

One turtle improves, one dies

NEWPORT (AP) — Authorities say a sea turtle found hypothermic and emaciated last month on a southwest Washington beach is improving at a Newport aquarium.

A second cold sea turtle, found Friday on Washington's Long Beach Peninsula, was

dead on arrival Monday evening at the Seattle Aquarium.

Oregon Coast Aquarium spokeswoman Erin Paxton in Newport said Tuesday that the olive ridley turtle named Solstice flapped her flippers in water last weekend and has warmed up to her ideal body

temperature of 75 degrees. She's also eating well. Aquarium official Jim Burke says that while she happily chomps fish, she spits out the nutrient-packed gel food supplement she's offered.

Burke says putting the turtle in a rehabilitation pool confirmed one concern: She has

buoyancy issues that prevent her from diving below the water's surface. He says this is a common ailment for distressed turtles and he hopes the issue resolves itself.

The turtles were found far from the temperate waters of their normal winter range.

Tongue Point: Nice but spendy

Port mulls what to do with property

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Port of Astoria Executive Director Jim Knight asked the Port Commission Tuesday: What should the Port do with North Tongue Point?

"I'd appreciate hearing your opinion about Tongue Point," Knight said, adding that the Port would establish the parameters of discussions with the multiple groups that come forward with proposals for the land.

Nice idea, no money

North Tongue Point, somewhere between 30 and 40 acres, includes five finger piers, a rail spur and Columbia River channel access and more than 140,000 square feet of World War II-era hangar space meant for an amphibious U.S. Naval base.

The Port Commission unanimously voted Sept. 29, 2009, to execute the lease on North Tongue Point with the Missoula, Mont.-based Washington Group, lasting 10 years.

The majority of the Port Commission agreed that while the property has great potential, the Port doesn't have the money to unilaterally improve it into a modern shipping facility, which Knight said would take hundreds of millions of dollars.

"Tongue Point is the only future for us right now," said Commissioner Bill Hunsinger, referencing the area's freedom from building restrictions in the Astoria Riverfront Vision Plan. The land has rail and deep water access to things that can't be regained if the Port walks away, he said.

Hunsinger supports buying North Tongue Point, on which the Port's lease from Washington Group runs for nearly another five years at more than \$300,000 annually. The Port has spent about \$1.6 million on lease payments, said Knight, and has a fairly equal amount to pay in rent on the remainder of the lease. It has had multiple suitors for the property, but nothing has materialized in a deal.

"It's a good location, but the Port can't afford it themselves," said Commissioner James Campbell, a previ-

ously stated proponent for keeping the lease at North Tongue Point. Campbell has been a tenant of the property since 1980 through Campbell Towing & Marine Construction.

Commissioner Robert Mushen said the worst thing to do would be to walk away from the lease, adding that while the Port doesn't have the money to develop it, the best option is to find a partner that does.

Commission Chairman John Raichl said that while he knows the least about the Tongue Point lease, he agrees it's a dysfunctional property with potential that the Port should only stay in if it doesn't jeopardize what the public already owns through the Port. He recommended including the public in the decision.

The Port should get a consultant to tell it about shipping trends and the possibilities for North Tongue Point, said Commissioner Stephen Fulton.

A private port?

Knight said industry shippers are looking at ways to privatize port operations. He asked commissioners if they'd be willing to privatize North Tongue Point if it would ultimately create more jobs than are already there and improve the property.

Oregon has been a pioneer in keeping its waterway public, said Mushen, and he'd hate to see Tongue Point go private, even if it created some extra tax revenue.

The Port needs to protect the multiple hundreds of jobs at North Tongue Point, he said, requiring any partner to guarantee that employees would hire locally and provide continuity. Pacific Coast Seafood's temporary plant subleased from Del Mar Seafoods accounts for most of the jobs, along with J&H Boatworks, J.E. McAmis Inc., NRC Environmental Services and others.

The Port's obligation is to its current tenants, said Raichl, and it has to make sure local jobs are being created by any venture. He reiterated the need for more public input.

Cannon Beach PD unveils strategic plan

Foot patrols will become a priority

By NANCY MCCARTHY
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — Longtime resident and former Cannon Beach City Councilor Sam Steidel was sworn in as the city's mayor Tuesday night.

Steidel, who ran unopposed in the November general election, replaces Mike Morgan, who served as mayor for six years.

The new mayor thanked his supporters briefly before beginning the City Council meeting.

During the meeting, Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn presented a master plan for the police department that includes a new mission statement and several goals.

"We started developing this three years ago with a community forum and some 'coffee with a cop' events," Schermerhorn told the council. "It contains the expectations the community has for us as well as expectations from the police department."

The department's three strategic goals are:

- Increase community contact through foot patrols and participation in community events;
- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of department operations;
- Establish a working environment that encourages teamwork, empowerment, communication and professional development.

Among the core values contained in the plan is a statement that the department "embraces diversity in all its forms, and vows to treat all individuals equally, with empathy, compassion and respect."

Schermerhorn said the department will, among other projects, increase downtown foot patrols and check local bars more often. The citizens police academy, which he directed while working for the Seaside Police Depart-

ment, will be expanded to include all law enforcement agencies in Clatsop County. The department also will assume responsibility for the Community Emergency Response Team, which the Cannon Beach Fire & Rescue had been supervising.

The department's strengths, according to the plan, include an attitude that the officers can mentor each other, a positive community perception, an emphasis on training, flexibility and maintaining a low crime rate. However, the plan notes that the department's weaknesses include a lack of experience, too many calls, a lack of opportunity to move up in the department and complacency.

Opportunities to overcome those weaknesses, however, include partnerships with the fire district and local businesses, exploring "lateral mobility" that would involve officers becoming detectives and dealing with the increasing volume of tourists in town.

The plan notes that "internal and external" threats also exist that aren't under the department's control. By being aware of them and developing programs to respond, however, the department can "greatly reduce the potential for loss," the plan says.

Those threats include employee retention, a tsunami, lack of a detoxification center, mental health issues, change and community perception.

During the community forum held in November 2013, those attending said the department's highest priority should be patrols, including foot and bicycle patrols and building and business checks. That priority was closely followed by public assistance, including home security checks, motorist assists, animal control and enforcing the city's nuisance ordinance.

Emergency response ranked third on the list of community priorities, and that was followed by community relations, traffic enforcement and criminal investigations.

Grants available for historic cemetery projects

The Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries offers grants for preservation projects at qualified historic cemeteries. Projects funded in the past include marker repair workshops, fencing, signs, interpretive panels and brochures, security lighting, access improvements, records management and more.

Awards typically range between \$1,000 and \$4,000, but

have been higher. Anyone can apply for a grant. While the grant applications are online, they are simple and commission staff can provide support.

"Our goal is to preserve Oregon's historic cemeteries, so we try to make it easy for people to access funds to do that while ensuring the funds are appropriately used," notes Kuri Gill, historic cem-

eteries program coordinator.

State law established the seven-member commission to maintain a listing of all historic cemeteries and gravesites in Oregon; promote public education on the significance of historic cemeteries; and help obtain financial and technical assistance for restoring, improving and

maintaining their appearances.

There are grant workshops on project planning and grant writing. A two-hour workshop is Feb. 3 in Salem. A one-hour webinar is available on Feb. 5. For information, go to www.oregonheritage.org or contact Kuri Gill at Kuri.Gill@oregon.gov or 503-986-0685.

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