

Astoria High School students can now park at Tapiola

City Council also seeks housing grant

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

The Astoria City Council took a stab at solving parking issues at Astoria High School at a meeting Monday night, voting to allow students to park at nearby Tapiola Park.

High school administrators say the demand for student parking has exceeded the capacity available on school grounds. However, students who have opted to park instead at Tapiola are violating a city ordinance that prohibits people 7 to 18 years old to be in the park during school hours.

Construction on West Marine Drive has contributed to lack of parking options, City Manager Brett Estes said. But, also, as the economy improves, more students appear to be driving their own cars to school, clogging up the parking lot, Parks and Recreation Director Angela Cosby said.

“(School administrators) are not sure if it’s going to stick around or not so they’re starting to look at all options,” Cosby said. “We are looking at it as kind of a test trial.”

The ordinance was written to make sure students didn’t stay in the park instead of going to school. However, Cosby was in favor of the proposed modifications since the



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Astoria High School students will be able to park at Tapiola Park.

new ordinance requires students to go directly to school and authorizes school administrators to be responsible for the students parking at Tapiola.

In other business:

- The City Council approved applying for a grant that would help low- or moderate-income individuals rehabilitate their houses.

The nonprofit Community Action Team had asked the city to apply for \$400,000 through the Community Development Block Grant program. The money would be available across the three counties the group serves — Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook — though company representatives said the Astoria

area would be marketed to first. They estimated the money, provided to applicants as zero-interest loans, could benefit at least 66 people in need of home rehabilitation services such as handicap accessibility or plumbing and roofing repairs.

According to Community Action Team, Astoria is in a perfect position to apply for the grant since the city received a grant from this same program in 2011 for the Astoria Senior Center and has all the necessary documents in place.

“This is just perfect for us and it’s greatly appreciated,” said Mayor Arline LaMear, commenting that Astoria, like many cities, struggles to house

its low-income and homeless populations, but also has very little land available for new development.

- The City Council took the next step toward library renovation work.

The councilors authorized city staff to solicit proposals for architectural and engineering services to take a close look at the existing Astoria Library building on the corner of 10th and Duane streets, as well as examine and update a library renovation study developed in 2013. The first conceptual designs and budgets will come out of this process, as well.

“This first step is really (about) starting to help us assess the situation, give us a preliminary framework,” City Manager Brett Estes said.

City staff say the library renovation will cost an estimated \$5 million. Fundraising efforts have been underway since September. Work on the building is expected to begin in 2019.

- Mayor LaMear recognized longtime city forester Mike Barnes, who has announced his retirement. During the 14 years Barnes worked as a consultant for the city, he maintained and updated the watershed forest management plan, led efforts to sell carbon cred-

its on the watershed forest and conducted controlled timber harvests and replanting efforts in the watershed.

“After the epic windstorm of December 2007 many acres of the urban forest within the city limits were totally blown down,” LaMear said, reading from a statement. “Mike was instrumental in organizing a salvage log operation to recover the blown down timber for sale to area saw mills. He also managed the effort to replant the wind-damaged areas so the urban forest would eventually return to its pre-storm condition.”

She said Barnes has always been a team player and added, “Mike’s a great guy to work with.”

“Everybody’s been outstanding,” Barnes said. “I wish the city well. You have an excellent resource in the Bear Creek watershed. It will continue to provide the main thing it provides: water, water, water. Quality and quantity. ... Thank you for letting me become a part of the city for a short number of years.”

Salmon pen collapse followed earlier breakdown

Associated Press

SEATTLE — A report to state regulators says a collapse of an Atlantic salmon net pen last August was preceded by a serious breakdown less than a month earlier in which nearly half of its anchor lines snapped.

The Seattle Times reported the owner of the Cypress Island net pen,

Cooke Aquaculture Pacific, filed last week a chronology of the net pen collapse that spewed more than 160,000 adult Atlantic salmon into Puget Sound.

More than 100,000 of those fish are still unaccounted for.

The report was provided to state investigators looking into the collapse.

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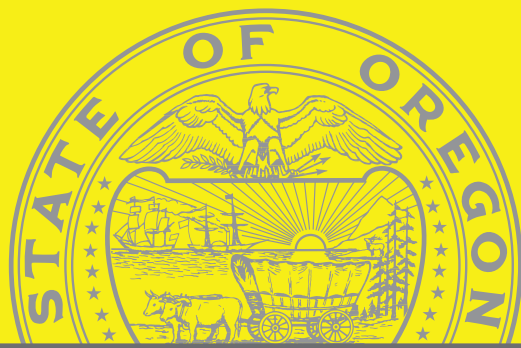
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