

Hammond Marina loses out on state money for dredging

Grant application was denied

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — The group steering development of the Hammond Marina must look elsewhere for money to dredge the increasingly silted property.

A grant application to the Oregon State Marine Board for dredging funds has been denied, Warrenton City Commissioner Pam Ackley announced at a City Commission meeting Tuesday.

The city set aside some money for dredging, but was told the work — identified as the top priority for the marina — may cost as much as \$1.3 million.

Grants and other funding will be necessary to bridge the gap. City Manager Linda Engbretson said staff is looking at a variety of options. Harbor-master Jane Sweet said she is now looking at smaller grants available through the Oregon Business Development Department, also known as Business Oregon.



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Warrenton has dredging concerns at the marina.

Either way, the city missed the window for dredging the marina before the busy summer fishing months on the Columbia River. Hammond is an especially popular spot for anglers participating in the Buoy 10 salmon fishery.

“We should have gotten it,” Ackley said about the grant, commending Sweet for her hard work.

Ackley, who serves on the

Hammond Marina Task Force, believes the fact that Warrenton does not yet own the marina complicated the grant application. Warrenton is still waiting on a promised transfer of ownership from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Corps representatives plan to be on site today for an environmental assessment, one of several assessments required before the agency will pass on

ownership to the city.

The Hammond Marina had one of its best years in 2017, hitting several revenue records, and was on track to exceed its budget thanks to camping and launch fees alone. Behind the success looms concerns about what happens if Warrenton can’t dredge the marina soon, however.

Last year Ackley and Sweet said they couldn’t wait for the city to have full ownership before dredging takes place. Fishermen had reported that at the docks there were sometimes only a couple of inches of water under their boats at low tide.

“If we don’t dredge that marina, we’re not going to have a marina to put boats in,” Ackley said in March when asked for an update on the work. Dredging, she said, is the “first and foremost thing that we need to accomplish in order to expand and do all the other things we’d love to do there.”

An engineering firm is continuing to develop a feasibility study for dredging. The marina task force has until November to update a master plan for the site and hopes to have a completed feasibility study in hand before then.

Governor signs ‘net neutrality’ rules

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — Gov. Kate Brown has signed into law a bill requiring public bodies to contract only with internet providers that practice net neutrality.

House Bill 4155 passed both legislative chambers with bipartisan support earlier this year. The law is meant to discourage broadband companies from blocking, slowing down or charging more for certain content.

“I’m so pleased and very proud that Oregon passed this legislation due in part to the voices of young people who made their voices heard,” Brown said before the signing the bill at Mount Tabor Middle

School in Portland Monday.

The Federal Communications Commission repealed a federal rule or universal net neutrality in December. The move prompted about 20 states, including Oregon, to urge the federal government to restore the protections and for dozens of states to consider laws to counteract the decision.

Washington in March became the first state in the nation to enact statewide net neutrality regulations that make it illegal for broadband providers to block or slow down certain content, according to the Washington Post.

The two new laws could mark the beginning of patchwork internet regulations around the nation, the paper reported.



Governor’s Office

Gov. Kate Brown signs House Bill 4155 at Mt. Tabor Middle School on Monday.

“We faced on this issue a unique challenge of balancing what we could do legally as a state with something that actually would be effective in moving the policy forward,” state House Majority Leader Jennifer Williamson said Monday.

“I think this bill, House Bill 4155, will achieve that balance with a perfect middle ground.”

“The internet should create, encourage and grow opportunities. It should allow us to develop the potential of all of our people.”

Brown backs Cleaner Air Oregon program

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — Gov. Kate Brown on Tuesday signed into law a bill that assesses a fee on industry to fund a program designed to reveal health risks posed by emissions from specific factories.

Brown proposed Cleaner Air Oregon in Senate Bill 1541 as a response to the discovery of toxic metals in Portland’s air in 2016.

“Now communities will know what they’re being exposed to and what risks are posed,” said state Rep. Karin

Power, D-Milwaukie, during a speech asking lawmakers to pass the bill in March.

The initial legislation would have strengthened state regulators’ authority to require industry to reduce air pollution. But in the interest of getting enough votes to enact the new fee and to give industry more predictable expectations on allowable emissions, the bill’s proponents said they had to agree to limit the state’s authority to respond to pollution.

The law authorizes the Environmental Quality Commission to adopt rules to discover and, on a limited basis,

address the public health risks from emissions of toxic air contaminants from individual industrial sources and to establish a schedule of fees to cover the cost of the program. The law also calls for the commission to develop a pilot program to assess the potential cumulative health effects from emissions from multiple sources.

Many lawmakers, including House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, expressed mixed emotions about the ultimate product. While Kotek voted for the bill, she later wrote that the compromise “undermined an 18-month public process that

brought together stakeholders from all sides of the issue” to address the air toxics problem and propose the original legislation.

She said the program would still make “Oregon a leader in air quality programs nationwide.”

“Since the program addresses both new and existing facilities, it provides stronger protections than many air toxics programs across the country.”

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

Report: Oregon off track on mentally ill prisoners

Isolation can exacerbate symptoms

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — Inmates with severe mental health conditions at Oregon State Penitentiary in Salem spend an average of nearly 23 hours a day in solitary confinement, according to a report released Tuesday by Disability Rights Oregon.

The state in many cases may be violating the inmates’ constitutional rights, the non-profit advocacy group alleged.

Isolation can exacerbate symptoms of mental illness, including depression and anxiety, and many prison systems around the nation have discontinued the practice, said Elizabeth Seaberry, a spokeswoman for the advocacy group.

The report recommends that the Oregon Department of Corrections end solitary confinement, transfer acutely mentally ill patients to a therapeutic environment and improve access to mental health care.

A Department of Corrections spokeswoman did not immediately return messages Tuesday.

Oregon State Penitentiary holds inmates from around the state.

More than three dozen men in the prison’s behavioral health unit spent almost 23 hours a day confined to “dark, cramped cells” during the final quarter of 2017, the study showed.

The progress report follows revelations by Disability Rights Oregon two years ago that about 40 male inmates in the behavioral health unit were kept in isolation and received inadequate mental health care. In some instances, prison staff acted violently toward the

inmates, according to the advocacy group.

In early 2016, Department of Corrections leaders agreed to take steps in the subsequent four years to improve the conditions for inmates in the specialized unit.

“The agreement strives to reshape this unit to live up to its original vision: an environment that’s safe for prisoners and the prison staff who work with them, where prisoners can heal through effective treatment for their mental health conditions, and where their intrinsic human dignity is safeguarded,” said Joel Greenberg, report author and staff attorney with Disability Rights Oregon.

Tuesday’s report marks

the midpoint of that four-year improvement plan.

Disability Rights Oregon alleged that the corrections department is failing to ensure that inmates with mental health conditions are released from their cells for a minimum of 20 hours a week. That number is the minimum to protect inmates with mental health conditions from “cruel and unusual punishment” as defined by the Eighth Amendment.

“Unless there is a dramatic shift, DOC is unlikely to meet the goals it agreed to within the timeframe,” Greenberg said.

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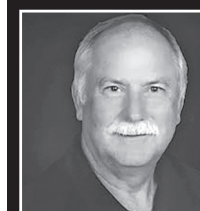


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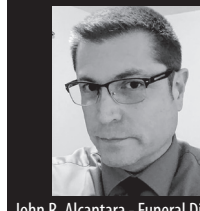


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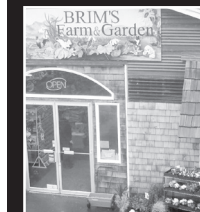


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