

Port: Commission also voted to accept \$1.5 million grant

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"I've talked to over 60 people since last meeting," Mushen said Tuesday. "The brick wall (for support) is \$2 million."

Staff has estimated the cost of the bond at its current price at \$12.88 per \$100,000 in property value countywide on a three-year measure.

In other news:

- The Port Commission

voted 4-1 to accept a \$1.5 million Connect Oregon VI infrastructure grant. The Port hopes to use the grant as a local match on funding the agency is trying to secure from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help repair damage throughout the central waterfront from a December 2015 storm. The FEMA money would in turn cover the required \$660,000 local match on the Connect Oregon grant.

Fulton was the lone "no" vote, saying he was extremely concerned about the Port's plan to cover the local match if the FEMA funds don't materialize.

• The Port Commission approved a contract with new general counsel Eileen Eakins, who attended her first meeting since being chosen. Fulton had argued the Port should table Eakins' hiring until the investigation into Property Man-

ager Shane Jensen by the Oregon State Bar is concluded. Jensen had a complaint filed against him by an undisclosed party over a legal memo he wrote for staff about not having alternates on the Port's Budget Committee. After some squabbling and a 3-1-1 vote in which Fulton was the lone "no" and Commissioner Bill Hunsinger abstained, Eakins' contract was approved. "Welcome, Eileen, to the Port," Executive Direc-

tor Jim Knight said with a bit of humor.

• At the request of Fulton and Hunsinger, the Port Commission heard a presentation from attorney Michael Haglund on whether the Port could charge ships in the Columbia River's Astoria anchorage a fee for services. Haglund, who had explored the issue for the Port in 2009, said the Port would need to provide a needed service. He said no other port he's

spoken with on the Columbia charges such fees. Mushen said the U.S. Coast Guard and Columbia River Bar Pilots have also advised against charging such fees. Director Kate Mickelson from the Columbia River Steamship Operators' Association, which represents shippers, also attended the meeting and cautioned that coming to the Columbia is already expensive, with shippers facing ever-increasing fees.

Plastic: Microplastics are 'a major problem'

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But these colorful bits are not natural. They're tiny pieces of broken plastic, from disposable water bottles, straws, fire-works, cellophane wrappers and more.

The debris gets pounded by swells and sunlight over decades, but doesn't mineralize, or go away over time. It breaks down into smaller pieces until they're microscopic, and get ingested by sea turtles, sea birds, fish, zooplankton and other marine life, with fatal consequences.

In 2002, Marc Ward and his wife, Rachel, founded the non-profit Sea Turtles Forever from their home base in Seaside. They've focused on microplastic debris, pieces that are 5 millimeters or less (the size of a pencil eraser), since they're more devastating to sea life.

People also affected

"It is a major problem," Ward told about two dozen members of the Portland Eco-School Network and their families, including myself and my two sons, age 8 and 11, who'd come to Fort Stevens for a February service project. "Plastics affect every part of the food chain, including people," Ward said. People can ingest it by building a fire on the beach and inhaling chemicals from the burning plastics.

Scientists also are research-



Dawn Robbins/Submitted Photo
Newborn leatherback turtles are readied for release into the Pacific Ocean at a rescue operation in Todos Santos, Baja California Sur this winter.

ing to what extent the accumulated polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) — banned internationally since 2001 — can seep from old plastic debris into organisms and travel up the food chain, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Because of the ocean's currents, Ward says Fort Stevens is the top spot on the West Coast for microplastics — the biggest "high-density landfill site," with 5,000 grams of plastics per

square meter of sand — more than two-thirds of it microplastics. That's enough to fill about five 5-gallon Ziploc bags from just from one square meter of beach.

The next-highest density spot on the West Coast is Crescent Beach — in Ecola State Park north of Cannon Beach — where Ward and his crew have collected 250 grams per square meter of sand.

"That's a lot of plastic," he says. "You see it all the way as far as you can see," in a 5-meter band along the high-tide line.

How to remove it?

But there is hope. Since 2008, Ward and his Microplastic Response Team of core volunteers have been cleaning beaches up and down the West Coast using a device they developed that can filter 99 percent of the microplastics out of the sand.

The device is a portable 7-foot mesh screen that produces a static charge able to filter debris from the sand down to 50 to 100 microns, the size of a grain of sand.

"Two years ago, we filtered the entire beach at Manzanita in six days," he says. It took 100 volunteers, seven filtration systems, and about \$4,000 to cover the 1.5 linear miles of beach.

A week later, they filtered the half-mile stretch of Crescent Beach and Oswald West State Park with just half a

dozen volunteers, funded by a \$3,500 donation from the Portland Patagonia store.

Yes, it'll have to be done again. But each cleanup is saving marine life in the meantime. "We're not going to see the end of this in our lifetimes," Ward says. "It gets more intense every year."

Unending supply

Each year, 300 million tons of new plastic is produced worldwide, and less than 10 percent is recycled, according to 5 Gyres, a Los Angeles-based advocacy group dedicated to ridding the world's oceans of plastic.

The rest ends up as litter, in a landfill, or carried out to sea. More than 8 million tons of plastic enters the oceans yearly. Ward is taking the work global, producing and shipping the patented filtration device to organizations and governments all over the world, including the East Coast, Hawaii, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Costa Rica, the United Kingdom and beyond.

The filtration device doesn't work in the rain, or in the marshy areas of Fort Stevens, so volunteers pick up debris by hand. After the end of our Presidents Day service project, we weighed our collection of debris and set a record for Sea Turtles Forever for two hours of work: a whopping 428 pounds of plastics.

Forum: 'President ... has no respect for the press'

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Goldschmidt

It is hardly novel, he noted, that powerful, talented people can be brought down by hubris — that power causes office-holders to lose their moral bearings and commit acts that, when publicly disclosed, hobble or obliterate their political careers.

Goldschmidt's career-ending mistake came when, 13 years after leaving the governorship, he took on two major assignments: chairman of the state Board of Higher Education (under his protégé, Gov. Ted Kulongoski), and a role promoting a Texas investment group's controversial attempt to purchase Portland General Electric. His decision not to pursue a second term as governor the previous decade had mystified many people.

"He had a secret," Jaquiss said, "and if he had just stayed offstage, that secret would have probably gone to the grave with him — or at least it never would have been publicly revealed."

Instead, after Willamette Week uncovered the life he had destroyed, Goldschmidt resigned from his posts and retired from public life.

Adams

Adams' hubris arose in neglecting to hire a staff that could effectively challenge him — that could push back on his poor decisions, Jaquiss said.

Adams himself had been a strong chief of staff to Portland Mayor Vera Katz. But when his turn came, "Sam surrounded himself by people who were sycophants and yes-men and yes-women," Jaquiss said.

When Adams started hanging out with his teenage inamorato, Adams' entourage enabled his vices.

"Nobody said, 'Hey, you can't do this. This is terrible. This is going to end your political career.' So they couldn't stop him — or wouldn't stop him," Jaquiss said.

"He had forgotten everything that he had ever learned

in politics," he continued. "It's OK to have relationships with people; you just can't have inappropriate relationships with people. And, if you're asked about them, you can't lie about them."

Adams, who maintained his lover was 18 when sexual relations began, managed to escape a criminal investigation and two recall efforts. But, Jaquiss said, Adams had crippled his long-term political prospects. "He blew this brilliant career," Jaquiss said.

Kitzhaber

And Kitzhaber, the longest serving governor in Oregon history, allowed girlfriend, Sylvia Hayes, while she served as his policy adviser on clean energy and economic development, to bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars in consulting contracts — money that benefited him.

"He was really, really smart, and, I think, he was really dedicated to public service," Jaquiss said. "But he had this terrible blind spot when it came to his fiancée. He allowed her to take those contracts, from which he benefited. And that was basically what finished him."

Kitzhaber let this conflict of interest fester, in part, because the governor needed the money, Jaquiss said.

"So you have, on one hand, this woman, Sylvia Hayes, who was clearly interested in making money. You have a governor who doesn't have enough money. That's a very bad combination," Jaquiss said.

Kitzhaber succumbed to hubris when he behaved as if he lost his sense of accountability. "It wasn't, I think, that he was so venal or evil — he's not," Jaquiss said. "It's that he didn't have any fear of losing an election, or he didn't have an effective check from the other side of the aisle in the Republican legislators."

Trump

These men — three Democrats whose futures held considerable promise — broke

their social contract with constituents in different but "fundamental and important ways," Jaquiss said.

The press' role is to keep such public figures' behavior transparent — a function whose importance is now getting major play on the world stage.

"We have a president who clearly has absolutely no respect for the press, and no regard for the accountability and transparency that the press can bring when we do our jobs," he said.

But he believes the fight is a

healthy one. The press, though it has fewer men and women on the front lines, remains a vital institution at the local, state and national levels.

"Sure, the president is beating up on the press. I think they can take it — we can take it. I think what you've seen is, reporters who do their jobs by digging up documents, finding people who will talk, finding people who will tell the truth — they'll be able to keep that guy honest," Jaquiss said. "If anybody can keep that guy honest, I think the press will be able to do that."

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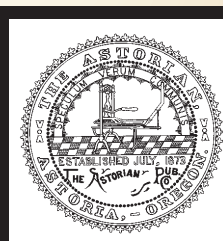
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• Ctrl + Y - Redo an action
• Alt + Tab - Switch between open apps
• Alt + F4 - Close the active item, or exit the active app
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