

Tax: Second hearing will be held later this month

Continued from Page 1A

Lodging Association, asked commissioners to delay a decision to give county officials time to consult the association, chambers of commerce and other tourism-based businesses.

"If an industry tax increase is of interest to lodging operators, the meetings could help serve as a helpful catalyst in identifying strategic tourism investments that could result in more tourism tax revenue and thus more unrestricted dollars for investments in jail operations," Brandt wrote.

The local business owners mirrored that request. A number of them also lamented what they described as a tendency for local governments to use the 30 percent of revenue from lodging taxes for projects at the expense of the tourism industry.

"I'm opposed to the tax because taxing authorities seem to come to the hotels for money because they see it as an easy way. The people who are taxed don't really have a say," said Don West, general manager of the Cannery Pier Hotel and owner of the Astoria Crest Motel.

Bergin said the lodging tax would add \$1 to a \$100 room rental. "If we were at 3 or 4 percent asking, I could understand that, but that's why we said 1 percent, you know, is more than fair," Bergin said. "It's kind of this, you know, this hypersensitivity to additional tax."

While some conceded the proposed tax was not large, lodging operators said other tax hikes — including one passed by the Astoria City Council last year to help fund city parks — are adding up.

"That extra 1 percent isn't going to make much of a difference for us, but it's just sad that this is pretty much the only place you guys always turn to," said Robert Jacob, owner of the Cannery Pier Hotel.



Joshua Bessex/
The Daily Astorian

The county wants to relocate the county jail from Astoria to the former North Coast Youth Correctional Facility in Warrenton.

Business owners were skeptical about precisely how the 70 percent of revenue would be used for tourism promotion, a distrust that has caused tension throughout the state. The lodging association, for example, won a Deschutes County lawsuit in May in which it claimed Bend used money for road repairs rather than tourism. The city is appealing.

Commissioners will hold a second hearing — during which they may debate and vote on the new tax — later this month. The tax would take effect in January if passed.

Commissioners would have the option of withdrawing the tax if voters do not approve the November bond. While Bergin said he would prefer to keep the tax in place even if the bond doesn't pass, business owners asked that it be repealed.

Looking out at the audience at one point in the meeting, the sheriff jokingly offered one concession to those unhappy about the potential tax: "Just so you know, I'll be in the dunk tank Friday at the (Clatsop County) Fair."

Drones: Right now, it is up to park managers

Continued from Page 1A

"Whenever we approach someone who has violated a rule, it's not like they're a criminal," she said. "It's really just a lack of knowledge. We totally understand this technology has grown so rapidly but the education hasn't kept up."

New signs on the beach explain that drones must stay 2,000 feet from Haystack Rock. The awareness program has also provided guidance to staff on how to handle drone encounters, and has taken to social media and newsletters to remind people of proper drone use.

Still, the effort doesn't seem to be enough. Apps for drones don't list Haystack Rock as a national wildlife refuge, although they do mark other no-fly zones like airports. Awareness program staff only work at the rock during low tide, leaving much of the day without anyone to manage drones.

Keyser hopes drone apps will eventually include wildlife refuges. Greater knowledge of the possibility of fines



Hannah Sievert/The Daily Astorian

Signs posted at Haystack Rock indicate the drone policy.

could help prevent wildlife disturbances.

"(The fines) would deter a lot of people, but they don't even have that knowledge," Keyser said. "It's still totally insufficient even with the people we talk to and the messages we put out. It's still not enough."

The state Parks and Recreation Department has also had to develop new policies. Drones are generally legal to use in most state parks, except in areas where flights could endanger wildlife or pose risks to people or property.

developing."

A draft policy should be completed this fall, with the goal of having the policy in place by 2019.

Right now, it is up to park managers to decide whether drones are allowed.

Nehalem Bay State Park was ruled a drone no-fly zone because of the nearby airport and the nesting birds in the area.

Ben Cox, park manager for the Nehalem Bay Management Unit, may rule Short Sand Beach in Oswald West State Park a no-fly zone because of the high concentration of people who visit.

Still, Cox tries to make drone use happen safely when possible.

"I try to figure out how to make this happen for the person so they can have an experience and not be bound up in regulations," he said. "Often times there's a misconception that the government looks to limit or hinder. I look to allow unless I can't. I want to make sure I'm not saying 'no' for no good reason."

Library: A move to closed stacks concerns some

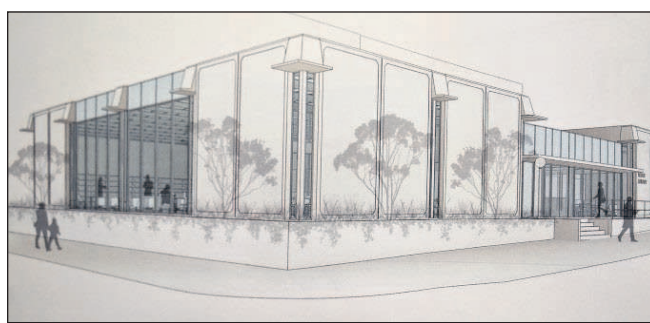
Continued from Page 1A

In the medium scenario, the basement is for staff use only.

In the second design scenario — the "large" scenario — many of the improvements to the first floor proposed in the medium scenario remain, but major changes occur in the basement that raise the cost by about \$1.6 million.

The large scenario would involve a hole cut in the first floor with a staircase leading into the basement. The basement would contain, in addition to staff areas, storage and the closed stacks, more meeting and study areas, multipurpose rooms, the Flag Room, seating, artwork and a supplemental kitchen that could be used for classes.

Under both scenarios, a mezzanine above the library's current reading area will go away and the library will address



Hennebery Eddy Architects

A conceptual rendering shows a renovated Astoria Library.

long-deferred maintenance issues such as aging plumbing and electrical systems, a roof in need of repair and lighting.

The city doesn't have to charge headlong into the large scenario, Wark noted. The medium scenario is set up so the changes presented in the large scenario can be added later.

People who attended the work session Wednesday were, overall, enthusiastic about the renovation options, but were

concerned about how the move to closed stacks might limit browsing, a concern also raised by Jones and other city leaders.

"I think people need to be able to walk into the library and discover things," Jones said.

Closed stacks, where materials are searchable in a library's catalog and can be retrieved for people to use and check out, are both a throwback to how libraries operated in years past but also the way many plan to oper-

ate in the future, said Wark and Astoria Library Director Jimmy Pearson. Ruth Metz, who led a 2013 study of the library and is a consultant on the renovation project, said there are ways to allow people to browse closed stacks.

"Books are not going away, books will never go away," Pearson assured. He noted that much of the collection, which totals around 52,000 items, is already in the basement. He says the first floor of the library would display mostly new and popular items after the renovation, while the young adult and children's collections would remain entirely available on the first floor.

Overall, City Councilor Zetty Nemlowill said, the design options seem "like a great balance of preservation and progress."

"I wish we had the money to just implement this whole plan right now," she said.

Newfoundlands: Event celebrates Newfoundland who accompanied Lewis and Clark



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

A Newfoundland named Happy enjoys the attention during the day's festivities.

Continued from Page 1A

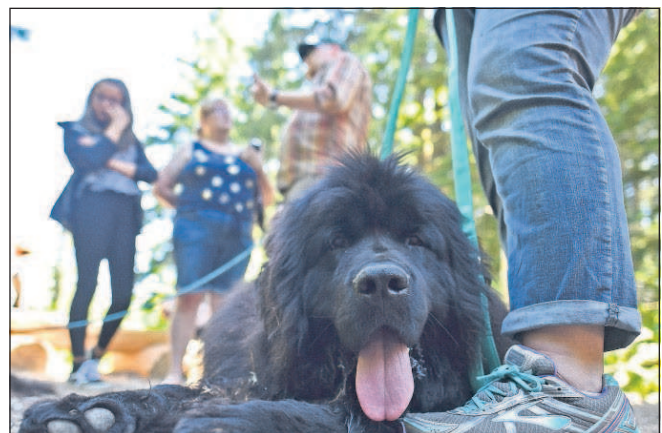
Owners acknowledge some drawbacks, like cleaning hair and drool and training the gentle giants not to pull on leashes or playfully jump on people and knock them over. Some hotels don't allow dogs that size to stay in hotel rooms with owners. And normal dog waste bags available in parks usually aren't big enough.

Ed Simstone, from Denver, has leaned into the historical component of the breed. In 2011, Simstone hiked up to Lewis and Clark Pass in Mon-

tana wearing elk skin moccasins with his Newfoundland, Seaman. On his way back this year, Simstone plans on hiking the trail with Seaman again, bringing his two other Newfoundlands along this time, too.

Even with all the maintenance, many Newfoundland owners can't imagine themselves with another breed.

"If you want a dog that's loyal and loving and friendly, you can't go wrong," said Jack Chapman, from Warrenton. "If you value a clean and immaculate house, wrong animal for you."



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Seaman's Day celebrates the Newfoundland who accompanied Lewis and Clark on their journey through the region.

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