

Port figuring out finances

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian



Jim Grey

The Port of Astoria missed the Dec. 31 deadline with the Oregon Secretary of State's Office to file the financial audit of its 2013-14 fiscal year. Executive Director Jim Knight said he isn't confident in the accuracy of financial statements after June 2013.

The Port fired its financial staff and replaced them with a newcomer and a contracted outside accountant, who with other Port staff's help have been combing through the finances a year and a half to ensure their accuracy.

The Port Commission, during a Tuesday night special session, unanimously approved of Knight negotiating with accounting firm Moss Adams to perform its financial audit of the 2013-14 fiscal year and those for two fiscal years thereafter. Concurrently, it allowed Knight to contract the Port with financial consulting firm CFO Selections to help prepare the agency for its audits.

"I'm painfully aware that we're not producing accurate financial statements," said Knight Tuesday, adding that the Port has the material to present them for the commission for approval, but can't be sure of their accuracy.

Pro-tem Financial Manager Jim Grey, hired in November to replace the fired

Hopkins, does the Secretary of State's Office contact the government within which the district is organized — in the Port's case Clatsop County — and seek possible dissolution of the agency.

Financial review

During his report near the end of the meeting Tuesday, Knight brought up Grey to explain what Port staff are doing to review all of its financials and ready them for an audit and creation of the 2015-16 budget, which is due by June 30.

The Port has been contracting on an hourly basis with Barbara Blue of Bussett Law & Associates since Aug. 25 and at least through the end of this month. She's going back through the financials as far back as June 30, 2013, the end of the last completed auditing period and the last financials Knight said he and she are confident of their accuracy.

Grey said Blue's primary role is to ensure the accuracy of the Port's financial statements, reconciling them with its bank accounts and finding ways to correct inaccuracies.

The Port has had trouble, he said at the Tuesday meeting, ensuring that bills get out on time and the accuracy of prepaid expenses it's passing on to customers, including one face-to-face meeting with a tenant who might owe upward of \$70,000, depending on the

accuracy review. The Port's trying to convey its recent financial staff changes to customers, said Grey, and make things right.

Operations Manager Matt McGrath said he and other staff members have been going through all the Port's leases page by page, looking at the bigger fish first.

"We're probably at about 85 percent compliance with the CPI compliance," said McGrath about the consumer price index, which measures changes in the price level of consumer goods and services purchased by households and changes the price of leases at the Port.

"It's none of the people who are here now," said Grey of the financial issues. "We're going to fix this, make it right and make it run like a well-oiled clock."

In other news:

- Knight reported that a tenant of the Port, who he would not name, is in arrears on its lease by about \$20,000. The tenant has hit hard times but still employs six to eight people, said Knight, and the Port's trying to be creative in working with the tenant to pay off debt so they can continue to operate. The tenant, he added, has agreed to a repayment plan.

- Grey reported that the Port hired Will Isom from Columbia Memorial Hospital as its new staff accountant starting Jan. 26. Currently, Grey's the only explicitly financial employee at the Port.



NATALIE ST. JOHN — EO Media Group

This year's Polar Plunge will be in the ocean instead of at Black Lake, pictured above last year.

Polar Plunge has been postponed

By NATALIE St. John
EO Media Group

LONG BEACH PENINSULA, Wash. — The New Year's Day "Polar Plunge" has been moved to a different day and a different location.

The annual event, which raises money for Ilwaco Middle and High School music, will now take place at 10 a.m. Jan. 17, at Waikiki Beach.

Band director Rachel Lake said the Ilwaco Music Boosters had to reschedule the event due to a misunderstanding

ing with the Washington State Parks System over an event permit.

"That will be remedied," Lake said. She added that everything else about the rescheduled event will be the same. Surf rescuers and volunteer emergency medical personnel will still supervise the event, and prizes, hot cocoa, coffee and photo opportunities will still be provided.

Lake said the new venue actually has a couple of advantages.

"At Waikiki, there are showers, bathrooms and more parking," Lake said.



DAMIAN MULINIX — EO Media Group

Ilwaco Music Boosters will take the Polar Plunge Jan. 17 at Seaview Beach Approach. Participants are pictured at last year's plunge at Black Lake.

Crab feed begins Friday in Warrenton

WARRENTON — The 27th annual Deep Sea Fishermen's Benefit Fund Crab Feed is being held from 4 to 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday at the Warrenton

Community Center, 170 S.W. Third St. in Warrenton. Fresh Dungeness crab, cole slaw, garlic bread, drink, dessert, and all the trimmings are being served.

The cost is \$17 for adults, \$15 for seniors and those younger than 12, or \$10 for a half crab dinner.

This event is sponsored

by the Deep Sea Fishermen's Benefit Fund, a non-profit corporation which maintains an emergency fund to help fishermen and their families.

Free estate planning workshop set

SEASIDE — CLA Estate Services is hosting a free Estate Planning Workshop at 2 p.m. Monday at Rivertide Suites, 102 N. Holladay Drive in Seaside. The workshop will provide infor-

mation on securing one's estate and retirement planning. Participants will receive a workbook and gain information regarding the pros and cons of wills and trusts; how to avoid probate;

long-term health care concerns; tax reduction planning and more. Seating is limited.

To confirm attendance, or for information, call 866-252-8721 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

DailyAstorian.com

At least 100 homes lose water in Cannon Beach Wednesday night

CANNON BEACH — At least 100 homes in Cannon Beach's north end found themselves without water from about 7 p.m. Wednesday to 2:30 a.m. today when a water line running from the Ash Street pump station uphill to the north reservoir broke, emptying the reservoir's 30,000 gallons of water onto the Ash, Seventh and Larch streets in three to four minutes, Public Works

Director Dan Grassick said. The department is "not exactly sure what happened," he said.

By early morning, Public Works had replaced the damaged section of PVC pipe and restored water to the residents.

Three private homes, whose owners are out of town, may have suffered water damaged, he said, adding that the city is trying

to contact them.

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The North Coast State Forest Coalition is hosting a fabulously fun **forest evening**

to celebrate our ongoing success protecting the Clatsop and Tillamook State forests and advocating for balance on these public lands

Our supporters on the North Coast play a crucial role in this effort and we want to thank you!

Where: Lovell Showroom
Fort George Brewery
1483 Duane St, Astoria, OR

When: 6:30-8:30 pm
Friday, January 9th



Michael Granger
Lightbox Photographic



Darryl Lloyd

Why: We've created conservation areas on our state forests, protected Oregon's largest tree and are moving toward a balanced forest management plan. So let's celebrate and keep the progress going!

Who: You and everyone you know!

Along with celebration and good company, there will be free beer, beautiful local photography and delicious food available for purchase. Oregon forest expert Bob Van Dyk will provide a brief slideshow on our progress to conserve and restore fish and wildlife habitat, clean drinking water and recreation opportunities.

North Coast State Forest Coalition