

EOU board retreat to Boardman a ‘great opportunity’

By **ANDREW CUTLER**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Eastern Oregon University’s board of trustees will hold its 2022 annual retreat Aug. 8-9 in Boardman.

The meetings will include engagement with local and regional business leaders, local representatives and regional stakeholders to discuss the university’s role in business, industry and education in the area.

The Boardman session is part of a larger program by the board to conduct fact-finding tours across the region, said Tim Seydel, vice president for University Advancement at Eastern Oregon University.

“The board has been intentional about going out, not wanting to do a retreat (in La Grande). Let’s go out into the region and meet with, you know, the parts of that we serve,” he said.

Trustees will host a public reception from 5-6:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 8, in the SAGE Center Gallery. The public is invited to attend the reception and share their EOU stories and hear comments from President Tom Insko and the board’s chair, Richard Chaves.

“This is a great opportunity for community members, alumni and friends to meet with trustees and the presi-



Eastern Oregon University’s board of trustees will host a public reception during its annual retreat from 5-6:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 8, in the SAGE Center Gallery, Boardman.

dent and hear about what we are doing, and for EOU to learn more about the needs of the area,” Seydel said.

During the retreat, the board also plans to host panels on economic development and education and conduct regular business. A full agenda will be made available in early August.

Seydel said the board previously conducted retreats

in places such as Ontario, Baker City, Enterprise and Pendleton along with remote sessions.

The outreach sessions are important to the board, he said.

“Most of our board is from the greater Eastern Oregon region so they all have a vested interest in the success of the university and what it does and how we

serve the region,” he said.

The retreats are also part of the university’s heritage, Seydel said.

“This goes back to our founding, you know, that’s why we were founded was in 1929 is to serve this area, serve this region,” he said.

Seydel said the retreats also highlight the amount of activity — both economic and educational — in the region.

“I think a lot of times (people) think its just a large, you know, big vast area with more cows than people. Like we tell people on the west side, there is a lot going on. And when they get out here, they’re always amazed,” he said.

The outreach sessions also provide board members with valuable knowledge regarding what area residents see

as crucial priorities for the university.

“What better way to inform the trustees and the senior staff at the university than to go do it in person,” Seydel said.

Seydel said, for example, the trustees plan on doing a tour of the Port of Morrow.

“I think it may just be like one of the larger facilities there that we have some student or some alumni working at,” he said.

Seydel also said the board would sponsor panels on various subjects during the outreach session.

“One on education, as you might guess, with people from the area. And like Blue Mountain Community College and the school districts around the area and the ESDs,” he said.

Another panel will address economic development issues, including challenges with work force priorities.

“Because that is where we hear the largest needs are particularly in that region,” Seydel said.

The trustees enjoy the outreach sessions, Seydel said.

“They are ‘Hey, who should we be talking to? What areas should we be making sure we cover?’ And they’re usually jumping right on board and our helping us out,” he said.

Forecast for Pendleton Area

