



SEASIDE Signal

OUR 113th Year

SEASIDESIGNAL.COM

December 18, 2020 \$1.00

School purchase 'a turning point for the city'

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

City Council members got their first look at plans for the purchase of Broadway Middle School by the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District.

"My hope and desire is to see this piece of property remain in the public ownership," Mayor Jay Barber said. "I would hate to see commercial development there, even though it would be a wonderful site for that."

Barber envisioned partnerships to build workforce housing on the U.S. Highway 101 side of the property.

The 5.4-acre property houses the middle school with two gyms, cafeteria, classrooms and kitchen, with four outdoor courtyards, parking lot and the land housing the Seaside Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce building and public restrooms. The city currently holds a long-term lease with the school district to use and maintain the property.

At Monday's City Council meeting, Skyler Archibald, executive director of the park district, outlined the six years of community engagement leading up to the potential purchase, including a 2014 citizens advisory group, 2017 feasibility study and a 2018 bond to expand the Broadway pool.

When the middle school campus went on the sales market after schools relocated to a new campus on Spruce Drive, the park district renewed interest in expansion.

The Seaside School District negotiated a \$2.25 million offer in November. The due-diligence process includes inspections, remediation estimates, public input and financing implications, Archibald said. The due-diligence period ends Dec. 30.

Flex-lease financing rather than a taxpayer bond would be used to fund the purchase. Annual payments would comprise 3.75% of the current park district budget, and that percentage would decline in future years.

"We feel really confident that we can acquire this property and maintain our current or even increase our level of programming to the community," Archibald said.

The park district will explore revenue strategy, partnerships and a detailed long-term program facility plan.

Councilors showed support for the potential purchase.

City Councilor Dana Phillips said she was impressed with the board's financing strategy.

City Councilor Tom Horning said the numbers "look very promising for the project as laid out."

"This is a great turning point for park and rec and the city," Horning said. "I encourage them to move forward and explore these things with all the participant groups in the community."

DELAY OF GAME



R.J. Marx

The new court at Seaside High School awaits student athletes.

School sports postponed

By GARY HENLEY
The Astorian

The Oregon School Activities Association announced its latest adjustment to the 2020-21 high school sports year as coronavirus numbers continue to move in the wrong direction in many areas of the state.

High school sports — which usually begin in late August or early September — were moved to an early January start by the OSAA executive board back in August.

In the latest board meeting last week, the OSAA revised the schedule again, pushing activities and sports back another month, to February.

This time, the fall sports will be the first to compete, with practices set to begin Feb. 8 for football and the following week for cross-country, soccer and volleyball.

Games and events will start the first week of March.

As a result, all three sports seasons will continue to feel the pinch, with shortened seasons.

Fall sports will last just over a month, and will be followed by a spring sports season from April 12 to May 23, with winter sports pushed back to May 17 through June 20.

Astoria athletic director Howard Rub said, "I am pleased that they're still making an effort to have something for all three sports seasons."

Still, he said, "It's hard on the seniors right now," as the senior athletes continue to see their final year of sports slipping away. With three separate sports seasons still planned, "it gives them some hope of playing."

The OSAA considered other proposals for separate sports seasons, and may still have to make future adjustments when February rolls around.

One proposal the OSAA was considering, Rub said, "would have had baseball and basketball offered during the same season."

"In our case, that would have made it

tough to field competitive teams in both sports," he said. "That was a proposal by 6A schools, because the majority of 6A schools have basketball players who are basketball-only athletes. That's not the case at the 4A level and below."

Another proposal had spring sports first, which would have made for some very cold baseball and softball games and track meets.

Currently, football, wrestling and basketball are unable to play or practice under normal conditions because of no-contact COVID restrictions, "so that's something I'm still nervous about," Rub said.

Rub, who doubles as football coach and athletic director, says the changes are creating scheduling nightmares for all athletic directors.

Seaside boys and girls basketball had already scheduled 13 games for January and February.

Rub said, "I was getting inundated with requests for some nonleague basketball games in January, but I wasn't even dealing with that much, since I didn't see that happening."

"I would say scheduling has been stressful, because of the direction things are going. The seasons are being shortened, we're down to five weeks." Still, the "Cowapa League is committed to playing a league season" in all sports.

In some sports, the schedules may take on a local flavor, with Clatsop County schools playing each other in nonleague games and events.

Coaches and athletes are still holding out hope of competing in some form or fashion.

Peter Weber, the OSAA's executive director, said the decision by the executive board "is another reminder of the impact the pandemic has had on Oregon students and schools. While disappointed that we need to adjust our original schedule, we believe that keeping three distinct seasons, albeit in shortened seasons, maintains potential opportunities for all students moving forward."



R.J. Marx

Project engineer Chris Lawson points to exterior remediation at the high school and middle school.

Campus work extends to February

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

The Seaside School District is finishing replacement of 22,000 linear square feet of weather barrier after the first application failed to meet specifications. The remediation project, estimated at \$2.5 million, is covered by insurance.

Construction work at the new high school and middle school campus is expected to be complete in February.

Project engineer Chris Lawson joined members of the citizen oversight committee on school construction on a tour of the building last Wednesday, now occupied by staff members as interior work comes to a close.

Teams scrape insulation wool left over from the first round, smooth the wall and reapply weather barrier, a two-part process that involves measuring, drying and testing the first coat before applying the second,

See Construction, Page A6

Board, public tussle over comment rules

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

In a special meeting with Special Districts Association of Oregon counsel Eileen Eakins, Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District board members peppered her with questions about what their role is and how they interact with the public.

Board member Celeste Bodner said members have experienced "personal attacks,

litigation threats and coordinated misinformation coming from a small group of individuals," and sought guidance from Eakins regarding how the board should respond to individuals.

Eakins listened as board members expressed frustration at communicating their message regarding the purchase of Broadway Middle School. The district has negotiated a deal with the school district for a purchase price of \$2.25 million for the former school, which closed to students after

construction of the new campus on Spruce Drive.

"The thing that bothers me the most is I'm understanding one of our City Council members and maybe more than one are part of this," board member Su Coddington said. "I think there is some legality, but I don't know enough. I think (executive director) Skyler (Archibald) was the one that said it was a bunch of lies."

See Guidelines, Page A6

As the Seaside School District approaches the end of construction, final costs will cap at about \$131.5 million.

The number, about a quarter more than the original 2016 construction bond of \$99.7 million, is supplanted by bond sales, interest, state grants, timber money, school sales and most recently a \$9 million 20-year loan.

With a favorable rate of return and investor demand, the district acquired the loan at a par amount of \$8.1 million, business manager Justine Hill said after a meeting of the citizen oversight committee on

See Loan, Page A6

Sunshine Teriyaki shines light on Asian cuisine

By KATHERINE LACAZE
For Seaside Signal

About a year after the highly rated Surf Pines Café in Gearhart closed its doors, a new restaurant has popped up in its place, keeping the location within the Bautista family.

Celestino Bautista opened Sunshine Teriyaki in August, transforming the site that was previously used by his sister for her breakfast

and brunch restaurant. Bautista also owns El Trio Loco, which runs out of the same building in the Gearhart plaza off U.S. Highway 101.

With Sunshine Teriyaki, Bautista has a dedicated partner in Jorge Lopez, the co-owner and head chef of the restaurant. According to Jose Bautista, who does communications for the restaurant group, his brother and Lopez have known each other professionally for many years and even worked together.

Lopez, who has past experience cooking in a small teriyaki place, approached

his brother about opening a new restaurant. At that point, Sunshine Teriyaki was born.

Lopez and his wife, Dulce Ciuz, handle the day-to-day operations of the restaurant, with Lopez doing the cooking and Ciuz occasionally helping in the kitchen but mostly managing the front of house. Sometimes their son will join the crew, making the restaurant a truly family run establishment at this point.

With the coronavirus pandemic ongoing and winter underway, Jose Bautista

See Teriyaki, Page A6



Katherine Lacaze

Dulce Ruiz (left) and Jorge Lopez run Sunshine Teriyaki, which opened in Gearhart in August. Lopez is also a co-owner of the restaurant with Celestino Bautista (not pictured).



7 29467 20040 1