

# The Tenino Independent

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## SBA loan program described to City Council

*Low-interest loans to cover disaster losses*

By Dan Fisher  
*News Editor*

Tana Morehead, public affairs specialist for the U.S. Small Business Alliance (SBA), made a presentation to the Tenino City Council during the work session before the Council's April 28 regular meeting concerning a program offered by her organization.

"We are employed to offer survivors who have suffered losses, through low-interest loans," Morehead said. "This program is like a lifeline. It's there so people can get repairs done as quickly as possible."

According to an information sheet Morehead handed out, the Disaster Loans program is for victims of severe storms, straight-line winds, flooding, landslides and mudslides which occurred Dec. 5 through 18, 2025 in 10 Washington counties, including Lewis, Grays Harbor and Thurston, as well as in tribal areas including that of the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation.

Application filing deadline for physical damage is June 10, 2026, and for economic injury is Jan. 7, 2027.

Three types of disaster loans are available.

Business Physical loans are for businesses to repair or replace disaster-damaged property owned by the business, including real estate, inventories, supplies, machinery and equipment. Businesses of any size are eligible, as are non-profits such as charities, churches, private universities, etc.



Photo by Dan Fisher

**Dan Penrose of SRJ Alliance delivers information on the Tenino Comprehensive Plan update to open the public hearing during the April 28 meeting of the Tenino City Council.**

Economic Injury loans are working capital loans to help small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small aquaculture businesses and most private, non-profit organizations meet their ordinary and necessary financial obligations that cannot be met as a direct result of the

disaster. These loans are intended to assist through the disaster recovery period.

The third type of loan is a Home Disaster Loan, which is for homeowners or renters to repair or replace disaster-damaged real estate and personal property including automobiles.

Credit requirements for applicants are that they must have a credit history acceptable to SBA, and must show the ability to repay all loans. Morehead said repayment can be extended for a period up to 30 years.

The interest rates charged where no credit is available elsewhere is 2.875 percent for home loans, 4 percent for business loans and 3.625 percent for non-profits on physical damage loan types. For economic injury loan types with no credit available elsewhere, interest is 4 percent for business and small agricultural cooperatives and 3.625 percent for non-profits.

Council also discussed two fireworks ordinances – one defining dates and hours during which sale and purchase of fireworks will be allowed, and the other giving the dates and hours during which use of fireworks will be legal.

"We are drastically different from the rest of the county," Maria Rodriguez reported to the council. "We are looking to be more in line before July 4."

Fireworks sale and purchase is allowed in Tenino from noon to 11 p.m. on June 28, 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. from June 29 through July 4, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. July 5, and from noon to 11 p.m. Dec. 27 through Dec. 31. The proposed change would remove legal sales of fireworks for the New Year holiday period.

The regular meeting included consent calendar approval that included an amended consent calendar from March 24 to April 14, which was discovered to have an error in its calculations. Both calendars were approved by the council.

A public hearing was held on Tenino's Comprehensive Plan update, with Dan Penrose of SRJ

Alliance providing information on the subject.

"There's a 730-page council packet on the update, which includes multiple drafts," Penrose said. "It's pretty extensive, there's a lot of challenges, but there's a ton of opportunities as well."

No testimony was given during the hearing, and council voted to formally adopt the Comp Plan update.

In New Business, Bucoda sent Town Council Member John Wood to express interest in a partnership with Tenino to hook the town up to Tenino's Wastewater Treatment Plant by means of a pipeline to be installed under a paved trail between the two municipalities.

"The study will determine whether it's a good idea or not," Wood said. "If we can do this, it's going to give you more revenue for the future."

Council approved further discussion on the potential partnership.

Also approved were resolutions declaring the city properties at 748 and 798 Sussex Ave. W. as surplus so they can be sold to the Tenino Community Service Center as its new food bank and storage warehouse; repealing of resolution 2024-07, a \$500,000 loan of which only \$300,000 was used, and an updated repayment schedule and final payment date for an interfund loan (resolution 2005-08).

Finally, council passed ordinances 939, to abolish the Investigative Fund, which has been at zero for close to 10 years and is no longer necessary to the Police Department, and to repeal Ord. 381, the Petty Cash Fund, which is no longer needed because all city purchases are now made by credit or debit card.

## Rochester School Board receives restraint report

*Voters approve capital levy for waterworks*

By Dan Fisher  
*News Editor*

One of the first reports delivered at the April 29 business meeting of the Rochester School District Board of Directors was from Laura Staley on the district's restraint and isolation practices, keeping under control students unable to control themselves.

Staley opened the report by introducing Jessica Whitehead, BCBA (Board Certified Behavioral Assistant) and Maggie Danford, COTA (Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant), along with Brandelle Bruat, RBT (Registered Behavioral Therapist), who described the restraint and isolation methods used at Rochester Primary and Grand Mound Elementary schools.

Danford displayed some of the equipment used at RPS and GMES to help students regain control of themselves, using her young daughter Melanie to demonstrate use of a vibration plate, a floor-level balance beam and a box divided into sections, each filled with small sensory items featuring different shapes and bright colors.

After being shown the use of



Photo by Dan Fisher

**Melanie Danford demonstrates the use of a vibrating platform, used to help calm overactive students in RSD's restraint and isolation procedures.**

this equipment by Melanie, board members were invited to try them out as well, and all did.

"They help our kiddos be more successful in controlling their actions," Maggie Danford explained.

Rochester uses the UKEBU restraint system and has 60

trained staff members. While some districts employ restraint or isolation for averages of up to 30 minutes, Rochester's typical restraint and isolation period is usually five minutes or less and never longer than 10 minutes.

Staley reported that Rochester received recognition for outstanding use of the program at a UKEBU conference in Salt Lake City.

"Incidents dropped from 71 during the 2022-23 school year to just eight so far this year," Staley said.

The board was informed that the special levy election held April 28 had seen Rochester's capital levy to fund renovation of the district's water system approved by 50.97 percent of the voters (1,546 to 1,487). A levy

requires only a simple majority, while a bond issue would have required a 60 percent supermajority.

In the Student Report, the board's student representatives updated the board on high school sports team standings and noted that 13 members of Rochester's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) were going to state this spring. They also reported that the RHS Prom was set for Saturday (May 2) at the Hands-on Kids' Museum and that the Skills USA Nationals begin June 1 in Georgia, where Rochester's robotics and drone teams will again compete.

Jill Pratt's business report indicated that district enrollment was at 1,979.58 FTE (full-time equivalent), including 53 in run-

ning start.

"It's our lowest FTE level in several years," Pratt said.

Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Bethman said the RHS Spring-fest had gone well.

"It was put on by the ASB and leadership students," Bethman said. "They did a great job."

She said the Distracted Driving mock accident staged by the West Thurston Fire Authority was held at the high school, though attendance was limited to students and staff. The demonstration included a Medivac helicopter landing at the school and the use of the "Jaws of Life" device to remove a volunteer student "victim" from the crumpled car used in the demonstration.

In the maintenance report, it was noted that on Monday morning, April 27, a water line at RHS running under a shed next to the stadium began leaking and flooded the immediate area before maintenance was able to shut off the water to that pipe. The leak is under the shed's concrete foundation and could not be reached to patch the break.

"One portable wound up without water," Bethman said.

She then listed the upcoming schedule of district events, including the RHS Future Farmers of America Plant Sale May 7-9; a spring musical, "25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," set for May 15, 16 and 18; an RHS Band and Choir concert May 21 at 7 p.m. at the May School Board meeting to be held May 27.

"The July meeting may be on the 22nd," Bethman said. "Justin Black is our interim superintendent and will make the final decision." Black has served the RSD for several years as District Tech and Curriculum Director and was approved by a 5-0 vote of the board.

### Prep Sports Calendar

**Wednesday, May 6**  
**Boys Soccer**  
 Hoquiam at Tenino, 6 pm

**Boys Soccer**  
 Tenino at Rochester, 7 pm

**Friday, May 8**  
**Fastpitch**  
 Castle Rock at Rochester, 4 pm  
 Tenino at King's Way Christian, 4 pm

**Saturday, May 9**  
**Track**  
 Tenino, Rochester at Centralia  
 Freshman Invite, 9 am

**Monday, May 11**  
**Fastpitch**  
 Tenino at Ridgefield Spudder  
 Classic, 3:30 pm

**Monday, May 11**  
**Fastpitch**  
 Rochester at Black Hills, 6 pm