

Submitted Photos

Proposed renovation plans for the exterior of the Seaside Civic and Convention Center. The City Council decided to raise the lodging tax from 8 percent to 10 percent.

Bill: Convention Center's last expansion was in 1991

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Tax's history

Enacted in the early 1970s, Seaside's original hotel and motel tax was set at 5 percent. Over the years the rate was increased as additional services were needed to accommodate a growing number of visitors.

The convention's last expansion in 1991 was funded by an increase in the room tax.

The rate, last changed in 2002, stands at 8 percent. The tax does not include vaca-

tion rental revenue. According to the new ordinance, funds collected are to be divided between tourism promotion, public safety, the Prom Improvement Fund and other city costs. More than half of the room tax — 56.8 percent — would be allocated to the convention center fund for outstanding debt requirements and for maintaining, upgrading and expansion of the convention center building.

An additional 4 percent of the tax would be allocated to the convention center capital

improvement fund for maintenance, upgrading and expansion of the convention center building, properties and equipment.

The tax increase could be approved by January, but the hikes would not go into effect at least until July, Winstanley said.

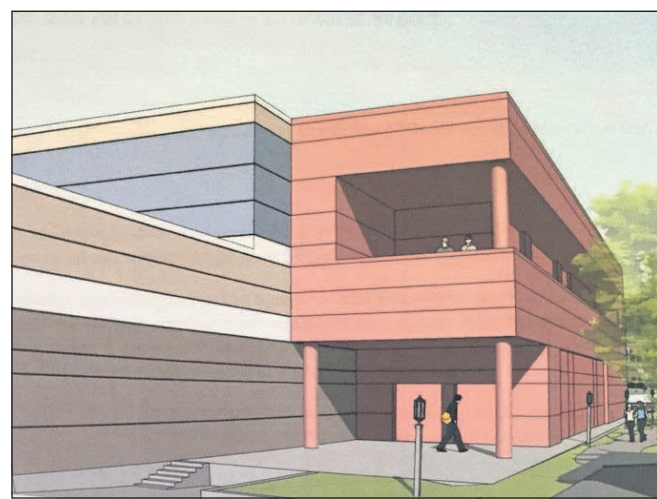
"I'm very excited about the process," Vandenberg said. "It's been a long journey, but we're certainly looking forward to the completion of the project, which we've been working on for the last seven

or eight years."

If the city OKs the tax hike in second and third readings, the convention center will go forward with the bonds.

"Then we're going to hire a design architectural firm and then a construction firm," Vandenberg said. "We'll be starting that process as soon as the bonds are sold."

Steele Architects' rendering of the convention center's southeast corner.



Housing: New owners of the apartment complex are locals

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Norma's Seafood & Steak, has described the housing crunch as a major issue for the city and has suggested expanding the urban growth boundary so more housing can get built.

The councilor, elected to a second term last week, has spoken of the need for affordable rental housing for workers in the service industry from Asto-

ria to Cannon Beach.

"I would hate to see anything bought up and turned into condominiums, so I guess we're protecting them from anything like that happening," Frank said.

Pam Ackley, a real estate broker with Windermere Stellar who serves on the Warrenton City Commission, handled the sale of the apartment complex.

Chisholm was a longtime

Seaside resident and businesswoman who lived at the Sunrise Apartments. The Bob Chisholm Community Center is named for her son, a volunteer firefighter who died trying to rescue a swimmer.

"She looked at her renters as her friends," Ackley said. "They were living there for way-under-market rents."

The property is in good condition, sits across from the Necanicum River and is within

walking distance of downtown and the beach.

"The new owners — they're locals — which was a really good thing in the end," Ack-

ley said. "They have the same mentality. It's an investment for them, but they know most of the people who live there."

Ackley called the balance

between preserving affordable rentals and charging market rents a "two-edged sword."

"It's a difficult line to walk, really," she said.



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

Randy Frank, Seth Morrissey, Dana Phillips, Mayor Don Larson, Don Johnson, Tita Monteiro and Jay Barber of the Seaside City Council. Larson announced he is stepping down.

Larson: Mayor's successor will be chosen by the City Council during future sessions

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you've been my friend," Johnson said. "I've always called you 'friend,' and I can talk to you about anything."

Years of service

Larson retired in 1991 as a staff training officer for the U.S. Army Reserve. He served on the David Douglas School Board in Portland, the Seaside Planning Commission, City Council and other committees before successfully running for mayor in 2002.

In that election, Larson recounted, he knocked on 1,650 doors.

A member of Clatsop County's Public Safety Board, Larson was recog-

nized as Mayor of the Year by the League of Oregon Cities in 2009.

"We really had some tough council meetings," Larson recalled, including sessions on short-term rentals and a new highway to replace U.S. Highway 101.

He ticked off a list of accomplishments: a skate park, a new library and the North Holladay Drive renovation. The boat ramp at Broadway Park. Upgrades to city buildings. Four bridges, built to tsunami standards at the time they were built, and the Recycling Center on Avenue S.

"We've done a lot, you guys," Larson said. "We've done a lot in this city. I didn't do these things. This is you

guys and staff who did."

A successor will be chosen by the City Council at future sessions, City Manager Mark Winstanley said after the meeting.

Councilors may select any registered voter with at least one year of Seaside residence. The appointee will fill the remaining two years of Larson's four-year term.

"Mayor Larson's been the mayor for virtually the entire time since I've been city manager," Winstanley said. "He's done a fabulous job. He's one of the most active mayors I've ever known. He's always been available for any types of issue we have had. There's nobody who cares more about the citizens of Seaside than the mayor."



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