

Somers not selected Mill Creek, Wash., manager

By KYLE SPURR
The Daily Astorian

Clatsop County Manager Scott Somers will not be the next city manager of Mill Creek, Wash., a city of about 18,750 north of Seattle.

Somers was one of four finalists for the position, out of 62 applicants.

On Tuesday night, the Mill Creek City Council unanimously chose Rebecca Polizzotto of Douglas, Alaska, near Juneau, who has been working as an assistant state attorney general, according to The Everett Herald.

The City Council made its decision after a two-day selection process. The four finalists

toured Mill Creek and met with city staff and the public Thursday, and interviewed with the City Council on Friday, The Herald reported.

The application process closed in March.

Somers declined to comment when contacted by The Daily Astorian Wednesday morning.

He previously said the Mill Creek position was the first job he applied for since becoming Clatsop County Manager in July 2012. Prior to Clatsop County, Somers worked as city manager of Reedsport.

Somers, who has a Master of Public Administration from the University of Arizo-

na, started his public service career in White Bear Lake, Minn., as an assistant to the city manager and then as the assistant city administrator in Savage, Minn., near Minneapolis.

Somers had described the Mill Creek position as an opportunity he did not want to overlook.



Scott Somers

Library: 'It's a way to get people talking and get the community together'

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bureaucrats, drawing unwanted national media attention.

Last year, Spencer Collins, a 9-year-old in Leawood, Kan., became a symbol for the movement after the city warned his family to take down a book exchange in their front yard because it was an improper detached structure. Neighbors had complained.

The Leawood City Council later placed a moratorium on the prohibition while the city reviewed its development ordinance.

"Messing with Little Free Library is like messing with a lemonade stand," Bol said.

The Little Free Library at 12th Street and Grand Avenue is on city property, which could invite a complaint from a persnickety neighbor or zoning vigilante.

"It seems like a benign use," said Mike Morgan, the interim city planner.

Ready to read

Keyser said she wants to eventually register her family's miniature library as an official Little Free Library and receive a charter sign to display.

Her family's self-styled contribution to the movement has already been noticed in the neighborhood. Over the past several days, books have been taken out, while new arrivals have appeared.

"It's a way to get people talking and

get the community together," said Keyser, who was out on the bench Tuesday afternoon with her son, Olin, 6, and daughter, Juno, 1.

Astoria City Councilor Cindy Price, who represents the neighborhood, said the Little Free Library is a great idea.

"It fits right in with having a mayor (Arlene LaMear) who is a librarian and who I think can bring educational, intellectual, reading kind of things to the fore," she said. "This is great. And it's cute, too."

Melissa Keyser, with son Olin, 6, and daughter Juno, 1, at their Little Free Library in Astoria.

DERRICK DePLEGGE — The Daily Astorian



Sea lions: Numbers of pinnipeds spiked during smelt run in March

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ODFW periodically traps and brands sea lions at the basin, as part of a tracking effort. It's authorized by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to kill up to 93 sea lions a year found preying on salmon at Bonneville Dam.

Larger issue

The sea lion issue has been a divisive one, with members of the Sea Lion Defense Brigade regularly attending Port meetings and squaring off with diametrically opposed audience members, and often Port Commissioner Bill Hunsinger.

"We don't have to, in the Port of Astoria, provide a sanctuary for sea lions," Hunsinger said, adding that nature's balance is out of

whack, with sea lions possibly finding a new place to breed and live full time now that they're starving in California.

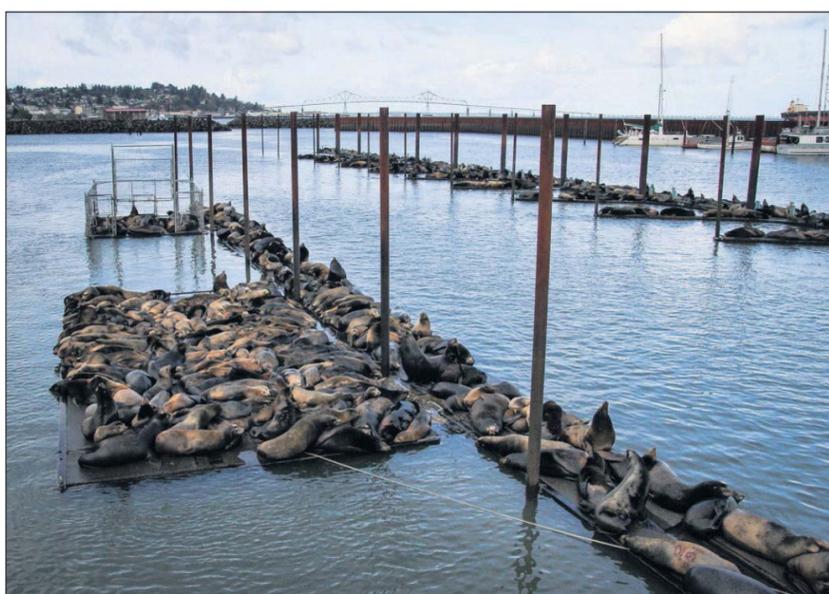
Biologists from NOAA have pointed to odd wind patterns leading to rising ocean temperatures affecting the food source of sea lions, largely sardines. Female sea lions are taking longer to find food for their pups, who are looking for food on their own before they are ready, and washing up emaciated along the West Coast. Meanwhile, sea lions are moving north and into the Columbia River to take advantage of strong runs of smelt and salmon.

Numbers of sea lions spiked during the smelt run in March, with one count by the ODFW estimating more than 2,300 in the East End Mooring Basin. The situation

seems to have boiled over, with a federal investigation by NOAA agents into possible sea lion shootings at the basin earlier this month.

"Clearly there is something wrong with ocean conditions," and sea lions need more support than ever before, Astoria resident Ted Thomas said. He asked the Port Commission to publicly condemn the possible shootings, state its support for the Marine Mammal Protection Act and release to the public the same surveillance tape footage Port staff gave to NOAA investigators.

Members of the Sea Lion Defense Brigade, including Stacey McKenney and Veronica Montoya, approached and commented about how the sea lions are so noisy because of the ODFW branding.



Sea lions and seals rest on the docks of the East Mooring Basin. The East End Mooring Basin has four docks, two for boats and two for sea lions. JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

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