order. A second reading of the ordinance will be held March 27, at which time the commissioners are expected to vote on it. If the ordinance is approved, the end result

would be that the county would continue to provide public health services using the same unique model it has been using in recent years, in which the services have been privatized and the county contracts with the nonprofit Douglas Public Health Network to oversee them. The nonprofit subcontracts with organizations like the Umpqua

Community Health Center to provide services like immunizations and reproductive health. Commissioner Tim Freeman praised the Douglas Public Health Network's work Wednesday. "They've been doing a fantastic job. The Oregon Health Authority recently did a triennial review of all their programs and

it came back fantastic," Freeman said. The county first began its move toward privatizing health services in 2014, when it dropped its mental health department and transferred its mental health authority over to the state. The nonprofit Community Health Alliance was

HEALTH, A3



MICHAEL SULLIVAN/THE NEWS-REVIEW

Adjudicator Debra Gaddis works with the Glide High School Choir group at the conclusion of its performance at the Douglas Invitational Choir Festival Program at Roseburg High School on Wednesday.

Festival of Song

Local choirs take the stage at Douglas Invitational Choir Festival

SANNE GODFREY
The News-Review

The Rose Theater was filled with music from eight different choirs during Wednesday's Douglas Invitational Choir Festival Program held at Roseburg High School.

"There was a lot of enthusiastic singing," adjudicator Donna Spicer said. "Sometimes choirs are timid, but today the choirs sounded more mature and many of them did quite well.

It's just fun to hear the kids singing enthusiastically."

Roseburg High School's concert choir started the festival at 9 a.m. and the school's Cantamus choir closed at 1:30 p.m.

After a Sililiza by Roseburg Cantamus, adjudicator Debra Gaddis said, "I just want more."

"I'm really proud of their character," said Julie Cherry, the school's choir director. "They could've given up because we lost a week of preparation because of

the snow, or they could kick it into high gear and they chose the second option. It's incredible."

The school's choir program partnered with Hannah Abercrombie, Douglas High School's choir director, to bring the high school's festival to Roseburg.

For many of the smaller schools in Douglas County, it serves as a qualifier for the statewide competition hosted by the Oregon School Activities

CHOIR, A3

Uber making stop in county

Ride hailing program open for business in Roseburg

MAX EGENER
The News-Review

After months of uncertainty, Uber is open for business in Roseburg.

The city received an Operator's License Application from the ride-hailing company on Wednesday, after a revised city ordinance setting rules for the company went into effect the same day.

A representative for Lyft, another ride-hailing service, is currently in the process of completing the company's application, according to a press release from Amy Sowa, the city recorder, who led negotiations with the company.

Uber's registration comes seven months after Roseburg City Council passed an ordinance allowing ride-hailing services to operate in town.

Shortly after the ordinance passed in August, Uber and Lyft said they wouldn't come to Roseburg unless the city became part of the service area of Eugene or Medford. Roseburg's background check requirements for drivers were too stringent for the companies, which consider themselves "second chance" companies – the companies' internal background checks extend no more than seven years into a driver's past.

That prompted city

UBER, A3



INSIDE, A2

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