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ONE DOLLAR

Astoria Police in conflict under former chief

Independent assessment shows leadership failure

By DERRICK DePLEDGE and KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Police Department under former chief Brad Johnston was riven by failures in leadership and undermined by politics, discord, conflict and staffing shortages that sapped morale, an independent assessment found.

The police department had been at the “point of a crisis” in Astoria, the assessment concluded, but the most serious issues have been averted by Johnston’s sudden decision to retire earlier this month.

City Manager Brett Estes asked Akin Blitz, a Portland labor attorney, to direct an assessment of the police department’s leadership at a time when three police officers and a clerical worker had left and the department was stretched thin.

Estes also asked Blitz to investigate a complaint from within the police department that Johnston had improperly obtained city reimbursement for personal travel in late May. The separate probe found that Johnston violated city travel and ethics policies and that his choices reflected “extraordinarily poor judgment.”

Estes was briefed on the findings of the assessment and the investigation prior to Johnston’s Aug. 2 retirement. Johnston was also aware of the findings before his retirement. Estes said he did not ask the former police chief to step down. “It was a decision made in his own volition,” he said.

Johnston, who was named by Estes as police chief and assistant city manager in 2014, resigned as assistant city manager in July, citing the difficulty of balancing the two roles. He has not responded to interview requests, but he explained on Facebook that his abrupt departure after 25 years with the police department was “sudden, but necessary.”

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Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian
Astoria Police Chief Brad Johnston retired earlier this month. An independent assessment documented leadership failures and low morale at the police department.

Department selects interim police chief

Spalding is an experienced leader

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

A former Beaverton police chief who is well-respected in the law enforcement community will lead the Astoria Police Department until a permanent chief is hired.

Geoff Spalding, who retired as chief of the Beaverton Police Department in 2016 and previously spent 31 years with the Fullerton Police Department in California, joins the Astoria Police as interim chief on Aug. 28.



Geoff Spalding

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2017 ASTORIA REGATTA

An evolving tradition



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

A float carrying the 2017 Astoria Regatta royalty makes its way through downtown Astoria on Saturday during the Grand Land Parade. Find more photos from this year’s Astoria Regatta online at DailyAstorian.com

Astoria Regatta takes to the streets downtown

By BRENNNA VISSER
The Daily Astorian

Thousands lined the streets Saturday to celebrate the Astoria Regatta with the Grand Land Parade, carrying on a 123-year tradition to honor the region’s maritime roots.

The parade, with the theme “Full Steam Ahead,” was the anchor to a weekend full of festivities, including the Highwater Boat Parade and Regatta Fireworks show. Many of the parade staples, such as the Regatta Court float, marching bands and bags of candy being thrown into the sea of enthusiastic parade-goers, all remained

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Astoria Regatta apologizes for Confederate flag at parade

Organizers say it was an unfortunate incident

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Regatta apologized today for Confederate flag displays on Saturday during the Grand Land Parade downtown.

Organizers described the displays from Sons of Beaches, an

off-road enthusiast group, as an unfortunate incident and said it was an oversight that the symbols were not caught at the start of the parade.

“The Astoria Regatta Association deeply regrets the display of a

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Cutter Alert gets a new commander

Reid takes over from Culver

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Cmdr. Patrick Culver, who led the Astoria-based U.S. Coast Guard cutter Alert for the past two years, transferred command Friday to Cmdr. Tobias Reid.

Reid comes from Charleston, North Carolina, where he was executive officer aboard the cutter Hamilton for the past two years. Culver heads to Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, D.C., where he will be chief of drug and migrant interdiction.

Rear Adm. Pat DeQuattro, deputy commander of the Coast Guard’s Pacific Area that oversees the agency’s operations in the Pacific and Indian oceans, described Culver as a consummate professional who set an example for his crew by leading from the front. DeQuattro said the nearly 50-year-old Alert ran smoothly on all but two operational days during Culver’s command. Those two days were spent in port in San Diego during a large storm, DeQuattro said, during which

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Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Cmdr. Patrick Culver, left, transferred command of the U.S. Coast Guard cutter Alert to Cmdr. Tobias Reid, right, Friday. The ceremony was overseen by Rear Adm. Pat DeQuattro, deputy commander of the Coast Guard Pacific Area that oversees the agency’s operations in the Pacific and Indian oceans.

A fearful reminder of war

Hartman fled the Nazis as a young man

By DWIGHT CASWELL
For The Daily Astorian

HAMMOND — Martin Hartman sits in the living room of his Hammond home. Tall, thin, his hair white, he leans on his cane and reminisces. “I was 16. It was May 10, 1940,” he said. “We heard bombing and saw planes. It was the German invasion, and the blitz was over in three days.”

“Gradually Nazism crawled



into Holland. Good people were sent to prison, Jews and ministers. My father said, ‘We have the Nazis now. We don’t know when we will be rid of them.’”

It had been difficult times in Holland in the 1930s. The Hartman family business was construction and the Depression had hit them hard. Now, just as things were getting better, they became much worse. Not long

after the invasion, the Germans began barricading city blocks and sweeping the apartments for young men to replace German soldiers lost in the war.

At the time, Hartman was enrolled in a trade school learning languages, bookkeeping and other skills that would be valuable in the family business. He graduated in 1943 and the next day was ordered to Germany by the Labor Department. There was no question in Hartman’s mind; he was not going to Germany. Making that decision left only one alternative: go underground.

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Submitted Photo

Martin and Frances Hartman live in Hammond. Martin Hartman fled the Nazis in Holland as a teenager.

