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ONE DOLLAR

ELECTION 2018

Herman, Zilli compete for council seat

Candidates in Ward 3

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

The candidates for Astoria City Council in Ward 3 want many of the same things: Good jobs and housing for locals, a vibrant economy, thoughtful development, a solution to homelessness.

Astoria Planning Commissioner Joan Herman and longtime forester Ron Zilli can both recall sleepier times in the city, but questions about future development, economic growth and housing could dominate discussion in the coming years.

Ward 3 spans much of what people picture when they think about Astoria — views of the Columbia River and, distantly, the Astoria Bridge; the historic downtown business district with its underground tunnels and old-time storefronts; breweries and restaurants; historic homes

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Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

LEFT: Ron Zilli, who works for the Oregon Department of Forestry, is running for the downtown Ward 3 seat on the Astoria City Council. **RIGHT:** Astoria Planning Commissioner Joan Herman is a candidate for Ward 3.

Cannon Beach fire levy fails; results encouraging

District plans to put levy on November ballot

By **BRENNA VISSER**
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — A local option fire chief levy for the Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District failed Tuesday night.

If this were a regular election, the five-year levy, which pays for the chief's salary, vehicles, administrative costs and supplies, would have passed 67 percent to 32 percent. But during a special election, a measure can only pass if there is at least 50 percent voter turnout.

Only 38 percent — 498 out of the district's 1,300 voters — cast ballots, according to unofficial county results.

The levy would have raised the tax rate to \$0.19 per thousand of assessed property value, up from an average \$0.14 voted in five years ago. At the new rate, a homeowner would pay \$95 a year on a \$500,000 house.

Between 2019 to 2024, the levy was estimated to bring the district about \$1.2 million. The increase was designed to account for growing costs associated with the position, such as rising health care

and PERS rates, Fire Chief Matt Benedict said.

While disappointing, Benedict said the results were encouraging and the district plans to put the same levy on the November ballot, where the 50 percent voter turnout rule will no longer be an issue.

"We will continue to educate more people about the levy before November," Benedict said. "It's a pretty decent margin but we won't take this for granted."

The board decided to take a chance at a special election earlier this year out of fear that voters would have "tax fatigue" from multiple levies and bonds on the ballot in November.

"We thought in a small community like this we could see a bigger turnout with only one thing on the ballot," Benedict said. "It turns out we were wrong in this case. But you never know unless you try."

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Port Commission backs enterprise zone expansion

Creates tax incentives for commercial development

By **EDWARD STRATTON**
The Daily Astorian

The Port of Astoria Commission on Tuesday unanimously approved expanding the Clatsop Enterprise Zone to include most of the Astoria waterfront, following in the footsteps of the Astoria City Council on Monday.

The Clatsop Enterprise Zone, approved in 2015, includes large swaths of Warrenton, Hammond and Miles Crossing, offering three- to five-year property tax abatements on improvements from eligible developments. The Astoria City Council, wary of partnering with the Port Commission at the time, chose not to participate.

The new expansion would include portions of downtown, the Port's central waterfront, the East Mooring Basin and portions of the Youngs Bay waterfront east of the Astoria Recreation Center, along with the industrial docks at North Tongue

Point purchased by boatbuilder Hyak Maritime to develop a maritime repair and fabrication center.

Unlike Warrenton and the county, the city chose not to allow hotels, motels and resorts to be eligible for the tax incentives, citing the already strong interest in such developments.

"We've seen some transitions in the retail environment of the downtown," said City Manager Brett Estes. "We're seeing some industries, particularly in the brewing and distilling area, that

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Colin Murphey
The Daily Astorian

The East End Mooring Basin in Astoria could be eligible for the Clatsop Enterprise Zone.

Climatologist talks El Nino, the Blob, climate change



Katie Frankowicz/The Daily Astorian

Nick Bond, Washington state climatologist, spoke about ocean conditions and predictions for the Columbia Forum speaker series.

River, ocean still suffering hangovers

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

Imagine a hangover that lasts for years.

In 2013 and 2014, a mass of warm water formed off the West Coast. The Blob, so named by Washington State Climatologist Nick Bond, persisted through 2015 and 2016 after a massive El Nino event hit and kept it alive. Temperatures inside the Blob were

recorded at nearly 3 degrees C warmer than normal.

These were years marked by drought, sea bird and salmon die-offs, marine mammal starvation, extensive harmful algal blooms, razor clam and Dungeness fishery closures and beautiful warm summer days for North Coast residents.

The effects of each single event have bled into the following year. This year, the Blob might be gone and ocean conditions may have returned to something closer to normal, but Oregon and Washington state are still nursing a hangover.

That hangover is particularly apparent in low salmon returns to the Columbia River

this fall, Bond said in a talk titled "The Blob, El Nino and Climate Change: Looking for a Hot Time in the Pacific Northwest?" He kicked off this season's Columbia Forum speaker series Tuesday night.

Oregon and Washington state fishery managers closed the river to all salmon fishing last week due to salmon returns that were well below preseason predictions. Besides upper Columbia sockeye, most runs are now expected to come in at 30 percent or less of the preseason forecast, said Tucker Jones, Columbia River program manager for Oregon.

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