

# Talk of lodging tax hike continues in Cannon Beach

By ERICK BENGEL  
EO Media Group

Doing the city's bidding

CANNON BEACH — Should the city increase the 6 percent transient lodging tax by 0.5 percent beginning in fiscal year 2015-16 as originally discussed, or by a full 1 percent? Should the tax be increased at all?

The Cannon Beach Budget Committee chewed on these questions Wednesday evening, which marked the committee's third meeting.

At previous meetings, the committee's discussion assumed a half-percent tax hike, as does City Manager Brant Kucera's proposed FY2015-16 budget of \$14,539,865 — a 7.6 percent increase over last year's budget.

The proposed increase would generate up to an additional \$139,000 specifically for the Visitor Information Center — via the Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce — to spend on marketing Cannon Beach and its events, Kucera said.

Then, on Wednesday, City Councilor Mike Benefield suggested that the increase be 1 percent instead.

Courtland Carrier, executive director of the chamber, had been imagining a half-percent increase, but, "if the opportunity exists, we can definitely justify the additional amount," he said.

Right now, the chamber-run information center staffs the equivalent of one full-time employee, whereas Seaside and Astoria's visitor centers staff more than three each, Carrier said. Meanwhile, Cannon Beach's information center, receives about three times the walk-in visitors.

"It's overwhelming. Totally overwhelming," Carrier said. "We're here to bring more business to Cannon Beach, and without additional staffing, we aren't able to do that outreach. We literally don't have the staff bandwidth to be able to do it right now."

He added that Cannon Beach gives a far smaller percentage of lodging tax dollars to its chamber — less than 10 percent — than do other Oregon cities; the statewide average is about 40 percent, Carrier said.

Because more than 50 percent of the city's general fund revenue comes from transient lodging taxes, the tax increase "would have a very positive fiscal impact," Kucera argued. The benefit to the chamber would "come back to (the city) in visitors and tourism."

"I can guarantee you that we are there to do your bidding — to bring visitors to increase your budget," Carrier said. "It's your budget we're dealing with. If we do more business, you earn more money."

Carrier said he plans to discuss at the next budget meeting how the information center will spend the extra money. He has already indicated that the chamber would hire a full-time staff person for the center and buy new brochure racks.

"I'd sure like to look and see where the money goes," committee Vice Chairman Richard Bertellotti said.

Marty Schwab Harris, a committee member, said she would like to know the projected increase in visitors and whether the city can handle it.

"We know that we're landlocked right now, and we know that we have parking limitations and whatnot," she said. "So, as a full-time resident, I would be interested in having a better understanding of what the volume increase will be, and what pressures that will put on all aspects of community services and public services."

### Public comment

The fourth and final budget meeting, scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, will include a public comment period.

Wendy Higgins, a city councilor and general manager of The Ocean Lodge, is organizing a meeting for representatives of Cannon Beach hotels to discuss the proposed lodging tax increase shortly after the next meeting, she said. Some representatives are expected to chime in during public comment.

The City Council plans to vote on the proposed budget at the June 2 regular meeting, but will hold a special meeting if more deliberation is required.



Courtland Carrier

# Ocean Beach teachers' union members won't take a 'skip day'

Teachers cite community support

**'Walking out and losing a day of school is not what's best for kids.'**

By KATIE WILSON  
EO Media Group

— Rachel Lake

Union president and district music teacher

LONG BEACH PENINSULA, Wash. — Across the state, teachers' unions are holding one-day strikes to protest what they say are inadequate school-funding proposals in the Washington legislature.

But teachers from the Ocean Beach School District will not be joining them.

Representatives of the local teachers union informed the Chinook Observer recently that Ocean Beach School District teachers will not go on strike.

"Walking out and losing a day of school is not what's best for kids," said union president and district music teacher Rachel Lake in an interview April 29.

They also thought about what the community would

think if teachers walked out of school for a day.

"Our community is so supportive of our schools," Lake said. "They've passed all our levies and bonds. ... We wanted to make sure the community knew we loved their support."

In cities where teachers have gone on strike, the community response has been mixed with some parents saying they understand the teachers' reasons but felt that the strikes (and the missed school day) hurt their kids.

Lake said they also wanted to make sure the district knew it had the support of its teachers.

"Our district is doing its best to support us," she said.

In mid-April, teachers in eight Washington school dis-

tricts walked out of classes, concerned about what they say is the continued underfunding of Washington's schools. The unions have argued that the state is not paying teachers competitive wages and is pushing testing over teaching.

To satisfy a state Supreme Court ruling to increase funding for public schools in Washington, state House Democrats and Senate Republicans have pushed budgets proposing \$1.3 billion and \$1.4 billion for schools.

Under both proposals, money would be put toward reducing class sizes in kindergarten through third grade, though not grades 4-12.

Unlike the Senate Republican's plan, the House Dem-

ocrats did propose a slight cost-of-living increase for teachers.

Though Long Beach Peninsula teachers have decided not to strike, they still intend to make their voices heard. Lake and the building representatives in the district have encouraged teachers and district staff to write letters to the state legislature supporting the union's demands to provide more funds to school districts so they can support staff; fund professional learning opportunities, Title I and special education; maintain smaller class sizes; and pay teachers a livable wage.

After the legislature failed to meet its deadline during its 103-day 2015 session, it moved into a special session last week to continue discussing issues, including education spending proposals. Special sessions can run up to 30 days and Gov. Jay Inslee could call for another such session if more state business still needs to be discussed.

# Columbia Pacific CCO to offer series on brain health

By The Daily Astorian

"The role of communities in health and wellness"

• Wednesday, Aug. 12, topic to be announced  
Established in Septem-

ber 2012, Columbia Pacific CCO coordinates health services for more than 25,000 Oregon Health Plan members in Columbia, Clatsop,

Tillamook and coastal Douglas counties (Reedsport).

For more information, please visit [www.colpahealth.org](http://www.colpahealth.org).

The Community Advisory Council of the Columbia Pacific Coordinated Care Organization is offering a series of five health talks for Tillamook County residents.

The series, titled "The Amazing Brain: Caring for Mind, Health and a Resilient Tillamook County," is hosted by R.N. Sharon Black.

Each talk will take place at Tillamook Bay Community College, and be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The next talk "Biochemistry of the Brain: The Effects of Life Experience on Brain Development" will be held Wednesday, May 13. Registration opens at 5 p.m.

Each discussion will feature local and regional brain health experts who will offer real life advice, tips and tactics on maintaining optimal brain health.

The series of talks is as follows:

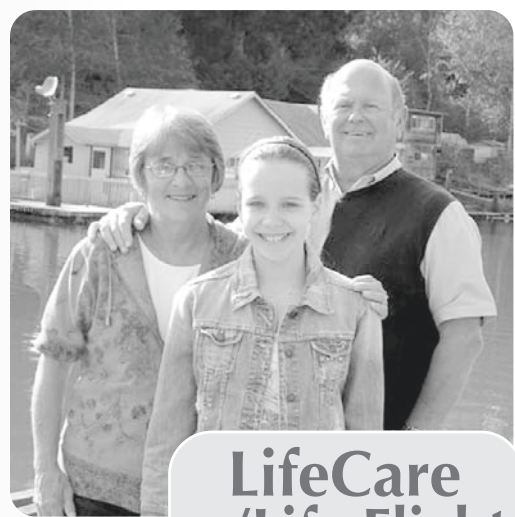
- Wednesday, June 10, "The effects of chemicals on brain development and health"
- Wednesday, July 8,

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Willoughby today.

Consultations will be performed at no charge for all qualified callers. Participants will try a new device for 10 days and rate improvement in their perception of head noise. Anyone who is bothered by head noise is qualified to take advantage of this opportunity to try this technology.

Participants needed who have any of the following head noises:

- Buzzing • Crickets • Hissing • Ringing • Roaring

## New Research Discovers Relief for Many

For adults with ringing ears (tinnitus), now comes good news. The results of significant tinnitus research were presented at the American Academy of Audiology Conference held in Boston, MA. Researchers from renowned universities, medical schools and technology companies presented positive conclusions to work regarding treatment methods of tinnitus.

For example, one published study reported relief among 60 percent of patients from a sampling provided by 230 clinicians using tone-matching audiograms and frequency-matching programmable hearing aids.

Citizens with ringing ears may now be helped by hearing aids with these special capabilities. This special Willoughby program is an opportunity for Oregonians to

find out if this new technology will help reduce or eliminate their head noise. To participate, call for an appointment.

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