

Free fruit and vegetable distribution begins Thursday

Food Bank has three sites and free seeds

Free fruits and vegetables will again be distributed to low-income residents in Clatsop County from April 30 through Oct. 1 in the style of a road side vegetable stand. The times and locations are as follows:

- Astoria: 9 to 10:30 a.m. Thursdays, in the parking lot between Second and Third streets.
- Seaside: noon to 1:3 p.m. Thursdays, Seaside Factory Outlet Center, 1111 N. Roosevelt Drive.
- Warrenton: 3 to 4:30 p.m. Thursdays, Clatsop Community Action (CCA) Regional Food Bank parking lot, 2010 S.E. Chokeberry Ave.

Our Food Bank Fresh program provides access and education, but most importantly an opportunity for low-income residents to make healthier food choices during visits to our partner agency distribution sites, and now directly from CCA Regional Food Bank Mobile Produce Pantry sites every week," Marlin Martin of CCA Regional Food Bank said. These free fruits and vegetables are in addition to the food people receive during their regular visit to a food pantry.

Much of the fresh produce received at the CCA Regional Food Bank each week comes directly from the efforts of Oregon Food Bank. Truckloads of product, typically rejected from the retail markets due to product blemishes, irregular sizes, under- or overdeveloped product, or excess pounds are donated or rescued to avoid wasting food that, although not perfect, is still consumable. Fresh produce donations are also received from local industry donors through the Fresh Alliance program, and from a growing number of gardeners, farmers and backyard apple trees.

The "Food Bank Farm" production gardens are targeted to produce over 5,000 pounds of carrots and apples, grown specifically for distribution to low-income residents though the good work of partner agencies throughout Clatsop County. Live food demonstrations will be conducted at the mobile produce pantries on given days, and thousands of packets of garden seeds will be available to low-income residents interested in growing fresh vegetables at their homes. These seeds will be available at the mobile produce pantries and at food pantries throughout Clatsop County.



Submitted photo

Pictured, volunteers and staff prepare to greet emergency food recipients at a 2014 Mobile Produce Pantry location.

this rewarding project, specifically during shifts at mobile produce pantry locations, or preparing the product prior to the pantries.

"It takes many hands to make this program a success," Martin said. "Volunteers are the only way for us to continue this undertaking. We need 15 to 20 dedicated individuals. Volunteers may serve as many days as they want to, but we are looking for folks who can commit to at least one morning or one afternoon shift each Thursday." This allows them enough time to learn and train for duties.

For volunteers who like behind the scene action, culling and packaging duties are available at the food bank during the mornings, preparing the product for the mobile produce pantry. For volunteers who enjoy working outdoors in the fresh air and with the public, help is needed at the pantry to assist in serving consumers.

For information, to donate, or to volunteer, call 503-861-FOOD (3663).

'It takes many hands to make this program a success.'

Marlin Martin
director, CCA Food Program

Seasiders ask to stop medical marijuana discrimination

City Council changes vote

By KATHERINE LACAZE
EO Media Group

SEASIDE — Several community members implored Seaside City Council to help end the discrimination of medical marijuana patients during a second public hearing on the proposal to amend Seaside's Code in order to allow and regulate medical marijuana dispensaries in the city.

The board members demonstrated a change of heart during the council's meeting Monday by voting 6-1 to remove restrictions applying to parks and arcades that were added last meeting. Mayor Don Larson was the dissenting vote.

The city is in the process of amending the Code of Seaside, which currently prohibits any business that is unlawful, illegal or prohibited by state and federal laws. The proposed amendment changes the business license ordinance to include the sentence: "Notwithstanding the aforementioned provisions, a license can be issued for medical marijuana dispensaries that comply with the additional licensing requirements in Chapter 118."

In addition, a new chapter regulating dispensaries will be added to the Code. The chapter, as proposed, requires all medical marijuana dispensaries to be registered in accordance with the Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rule.

Seaside resident and activist Angela Fairless, Highway 420 owner Steve Geiger and other speakers drew a comparison between medical marijuana dispens-

saries and the sale and consumption of alcohol, which is very present in Seaside. They questioned what they see as hypocrisy that people can consume alcohol at multiple restaurants and locations, even those attended by children, but patients who need cannabis for medicinal reasons are denied the ability to even obtain it within city limits and Seaside's Urban Growth Boundary.

The restrictions proposed by Larson seem unnecessary, discriminatory and stemmed from fear, they said.

"I think those fears you have are based on old mentalities that are going to the wayside," Fairless said.

Since the Seaside Planning Commission did a majority of the work on the ordinance and did not see a need to add restrictions outside of what the state has addressed, Geiger said, he did not know why the City Council would then ignore the commission's recommendation and add "unreasonable and unfair" restrictions.

Mark Tolan, owner of Seaside Vacation Homes, was the only resident who asked the council to be conservative about allowing anything that makes people not be "in their right mind." He said doing so was in the interest of public safety and keeping Seaside a "family friendly" town, much to the chagrin of several other audience members.

Dawn Greenfield, who used to own a licensed dispensary, responded "all medical marijuana patients have family."

"To me, that's one more discrimination we need to end," she said.

Fairless agreed, "'Family friendly' means not discriminating against people and not allowing fear to

make you hide truth from our children," she said after the meeting. She was accompanied at the meeting by her third-grade son, who has been educated on such issues as caffeine, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drugs.

The restrictions already placed by the state are "so intense," Greenfield said, with every transaction being tracked, recorded and caught on camera 24/7. Proponents of medical marijuana are not asking for Seaside to take on "a crazy, Venice Beach atmosphere," she said. "We're talking about legitimate sick people that need this medicine."

Eric Saucedo, who grows medical cannabis, requested the City Council also be lenient on placing more restrictions for growers in the city. The council responded they're not addressing that aspect of medical marijuana at this time.

Barber, who also voted "no" last meeting, said he's thought a lot about this issue and believes the Planning Commission "did a great job of crafting an ordinance for exploring a new area for Seaside." The city can amend its Code at any time, he added, to deal with unforeseen problems that might arise.

Councilor Dana Phillips changed her vote to approve removal of the amendment, but she is adamantly against a medical marijuana dispensary being established in Seaside's downtown core. She will vote against allowing a marijuana business, medical or recreational, from operating there, she said.

The council will bring back the legislation for a third reading and possible adoption at its May 11 meeting.

Group offers help for dealing with domestic violence

The Help Ending Abusive Relationship Tendencies (HEART) support group meets from 10 to 11:30 a.m. every Wednesday at The Harbor, 1361 Duane St. in downtown Astoria.

HEART covers subjects related to the effects of domestic violence on children, parents and other family members. It covers the dynamics of power, control and how to recognize red flags.

"Domestic violence affects everyone residing in a household, and if victims of domestic violence can learn how to see abusive patterns, they will be better prepared for current and future relationships," a release by The Harbor read. "If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship this class can help to educate you

and give you options. Everyone deserves to live in a safe home."

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spot by calling Williams at 503-325-3426, ext. 104, or by emailing audrey@harbornw.org

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