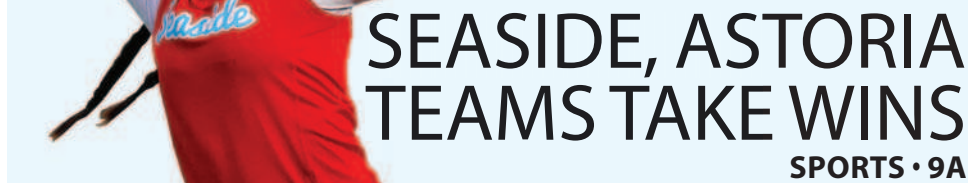




## SEASIDE FIRE CAUSES MAJOR DAMAGE

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## SEASIDE, ASTORIA TEAMS TAKE WINS

SPORTS • 9A

# Oregon LNG, Columbia Riverkeeper appeal ruling

## Warrenton Commission hearings set for early May

By ERICK BENGEL  
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Oregon LNG has appealed a city ruling against a proposed terminal on the Skipanon Peninsula, claiming the hearings officer drew erroneous conclusions that would make any marine industrial development virtually impossible.

The energy company also argues that the hearings officer — Daniel Kearns, a Portland land use attorney

— gave too much credence to assessments by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Columbia Riverkeeper, while ignoring expert testimony from the company that terminal impacts could be minimized.

Columbia Riverkeeper, an environmental group that opposes the \$6 billion terminal and pipeline project, has also appealed portions of Kearns' ruling.

Appeal hearings before the City Commission are slated for May 4

and 5 at Warrenton Grade School. The commission's decision can be appealed to the state Land Use Board of Appeals.

Earlier this month, Kearns, who was appointed by the city to review the project, denied Oregon LNG's land-use applications to build a bidirectional liquefied natural gas terminal.

Kearns — who approved a short segment of LNG pipeline to serve the terminal — cited the terminal's potential to harm salmon habitat and dis-

rupt the public's right to fish in the Lower Columbia River Estuary. His decision disagreed with city Planning Director Skip Urling's recommendation to approve both the terminal and pipeline.

Oregon LNG's opponents cheered Kearns' decision as a victory for the environment, while supporters viewed it as a barrier to economic development.

Neither Oregon LNG nor Columbia Riverkeeper could immediately be reached for comment on the appeals.

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Rosemary Baker-Monaghan

## Liberty Theater leader resigns

### Executive director had been in charge for a decade

By DERRICK DePLEDGE  
The Daily Astorian

Rosemary Baker-Monaghan, who led the Liberty Theater since the historic venue's rebirth a decade ago, will resign as executive director.

In an email Tuesday to the theater's board of directors, Baker-Monaghan said she is proud of her accomplishments and the generosity of the people who have revived the downtown theater.

"I have given this a lot of thought," she wrote. "It is time for me to move on to the next project that will be challenging, interesting, creative, rewarding, and of benefit to the community. I wish the Liberty nothing but success in the future."

Baker-Monaghan, a former Seaside mayor and board member at Clatsop Community College, said her last day at the theater would be Friday and that she would take vacation time until her resignation on April 15.

The board, which has scheduled an emergency meeting Wednesday evening, will turn to an interim executive director until a permanent replacement is found.

Dian Barker-Sayce, an executive at Bank of the Pacific who serves as the board's president, declined to comment on Baker-Monaghan's resignation.

Last year, the Liberty, an Italianate-style theater that opened in 1925, celebrated its 90th anniversary and the 10th year since a grand reopening after a renovation.

The complex at 12th and Commercial, which includes the McTavish Room and rehearsal space upstairs and commercial outlets on the ground floor, is considered the jewel of downtown and has contributed to the city's redevelopment.

Known for the Astoria Music Festival, a summer classical music series, the theater has hosted acts as varied as soprano Angela Meade and the Dance Theatre of Harlem to rock bands Quarterflash and The Decemberists.

But there has been a sense privately among some in the community that the lineup at the Liberty has gotten stale, and the theater has struggled financially.

There have been tensions between the board and Baker-Monaghan in recent months, sources say, over whether the executive director was too controlling and resistant to change.

Others in the community have also expressed doubts about the theater's management.

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## Astoria Ford hits the road to Warrenton



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Construction crews work on the future site of Astoria Ford in Warrenton on Tuesday. A rendering of the lot is shown on the left corner of the sign.

## The last major car dealership will leave city, keep name

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Astoria Ford owner Dane Gouge said he hopes to be in operation at the North Coast Retail Center in Warrenton by December, if not sooner.

Gouge, who signed a purchase and sale agreement with the retail center in 2012, closed on more than 6 acres at the corner of Ensign Lane and 19th Street earlier this month. Even though the dealership is changing cities, Gouge said he plans to keep the same name.

"We've worked really hard to push the Astoria Ford name," he said, adding only a few people have taken issue with the name. "It would be really tough to change that."

Gouge said the location at the retail center, across Ensign Lane from Costco and adjacent to a planned Wal-Mart, provides 10 times the traffic as his Astoria location. His new location will include a large showroom and service center, with a separate building for auto detailing, car storage and parking on the remainder of the site. The entrance to his dealership would be located across from the proposed exit for the Wal-Mart.

"For me, it's more exciting to have your own instead of paying a lease payment," said Gouge, who leases his current location

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Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

An excavator drives on the Astoria Ford site as construction crews work. The new Warrenton location will include two large commercial buildings, with car storage and parking on the remainder of the site.

## Gearhart short-term rental rules take shape

### Rental owners on notice about upcoming tax

By R.J. MARX  
The Daily Astorian

GEARHART — An additional room tax, business license and minimum rental terms are among the changes to Gearhart laws in an effort to curb issues with some short-term rentals.

Property owners with short-term rentals received a letter about upcoming changes in city law, City Administrator Chad Sweet said. The notification estab-

lishes the first regulations for transient lodging, which is overnight occupancy of 30 days or less.

The proposed ordinance requires short-term rental property owners to pay a 7 percent room tax, in addition to the 1 percent Oregon lodging tax, Sweet said. The tax goes into effect April 1, and is paid quarterly. A \$40 business license is also required by April 1.

About 85 owners of short-term rental properties have been contacted about the proposed new rules.



Chad Sweet

"We haven't got much negative reaction," Sweet said. "I haven't had anybody upset about it. Most people are pretty understanding."

At a mid-March Planning Commission work session, commissioners proposed a rule designating a minimum rental period of seven days.

"If you can make a seven-day reservation, that's great," Sweet said. "But if it's only three days, four days it cannot be occupied. It limits the turnover."

Commissioners also

agreed to limit the number of available permits, Sweet added, starting with about 35.

The number of occupants was limited to two people per bedroom, based on local septic recommendations, he said.

More details remain to be hammered out, Sweet said, including developing a "good neighbor" policy, off-street parking rules, tsunami preparedness requirements and garbage pickup regulations.

A Planning Commission public hearing is 6 p.m. April 14, and will offer an open comment period on the transient lodging rules.

