

# Cannon Beach to seek \$102,000 for emergency materials

## Grant could fund emergency equipment

By **NANCY McCARTHY**  
For The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — If Cannon Beach receives the \$102,000 state homeland security grant the city is applying for, communication during emergencies may be improved.

The grant application will be part of an overall grant being sought by Clatsop County.

During a Cannon Beach City Council meeting last week, the council unanimously approved City Manager Brant Kucera's request to apply for the funds.

About \$30,000 would go toward developing three different field operating guides for the city staff, volunteers

working with the emergency responders, including ham radio groups and community emergency response teams; and local community organizations as well as businesses.

The guides would "allow someone to understand how to run a command center better or allocate resources," Kucera said. "Anyone could pick up a guide and understand their role in this event."

The remaining \$72,000 of the grant would provide equipment, including a generator for the emergency command center, which would be based at the fire station or the public works building; hand-held radio sets for response staff; and a military-style tent to act as a temporary command center.

In other business, the council:

- Removed from the agenda a planned public hearing on a proposal by Jeffery Nicholson for a four-unit planned

## 'Anyone could pick up a guide and understand their role in this event.'

**Brant Kucera**

city manager, on emergency field guides

development at 532 N. Laurel St. The hearing was postponed because the city Planning Commission has not completed its hearing on the matter and will take it up again at 6 p.m. Jan. 28.

• Approved revised leases for the Cannon Beach Library and the Tolovana Arts Colony.

Although Kucera proposed that the library's original 99-year-lease on city property, due to end in 2070, be changed to end in 2026, library board members protested.

Library Treasurer Phyllis Bert said a lease with only 10 more years left would prevent library board members from

making long-range plans, would reduce the library's sense of security in its location and could jeopardize a public/private partnership between the city and the library that has been working well.

The council agreed to a compromise that would continue the 99-year lease but would require the library board to comply with updated insurance requirements. The board also would be required to allow an evaluation of the lease every five years.

The Tolovana Arts Colony's lease with the city ends in 2020. Its lease also was revised to reflect new state re-

quirements to increase insurance coverage.

• Heard comments about the council's ongoing consideration about whether marijuana dispensaries will be allowed in Cannon Beach.

Local resident Marlene Laws said she had collected 156 signatures of those who don't want a marijuana shop in town. David Robinson, pastor of Cannon Beach Community Church, told the council that the commercial sale of marijuana would discourage young families from moving to town and would adversely impact tourism. Business owners would have to worry about employees using marijuana, and there could be more impaired drivers, Robinson said.

However, Jan Siebert-Wahrmund said the public has been "misled" about marijuana and that the drug suffers a double standard when compared to alcohol.

"Moderation is the key," said Siebert-Wahrmund, who added that it still would not be legal for children to use marijuana. She noted that 63 percent of the community's voters approved marijuana's legalization.

"I don't feel that having a shop in town would stop tourists from coming here," Siebert-Wahrmund said.

• Heard praise of the city's public works and planning departments from Bruce Francis, manager of the Breakers Point condominiums. When enormous swells on the Ecola estuary caused deep undercutting of the bank adjacent to one of the condominium buildings, Francis said the city staff responded within 24 hours to shore up the building and also prevent a 2-inch gas main from bursting.

"We are very indebted to the prompt action by the city staff," Francis said.

# Sales tax not stopping Oregon pot shoppers

By **NOELLE CROMBIE**  
The Oregonian

PORTLAND — Oregon's recreational marijuana consumers, at least those who opt to shop in dispensaries, seem to be taking a new state sales tax in stride, many dispensary owners say.

On Jan. 1, after a three-month tax holiday, Oregon imposed a 25 percent sales tax on recreational marijuana sales. The tax will eventually be replaced with a 17 percent state tax once the Oregon Liquor Control Commission assumes control over recreational marijuana sales later this year.

Matt Price, who owns a chain of dispensaries called Cannabliss, said some customers have shrugged off the tax. "And then," he said, "we have people that say they would rather go back to their 'guy,' so to speak, and walk out."

At Glisan Buds and Foster Buds, general manager Nathan Krytenberg took the radical step of absorbing the tax. Krytenberg is betting on his "strategic decision" to generate enough additional sales to cover the added cost.

He also hopes the gesture builds customer loyalty in a city where more than 100 shops compete not just with each other but with the well-established black mar-

ket. The company spread its message on social media and lets customers know about it when they come through the doors.

"To be quite honest with you, if we even take a small hit, I believe the fact that we are doing this will put us in a better market position," said Krytenberg, whose shops sell marijuana for \$9 and \$15 a gram.

### Cheaper prices

Oregon's marijuana enthusiasts have historically enjoyed some of the cheapest prices, particularly when compared with Colorado and Washington state, both home to taxed and regulated marijuana markets.

Yet even in Portland, where dispensaries routinely compete for recreational dollars by slashing prices on flowers, the move at Glisan Buds and Foster Buds raised eyebrows among other in the industry.

"If you can do it and make any kind of profit, God bless you," said Sam Heywood, an owner of Farma, a dispensary on Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard where a sign at the entrance reminds customers about

the sales tax. "It's aggressive. Is it sustainable? I don't know."

Officials with the state Department of Revenue, the agency charged with collecting the new sales tax, said shops are free to absorb the tax or spread it among the grower, shop and consumer. Ultimately, the agency's chief interest is ensuring the tax is paid in full.

"We have no authority over pricing," said Julia Dodson, a spokeswoman for the agency. "Dispensaries can charge whatever they decide."

The agency won't begin collecting the tax until February. On Friday, officials said only about half of dispensaries selling recreational marijuana have registered with the Department of Revenue, a state requirement.

### Share burden with growers?

At Cannadaddy's, a dispensary in outer southeast Portland, owner Brad Zusman said he's asked the cannabis growers who supply his store about the possibility of sharing some of the tax burden, but the idea hasn't gone anywhere.

# County accepting applications for Planning Commission

The Daily Astorian

development, housing, farm and forest lands and coastal zones.

Clatsop County is seeking applications for an open seat on its Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission meets at 10 a.m. on the second Tuesday of each month in Astoria.

The commission is the county's committee for citizen involvement on development and land use issues, such as zoning, natural resources, transportation, natural hazards, economic

It makes land use decisions on variances, conditional uses and subdivisions.

In addition, the commission makes recommendations to the Board of Commissioners on amendments to the comprehensive plan and implementing ordinances.

The open position is for a vacant term ending June 2018.

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