

the sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra



Dennis Wedland of Escalon, Calif. wins the Men's Stein Holding Competition at the 2022 June Lake Autumn Brew Festival. For more photos, see page 18. .

Saturday, October 8, 2022

FREE

Vol. 20, No. Seaver

COUNCIL HOPEFULS SQUARE OFF

Mammoth Town Council's six candidates gather to discuss their hopes for the town
By Crocetti



Left to right: Chris Bubser, Betsy Truax, John Wentworth, Amanda Rice, Seth Guthrie, and Cleland Hoff

The Mammoth Chamber of Commerce held a Mammoth Town Council candidate forum on Tuesday, where the 6 candidates for Mammoth Town Council's 3 open positions answered questions posed by the Chamber.

Chris Bubser, Betsy Truax, John Wentworth, Amanda Rice, Cleland Hoff and Seth Guthrie all gathered at the front of the Emerald Room in the Village Hotel to answer questions; each candidate was given four minutes to answer each question - about how long it takes former Sheet staffer Timmy Gorman to run a mile.

During opening comments, Wentworth, the sole incumbent running, emphasized his previous experience on Town Council and the importance of electing an incumbent who already knows the ropes and is already involved in the town's complex set of projects.

Truax also emphasized her prior experience during opening comments, pointing to her involvement in town organizations such as the Mammoth Lakes Parks and Recreation Commission (she was chair for a decade), and her years of being an active member of the Mammoth community.

Bubser emphasized her background in business, her connections to state and federal agencies, and how she would be an advocate for the town to get funding for its various projects.

Hoff, a resident of Mammoth for over 30 years and a former Council member, emphasized the importance of her perspective as a longtime local and somebody who doesn't want to see locals continue to leave Mammoth as the town's cost of living increases.

As a local small business owner and mother of two

children, Rice also spoke on the behalf of middle class families being squeezed out of town, and as somebody who "wants to do more than just complain about the issues of locals".

Guthrie spoke on the behalf of people fed up with politics, and who want to see real, tangible change enacted in their

see COUNCIL, page 2

STAR TURN



Trevor Donovan, a Hollywood actor who grew up in Mammoth, is appearing in the latest installment of "Dancing With The Stars." For story, see page 13.

PERSONAL FOUL?

F-Bomb's, chokeholds, and football in Mono County
By Pike

After their football game against Mammoth High School on September 24th, Coleville High School administration has decided that it will not schedule athletic contests with Mammoth during the upcoming basketball season. Or during boy's baseball. Or during football next year.

Why?

Here's one narrative.

It was a fumble. Clear as day. According to MHS Huskies Head Coach Martin Ezidro.

"[The refs] can't see everything," he wrote in an email, "but it seemed he was looking right at it."

One of Ezidro's assistant coaches, identified as Charlie Gray, didn't agree with the call. "His passion was mistaken for aggression," wrote Coach Ezidro. "We had a talk, and it's gotten better."

The referee ejected Gray. Gray left the field. The Huskies were down against Coleville with a minute-thirty left in the game. The Huskies scored. 28-24. The clock hit 0:00. The Huskies had won.

So, the team went to take a picture by the scoreboard. "Tradition after a win," wrote Coach Ezidro. "[Gray] came back to take the picture."

Back onto the field. Which is against the rules.

"A fan of Coleville put my coach in a chokehold for trying to get in the picture," wrote Coach Ezidro. "It was all over a coach trying to get in the photo ... ultimately, it's our fault for not knowing the rules completely, but putting hands on someone over a picture seemed a bit extreme."

Coach Ezidro wrote that it was a shame Coleville canceled future games: "We don't hold a grudge and would love to play

them again ... The good news is, it's behind us, and we are focused on Eureka."

A Coleville chokehold.

Matt Toomey, who was also at the game, told the Sheet that he witnessed Gray being put in a headlock by a Coleville fan. What might have looked like aggressive behavior was just Gray defending himself, according to Toomey.

Eastern Sierra Unified School District Superintendent Heidi Torix was at the game. Had a bird's eye view of the field. A chokehold? "I did not witness that at all," Torix said.

What she did witness: "negative comments" coming from the Mammoth side. Mammoth coaches yelling, cursing. "A lot of F-bombs involved," she said. The team chanting negative comments as they pulled away on the bus. An ejected coach coming back onto the field. A parent asking him to leave. The Coleville High School principal asking, too.

But no chokehold. No physical altercations.

"I don't want us to come across as some angry, bitter, losing team," Torix said. "That's not really what it is. We just want them, in the end, to apologize." Torix believes that any negativity between the two districts will make future games worse for the community.

The Sheet discovered the name of the alleged assailant from Coleville. Retired Navy and current firefighter, Benjamin Paladino.

Paladino, a Coleville parent, denied the allegations. He did not do anything physical. No chokehold.

Paladino heard about Mammoth's beratements from a third party after the game. He didn't

see FOOTBALL, page 4

Gas unlighting

p. 8/

Sexploitation

p. 19/

More Beer please

p. 18/

Roeser chokes up

p. 17/

Nice Boxes

p. 6/

COUNCIL

continued from page 1

community. Notably, Guthrie spoke about Mammoth’s cultural and racial diversity throughout the forum. During his opening comments, he said, “Equity’ has been the dividing stake of communist and socialist agendas throughout the world’s history... With the fact that 50% of the labor force here in Mammoth are from a foreign land, just south of here, I find it hard to believe that there’s a problem with racism and equity in this town. But it seems a lot of public officials here want to push that notion. So I’m here to make some changes and right this ship.”

Question 1: What unique skill, background or perspective do you think you’ll bring to Council?

Hoff: I can work with anybody, even people I don’t agree with ... I am not scared to be unpopular.

Guthrie: After growing up in the foster care system and living basically everywhere in the country, I don’t exclude anybody. I take everybody for their character.

Rice: Being a business owner and a mother of children attending the schools, I wear many different hats. I also came here as a waitress and know what it’s like to live paycheck to paycheck ... I’m also bilingual and a creative problem solver; I can find things in common with just about anybody.

Wentworth: Before Council, I worked for 4 years doing non-profit work... I’ve learned a lot since then on the Council side and the regional side, so I have a wealth of experience to offer and draw from.

Truax: I have actually worked with current council members and, like Cleland, I know how to interact with people I disagree with... It’s also important to recognize that Mammoth is a working community, and I’d like to continue to be a voice for that.

Bubser: I have experience with NGO’s and nonprofits at the state, regional and federal level ... I’d like to help use these connections to bring more resources our way ... I’ve also been an activist in different capacities, and we need to make sure that we’re encouraging people to not just complain about issues on Facebook, but to actually show up to Town Council meetings.

Question 2: How should remaining revenues over the Council budget be spent?

the sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra

“Paintings are like a beer, only beer tastes good and it’s hard to stop drinking beer.”

-Billy Carter

Ted Carleton Jack of all Lunches
760.937.4613 / lunch@thesheetnews.com

June Simpkins... Jack of everything else
760.937.3967 / juneatthesheet@gmail.com

Emily Crocetti..... Writer
emilysheet3@gmail.com

Charlie Pike..... Writer
pikeatthesheet@gmail.com

Clouds McCloud Ass-trologer

Spike Todd Beverage Consultant

P.O. Box 8088

Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

760.924.0048/jacklunch@yahoo.com

An adjudicated paper of general circulation. © 2021 The Sheet, all rights reserved.

JACK LUNCH

PUBLISHER

For a subscription, visit the website, make a donation and be added to the e-mail blast list.

Bubser: Affordable community workforce housing; for every dollar that the town spends, we’re getting 5 dollars back from the state to spend money on these things; the second priority is green infrastructure, i.e. renewable infrastructure ... Towns like Mammoth are in good positions to be able to advocate for that money ... And lastly, childcare programs for the community.

Truax: We’ve already spent a lot, such as the town granting over \$2 million in rental assistance to get us through Covid, and TOT allocated towards housing and parks/facility maintenance, and I would like to keep focusing on those things.

Wentworth: Housing. Housing is really expensive and that’s where this money is going ... Also, we need to invest resources into solid waste disposal ... As a council, we need to establish a list of priorities of what to do with this money, so that when challenges do arise, we can be resilient and act quickly.

Rice: How long are people supposed to wait for housing? We currently have less than 1% of rentals vacant in town, and I would guess that that number is closer to zero... Town Council got rid of the rule in 2015 that 10% of new development needs to go to affordable housing and I think we need that back. If that were in place right now, then the Limelight Hotel would have to offer 15 new rooms for our local workforce ... Tahoe is currently subsidizing landlords to do long-term rentals, and we should look into that. I know it’s hard to admit that you’re hurting the town when your livelihood depends on it (i.e. nightly rental owners) ... Also, childcare is a huge priority. Working couples in town currently have to worry about splitting shifts just so one of them can watch their kids ... Parking in the Lakes Basin is a nightmare as well, and we need to spend money to build infrastructure that can manage the influx of tourists ... Also, money should be put towards the fire threat.

Guthrie: We shouldn’t be putting bathrooms out in the woods to enable people who come here without a plan; instead, we should use money to incentivize second homeowners to house workers through agreements with employers... I think Mammoth Mountain has enough money to be able to do that ... Also, we should put a Food Bank in town ...

Hoff: I almost feel like this is a trick question. It isn’t [millions] that we have to spend; it’s much more complex than that, a lot of the money is already tied up ... Of course housing is the most pressing issue, but I’d also disagree with this question because it’s not like \$50 million is just sitting there for us to spend however we want.

Question 3: Tourism is the economic lifeblood of Mammoth Lakes. What role does Town Council play in enhancing the visitor experience?

Hoff: The main problem regarding our visitor base right now is that we don’t have enough people to look after their needs ... The only way we’ll be able to do this better is to have housing, and as a business entity, having a viable workforce base is, or should be, the priority of The Chamber and MLT.

Guthrie: If I dumped out a bag of off-brand skittles and told you they were skittles, you’d believe me. But it’s actually Fentanyl. And this is happening right here in Mammoth Lakes. Fentanyl is being brought here in Mammoth by illegals. Fentanyl is a problem here in Mammoth ... If you want to “protect immigrants” or whatever you want to call them, you have to police the crime that they are bringing here; we should be doing ride-alongs with police officers ... There’s a drug problem in Mammoth that we are not addressing, and it’s Fentanyl and Methamphetamines ... If we want to be a tourist city, we have to crack down on the crime that exists here so that the tourists’ cars aren’t being broken into by these people so that they can sell their gear for drugs.

Rice: Improving on parking is huge, so that we can manage the flow of people who come here ... Also, we need to prioritize our workforce. People who visit here will be less apt to return if they have to wait 2+ hours to eat at a restaurant, their hotel rooms aren’t getting cleaned, and their ski gear takes forever to rent due to staffing shortages. If we want people to want to come back, we have to focus on making sure that our businesses are well staffed, and that means that those staff have a place to live.

THE ROTARY CLUB OF MAMMOTH LAKES PRESENTS

Thursday, October 13 5:30 PM

OKTOBERFEST CELEBRATION

The EATery @ Mammoth Brewing Co.
\$75 Includes Bavarian Buffet

TICKETS:
<https://www.mammothlakesrotaryclub.org/>

All Proceeds Benefit the Rotary Club
Scholarship for Local Students

BEER . FOOD . SILENT AUCTION

Rotary

FORUM

continued from page 2

Wentworth: This is about the relationship between MLT and Mammoth Town Council ... Council capped the amount of money that is allowed to go to MLT from Measure A recently, which was a good step ... We now, as a group, should map out exactly what the priorities are for MLT in terms of their purpose and function.

Truax: The first role of Town Council prior to enhancing the visitor experience is to provide essential amenities to those who live here, such as snow removal, police services, and things not just for tourists but for locals too. Once we handle those things, then we can focus on the visitor experience.

Bubser: We should be focused on building a healthy community where people have roofs over their heads and places to shower ... If we prioritize the well-being of people who live here, visitors will feel that and enjoy their experience that much more ... My friend told me recently, "If I have to leave my rental property because my landlord keeps raising the rent and live in my car just to get ahead, then what kind of place is this?"

Question 4: How would you describe your aesthetic impression of Mammoth Lakes?

Bubser: Homey. It's a real town with real people who have lived here and who have built it into what it is today ... Also, I think that the mountains are what people really look at and see when they're here, not any of the buildings... I get that people want to see more cohesion in the downtown part of Mammoth, where we all are, but we also have to remember that those are the businesses who actually serve us, the locals... We have to be careful about the consequences of forcing it to look any certain way.

Truax: Needs improvement. Visitors spend most of their time in the business part of Mammoth, and the town does certain stuff well, such as maintaining beautiful parks and putting up flags on the 4th of July, but we could definitely improve the aesthetic of Old Mammoth Road by all working together to make it more cohesive.

Wentworth: Profoundly mediocre. But we have an advantage, because it means

it's not as ridiculously expensive to live here when compared to other mountain resort communities... But, with the new Main Lodge going in, people will still have to drive through our downtown to get there; how can we re-envision our physical impression? We need to work together to do this, and do more than just nibbling around the edges by putting up flower pots etc... We need to raise the bar from profoundly mediocre.

Rice: I'd describe it as a unique, individualistic mountain town. Everyone is doing their own aesthetic thing. I don't want Mammoth to become a designer town where everything looks like The Village, and I don't think that the local population necessarily wants that either.

Guthrie: This is a mountain town. Let's make sure this stays a mountain town, by stopping cutting down the trees and putting bathrooms in homelessness encampments while we try to figure out how to fix the problem... There are also smaller aesthetic issues, such as the unfixed concrete near Carl's Jr., that could be easily fixed right away but that we can't seem to get our act together enough to do.

Hoff: Aesthetics aren't something I really depend on to get the feel of a town... Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. But when you're here, you're really looking at the mountains and the trees and the nature, and that's why people come here. Signs and decorations are basically just a distraction. And you'll never be able to please everyone about how our town looks.

Elections will be held on November 8.

LETTERS

Wentworth's Gate Falsehoods

Dear Editor,

John Wentworth has inaccurately stated (in a Sheet candidate interview published in the Oct. 1 issue) that the Ranch Road and Woodcrest Trail homeowners association has put a private gate on a public road. These roads are not part of the Town of Mammoth lakes public road system. They are owned by the property owners of those two homeowners associations and were built by and are maintained by those homeowners associations.

The two homeowner associations applied to place a gate at the entry not to stop access to the Sherwins, but to eliminate cars being parked on the streets.

These cars were left unattended with barking and defecating dogs tied up while skiers were spending their time on the Sherwins. Trash was left behind on the roads and profanities were exchanged between the homeowners and the trespassers over their inconsiderate behavior.


We installed a walkway around the gate and the problem has been eliminated and pedestrians can still enjoy the area. John Wentworth did not win the public's right to access our property by automobile which is the reason we wanted a gate.

Dennis Hartman
Mammoth Lakes




Footloose Sports is seeking enthusiastic and passionate outdoors lovers to fill the following positions:

- Retail Sales Associates
- Rental Associates
- Part time seasonal positions
- Full time yearly positions



If you have a passion for the Eastern Sierra or just want to get your foot in the door at one of the best and largest outdoor shops in the country, please come see us now!

760-934-2400
www.footloosesports.com/careers

3043 MAIN STREET
MAMMOTH LAKES



JOB OPENINGS

Full-Time Position

Public Works Maintenance Worker

\$48,239 - \$67,877

Temporary Seasonal Positions

Temporary Airport Maintenance Worker
\$26.63 - \$30.83 per hr.

Temporary Maintenance Worker I - Facilities
\$18.19 - \$21.06 per hr.

Temporary Snow Removal Operator CDL Required
\$26.63 - \$30.83 per hr.

Various Parks & Recreation Winter Positions
\$15-\$28.03/hour

For more information and to apply:
townofmammothlakes.ca.gov
(760) 965-3604

JOIN US FOR DINNER
PRIME RIB
EVERY DAY



OPEN EVERY DAY
BREAKFAST & LUNCH 9AM-3PM
DINNER 5PM-8PM
343 OLD MAMMOTH ROAD | 760-965-0549