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JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Astoria City Councilor Cindy Price sits behind the soundboard at the KMUN radio station where she volunteers as a radio host about once a month. As a councilor, Price wants to focus on greater transparency, particularly on city finances, more scrutiny of development projects and the shift of drunken-driving prosecutions from the city's Municipal Court to the county's Circuit Court.

Schools: We need more \$\$

Area legislators, schools, parents grapple to pay for education

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

The general message to state Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, and state Rep. Deborah Boone, D-Cannon Beach, was pretty clear from school leaders gathered Thursday night at Capt. Robert Gray School: After years of deep cuts and only one recent biennial raise, schools still need more money to recover and invest in improving education.

Astoria School District hosted the legislative forum to speak with local legislators about their needs. It comes amid multiple proposed state budgets for the 2015-17 biennium from the governor and chairmen of the House and Senate, and about two weeks before the 78th Oregon legislative assembly begins Feb. 2.

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IN THE OPEN

Price wants to focus on greater transparency, drunken-driving prosecutions

By DERRICK DEPLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

When Cindy Price was sworn in this month to the Astoria City Council, she took care to assure her supporters in Ward 3, the heart of downtown, that she had heard them during the election campaign.

Her issues will be greater transparency, particularly on city finances, more scrutiny of development projects, and the shift of drunken-driving prosecutions from the city's Municipal Court to the county's Circuit Court.

"Some of it just goes down to goal setting," Price said in an interview after what she billed a "salonical" — a meet and greet with residents — last weekend at the Astoria Public Library. "Why are certain goals set? What is the vision of the city and what part of that vision does this goal meet?"

Mayor Arline LaMear and the City Council will hold a goal-setting session next week, which will help shape the city's policy agenda for the coming year.

Price, 60, a writer, radio host and community volunteer, has suggested that the city look to the Albany strategic plan as a model. The Willamette Valley city has outlined four broad themes — great neighborhoods; a safe city; a healthy economy; and an effective government — fleshed out with goals and objectives for each subject area



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Councilor Cindy Price speaks with City Manager Brett Estes at the council meeting Jan. 5.

consistent with the city's overall mission, vision and values.

Divisive DUI decision

A policy change Price hopes is on the city's agenda is the transfer of drunken-driving cases to Circuit Court, a divisive issue that for years has pitted the city against Clatsop County District Attorney Josh Marquis, Price's husband, who has sought jurisdiction.

The Oregon Court of Appeals ruled last year that the city has the authority to direct DUI cases to Municipal Court, but, philosophically and politically, the question is far from settled.

LaMear has said the DUI issue could be the topic of a work session of the City Council, and a discussion item has been set for the council's next meeting Tuesday night.

"I did not make it the center-

piece of my campaign at all. But I've made it clear that I think that the highest standard of justice available to Astoria citizens and visitors to Astoria is at Circuit Court and not at Municipal Court," Price said.

"And that's sort of the basis on which I probably will make all of my decisions: What's the highest

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Final field details OK'd

CMH already has the keys for John Warren Field, just needs the paperwork

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

"We are done with that property," said Superintendent Craig Hoppes to the Astoria School District Board of Directors, shortly after they voted Wednesday night to approve two more property transfers and a bill of sale to Columbia Memorial Hospital for John Warren Field and the adjacent bus barn.

It's a final step in the process of transferring the entire property at 1905 Exchange St. for the Astoria Sports Complex on Williamsport Road.

Hoppes said CMH's lawyer found two more parcels at the site

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Cast out commissioner: No regrets for coal dock clash

By PETER WONG
Capital Bureau

SALEM — The former chairwoman of the Oregon Transportation Commission says she has no apologies for her opposition to \$2 million in state money for a coal-loading dock project — a vote that prompted Gov. John Kitzhaber to remove her last week.

Catherine Mater of Corvallis, who led the commission for just seven months, made her remarks Thursday at a hearing by the commission. The commission is reconsidering the project for a share of \$4 million in grants for non-highway transportation projects under Connect Oregon.

Atop the short list recom-



AP Photo/The Oregonian, Rob Davis

Catherine Mater, transportation commissioner fired for coal opposition, fires back at coal supporters.

mended by a review panel last week is \$2 million for renovation of Berth 2 at the Port of St. Helens near Clatskanie on

the Columbia River.

The port's original request was to have been matched by \$3 million from Ambre En-

ergy, the Australian company proposing to ship coal via the Northwest to Asia. But Mater and two other commission members rejected that project on a 3-2 vote Aug. 22.

Now the port, whose officials say the project is an all-purpose dock for oceangoing ships, proposes to put up the \$3 million match itself.

The four remaining commission members will decide the grants at their next meeting Feb. 19 in Keizer.

On Thursday Kitzhaber named commission member Tammy Baney, a Deschutes County commissioner and supporter of the dock renovation, as Mater's replacement chairwoman.

Kitzhaber opposes coal ex-

ports, but some state officials — including his transportation adviser — say the dock project should stand on its own merits. Despite Ambre's commitment to the project, they contend the renovation is commodity neutral and would allow shipments a variety of products.

Also in support of the project is Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, the No. 2 senator on the Legislature's joint budget committee and co-leader of its subcommittee on transportation and economic development. Kitzhaber needs the support of Johnson and other legislators for his broader agenda.

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