

# Warrenton changes code to encourage more local housing

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**  
*The Daily Astorian*

WARRENTON — The Warrenton City Commission voted 3-1 Tuesday to allow multifamily housing development in commercial zones.

Acting Mayor Henry Balensifer was the sole “no” vote. He said after the meeting that the amendment to the municipal code chips away at the code without a comprehensive, overall plan for how the city could and should develop into the future.

“This does not keep in line with current plans, particularly our community vision plan,” he said.

At a prior commission meeting, Balensifer indicated he was not against the amendment in general, but was concerned about allowing this development in certain downtown corridors along Harbor Street and South Main Avenue.

At the meeting, he asked the commissioners to consider amending the language of the amendment to exclude a portion of this downtown corridor. No other commissioner seconded and the amendment

passed as presented by city staff.

The amendment will allow multifamily housing development in commercial zones, with the exception of land along U.S. Highway 101, SE Marlin and SW Dolphin avenues. Multifamily dwellings could be neighbors with various types of shops, storage or distribution facilities, clinics, rental businesses, churches or commercial buildings with residences on the second floor, among others.

In other business:

- The City Commission approved a lease with the Warrenton School District, temporarily moving the Warrenton Community Library from its current location in a deteriorating building in Hammond to the old Serendipity Cafe at 160 SE Main.

The city will put \$15,000 it had planned to use to recarpet City Hall toward the lease and the library’s moving expenses.

“We believe this to be more than adequate to finance the relocations, and any remaining balance will fall to beginning fund balance for next fiscal year,” stated a memo to the commission from City Manager Linda Engbretson.

# Warrenton swears in new police officer

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**  
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WARRENTON — Warrenton Police Chief Mathew Workman joked that if you looked up “local” in the dictionary, you’d find a picture of acting Mayor Henry Balensifer. But right below it, he said, would be a picture of the police department’s newest hire, Joshua Holloway.

Holloway, who was born in Astoria and raised in Warrenton, was sworn in as the city’s newest police officer at a City Commission meeting Tuesday. Balensifer administered the oath of office.

“We’re really proud to have him and very excited,” Workman said later. When he hires officers who grew up in the area “you want to be sure they’re the right fit because that can present challenges in a small town where you know everyone and everyone knows you,” Workman said. But Holloway: “He’ll be fine.”

“He’s a good fit for our community.”

The department now has nine police officers and three reserve police officers. Workman still hopes to fill two additional police officer spots the city approved recently.



Katie Frankowicz/The Daily Astorian

**Warrenton Police Department’s newest officer, Joshua Holloway, is sworn in by acting Mayor Henry Balensifer Tuesday.**

Recruitment is difficult at small, rural departments and the Warrenton Police Department has worked with a skeleton crew for years. Now, said Workman, “We’re playing catch up.”

Holloway officially started at the Warrenton Police Department in April and began his field training with another officer. Since he came to the department with no law enforcement experience and has months of training ahead of him,

he probably won’t be a full police officer, on the road by himself, until the start of next year, Workman said.

Holloway is scheduled

to go to police academy in May. When that ends in September, he will still have to complete another round of training and evaluation.

# Long Beach razor clam dig good to go

State gives OK after tests show safe domoic levels

EO Media Group

OLYMPIA, Wash. — State shellfish managers on Tuesday gave a green light for six days of razor clam digging on the Long Beach Peninsula after tests found the clams are safe to eat. The peninsula’s daily limit is being increased to 25 clams.

This means the Long Beach Razor Clam Festival will be able to proceed as planned this weekend, starting with clam-digging les-



EO Media Group/File Photo  
**Seattle resident Bradley Sweek came to Seaview to dig clams last spring. A large crowd is likely to do the same this coming weekend.**

sions Saturday at 6:45 a.m. and Sunday at 7:30 a.m. at the Bolstad Pavilion near the north end of the boardwalk.

Many other events are planned, including clam-related contests 8 a.m. to noon Saturday at Long Beach Dennis Co., clam chowder contests for amateurs and professionals from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at Long Beach Elks Lodge and a clam fritter cook-off from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday at Veterans Memorial Park just east of the police station between Pacific Avenue and Oregon Street.

State shellfish managers agreed to increase the daily limit to 25 for the digs at Long Beach, which has been closed much of the razor clam season due to elevated

marine toxin levels, said Dan Ayres, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife coastal shellfish manager.

“We wanted to provide diggers with some additional opportunity at Long Beach since we know there are plenty of clams there for harvest,” Ayres said.

Recent tests found domoic toxin levels at all Washington ocean beaches met health standards, but the Washington Department of Health asked for one more test to be sure, Ayres said. That new set of samples taken Sunday all came back within safe limits of 19 parts per million or less.

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Jobless rates for March\*

Area	March 2017	Feb. 2017	1-yr. ago
Clatsop	3.8	4	4.8
Columbia	4.9	5.1	6.4
Tillamook	3.9	4.1	5.1
Oregon	3.8	4	4.9
U.S.	4.5	4.7	5

\*Preliminary, seasonally adjusted rates.  
Source: Oregon Employment Department  
Daily Astorian graphics

## Clatsop County unemployment rate falls to 3.8 percent

The Daily Astorian

Clatsop County’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in March was 3.8 percent, down slightly from the month prior, the same as statewide unemployment and lower than the U.S. average.

The county had the eighth-lowest unemployment rate in the state.

In March, the private sector added 140 jobs. Leisure and hospitality added 160 positions, while trade, transportation and utilities dropped 30.

Nonfarm payroll employment was 18,400 in March, 230 more than the year prior for a growth rate of 1.3 percent. Over the past year, the retail sector has grown by 140 positions, and education and health services by another 50. Local government added 80 positions over the past year, although education shed 70 jobs.

March seasonally adjusted unemployment was 4.9 percent in Columbia County and 3.9 percent in Tillamook County.

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