Suspension of GCHS senior upheld by school board

by Danny Chandler
staff writer

The Grand County Board of Education decided Tuesday to uphold the suspension of a Grand County High School (GCHS) senior, preventing him from participating in the school's graduation ceremony that evening.

Jack Osness was suspended from school last week for posting a video on the website YouTube which depicted the violent deaths of two school faculty members.

The video was seen as an implied threat to school personnel, which constituted a "safe school" violation under Grand County School District policies, school officials said.

"Protocol is that we suspend the student for 10 days, pending an investigation," said GCHS Principal Steve Hren.

Osness and his parents appealed the suspension to the school board, where the suspension was upheld.

"We were being asked to do something that was inconsistent with our policy and past decisions," said Grand County School District Superintendent Margaret Hopkin. "It makes it appear arbitrary if we make an exception we wouldn't make under other circumstances."

The school board met Tuesday, May 18, to hear Osness' appeal.

"We deliberated for over three hours, and we didn't take it lightly," said Grand County School Board Vice President Bryon Walston. "In the end, we followed policy."

During the hearing, students and parents gathered at the school district office to show support for Osness. Students signed a petition asking that Osness be allowed to receive his diploma in the May 18 graduation ceremony, and many at the meeting held signs which read "Justice 4 Jack" or simply "J 4 J." A number of students also carried similar signs of support during Tuesday night's graduation ceremony at GCHS.

Osness was not allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony because suspended students are not allowed on school property, according to school district policy. The commencement ceremony fell within Osness' 10-day suspension. The family held a private graduation ceremony for Osness on Tuesday.

"It was a bad video, and it shouldn't have been done," said Dewayne Gwinn, Osness' stepfather. "We just think the punishment was too severe."

Although he could not walk in the graduation ceremony because he was suspended, Osness will receive his diploma, school officials said.

Arena...

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said, "recommends" the new fee proposal.

County council member Bob Greenberg asked Foster if he intends to formalize the advisory group. When Foster said he is looking for direction from the council, council member Chris Baird said he will work to make that happen.

In February, Foster recommended that the racetrack be permanently closed because the cost of repairing the fiberglass rail around it and other facilities is prohibitive. Area equestrian enthusiasts protested, telling the council that they need to use the track to exercise and warm up their horses.

Foster also noted the high cost of maintaining the track to race standards and troubles maintaining the grooming equipment. This week he said the equipment is being repaired.

The new fee schedule noted that "only trained OSTA employees will be allowed to operate OSTA equipment."

Currently, the track is closed while Foster replaces water pipes that burst during the winter, and electrical lines that were previously removed. Once that work is done and the trenches are filled, he said he will prepare the track for exercise and warm-up use.

Asked for a timeline, Foster first said reopening the track should happen within a few months. But when council members then pressed for more details, he said he could get the track open for temporary use within a month.

The timeline for bringing the track up to racing standards is unclear because of the high cost of replacing the rail, he said. Foster agreed to come back to the council in June with estimates of the costs and a timeline.

Thank You to all the volunteers and contributors who helped make Red Rock Elementary's final year a great memory. I'm very sorry I couldn't include all the volunteers' names, but I sincerely appreciate everyone's time and effort.

Teachers and staff, we truly thank you for making this challenging year a time to show how dedicated you are. I am genuinely impressed.

Kathy Lacy, PTA

Thank you

Mary McElhaney
Jeramey McElhaney & Family
Tom Lacy
Joylynn Torgerson
Bryan Torgerson and Family
Cassandra McDougall
Jenny Hymas
Daves Corner Market
Rock On Climbing Walls
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And once again I thank... Mary McElhaney *for all her hours and dedication!!!!*

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The Moab Valley Multicultural Center
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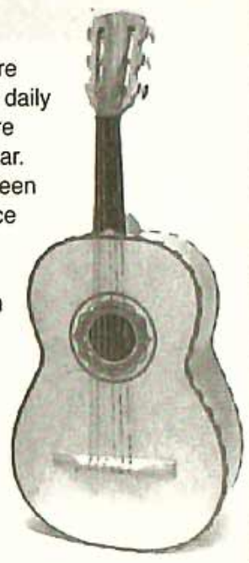
"Hecho en Paracho" or "Made In Paracho"

Thursday, May 20th 6:00 p.m.
The Grand County Public Library
With guest speaker and Paracho native Leticia Bentley



Visit Paracho, a town in central Mexico, where old world cultures and traditions are still part of daily life, and where a society, its economy and future are based solely on the construction of the guitar. The knowledge of crafting quality guitars has been passed on from one generation to the next since the early nineteenth century. Luthiers have been utilizing old world tools and techniques, and have propelled this small town's reputation to international acclaim. The filmmaker says, "I want [people] to realize that there are still people out there that actually craft the guitar from beginning to end and that it is one of the arts that are little by little getting lost."

"Hecho En Paracho" a 53 minute film, is a vibrant and colorful documentary that will take you to the heart and soul of Michoacán, Mexico.

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Road Construction is continuing on 5th West in Moab, Utah

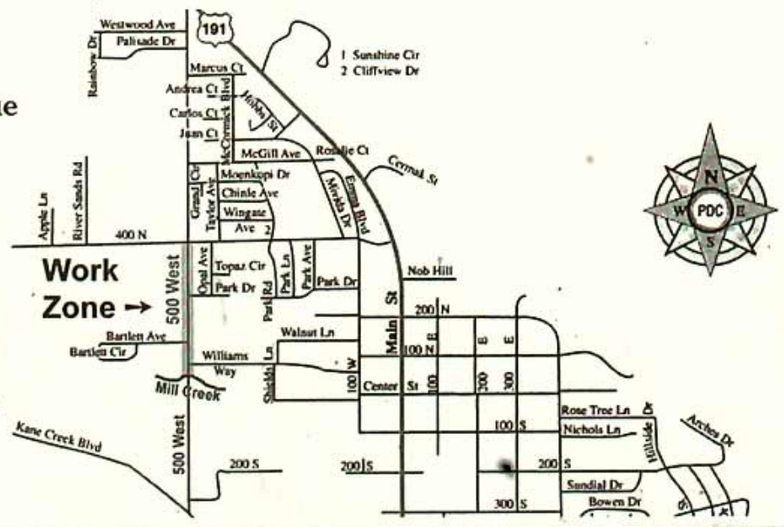
This project will include new storm drain system, widening of the roadway, bike lanes, curb and gutter, sidewalk and new asphalt pavement.

Work hours will be from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. There will be minimal impact on traffic this week.

For the week of May 24, 2010, we will continue to install Storm Drain and will be doing some grading for sidewalk and curb and gutter. There will be road closures between Bartlett and Williams Way. There will be one way traffic at times. We will be working in the intersection on 5th West and 400 North Please expect delays if you travel on 5th West.

Minimal delays are to be expected. Please use alternate route if possible.

This project will continue through the middle of August, 2010.

Announcements concerning progress of job will be made each week.

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