



THE DAILY ASTORIAN

145TH YEAR, NO. 199

WEEKEND EDITION // FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 2018

ONE DOLLAR

WATERWORKS

County mistakenly exits forest committee

Clarification came after 4-1 vote

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

Clatsop County commissioners withdrew last week from a committee that advises the state on behalf of forestland trust counties. They just didn't know it at the time.

In a 4-1 vote, commissioners decided to no longer pay \$11,800 in annual membership dues to the Council of Forest Trust Land Counties, a subcommittee of the Association of Oregon Counties comprised of commissioners from areas with state forestlands.

State law, however, mandates that the Forest Trust Land Advisory Committee, which advises the state on forestland issues, be composed of the council's board of directors.

The state Department of Forestry informed the county the day after the vote about the law, County Manager Cameron Moore said. County Counsel Heather Reynolds drafted a memo to commissioners clarifying the issue.

"We became aware of the language of that Thursday, but obviously the decision came Wednesday night," Moore said. "I think commissioners are now aware of that and they'll have to decide on what they have to do next."

Scott Lee, the board's chairman, said he was unsure last week if the commission's decision would impact the county's standing on the advisory committee. But he is sticking by the move.

"To me, it doesn't matter. They're both the same," Lee said of the council and the committee. "They're basically just a rubber-stamp committee."

The vote stemmed from the county's decision last year to withdraw from a \$1.4 billion timber lawsuit led by Linn County that alleges breach of contract by the state on timber harvests. Clatsop County was the only one of 15 counties in the class action to leave the lawsuit.

John DiLorenzo, the attorney for the county plaintiffs, recently instructed members of the council not to speak with the Board of Forestry about any policy matters that may be used as evidence in the lawsuit.

"We're concerned anything we say can and will be used against us when we get to trial," said Tillamook County Commissioner Tim Josi, the council's chairman, who is also running for state House.

Clatsop County, however, can still speak to the board without those legal concerns.

"Why would we spend money on a board that's not really function-

See COUNTY, Page 3A



Photos by Jeff Harrington and Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Clockwise from top left: A sign warns against trespassing at the watershed. A reservoir at the watershed supplies Astoria with drinking water. A new liner is in place at a purification cell. The watershed includes heavily forested areas.

Astoria studying storage capacity, landslide risk

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ
The Daily Astorian

A water quality report for 2017 gives Astoria's drinking water a clean bill of health. The city will face big projects in the future, however, as it tries to maintain and build a more resilient system.

The Public Works Department is at the beginning of one study that will look at adding storage capacity for treated water by installing a clearwell system. The department is at the end of another study examining landslide threats to a 12-mile transmission line that takes water from the dam in the Bear Creek watershed, the source of Astoria's drinking water, to the city.

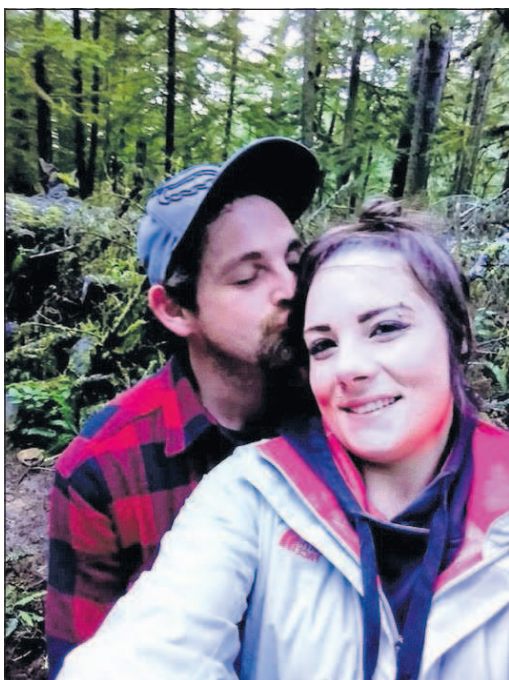
Both are \$20,000 to \$30,000 studies that will outline millions of dollars worth of work.

"We need to have things that are more dependable," Public Works Director Jeff Harrington said. "We don't need to be having panics in the middle of the night. It's 2018. We need to be a little more advanced. Just like every city across the nation, the only thing keeping us from doing that is money, so we're doing the best we can with what we have."

Over the past four or five years, the department has slowly built up funding for regular maintenance work. Big capital projects — like the ones the two studies in progress now will someday inform — will still be funded through grants and loans, but the city is trying to get away from borrowing money to complete routine maintenance.

The Public Works Department is just now paying off debt ser-

See WATER, Page 7A



Noel Moor with her fiancée.

Facebook

After a tragedy in Warrenton, anger, frustration and uncertainty

Woman held in her little dog's death

By DERRICK DePLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Five days after Noel Moor was discharged from Cedar Hills Hospital, a mental health treatment facility in Portland, she put her beloved Chihuahua, Bolt, in the oven of her Warrenton home.

The little dog's death horrified Moor's family and friends and led to her arrest for aggravated animal abuse. Her fiancée and mother

watched the sweet young woman they love stumble toward a psychotic break, but with their heartache, there is also anger and frustration.

After she left Cedar Hills in March, Moor walked away from the crisis respite center in Warrenton that was supposed to be her safe landing. She was found naked at Rite Aid. She was taken to Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria after several outbursts, but was released each time.

Mental health staff explained to the family that Moor did not pose an imminent danger to herself or others, the standard under Ore-

gon law to pursue commitment to a mental hospital. By the time her fiancée finally convinced them she was out of control, it was too late.

"She had to do something horrible for you guys to figure out that she is very, very, very sick," Melanie Ryan, Moor's mother, told mental health staff in an anguished phone conversation after Bolt's death.

Administrators at Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare, Columbia Memorial and Cedar Hills declined to comment on Moor's care, citing legal restrictions meant to safeguard

See DIAGNOSIS, Page 7A

