

Probe of mental health director was over on-call responsibility

Baker was cleared by the agency's board

By **DERRICK DePLEDGE**
The Daily Astorian

The internal investigation of Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare's executive director involved her on-call responsibility at the crisis respite center in Warrenton.

Amy Baker was the on-call administrator on a night in December when two patients at the respite center got into a fight and one was arrested by Warrenton police. After video footage showed the wrong patient was arrested, the program manager at the respite center reached Baker and asked whether police should be called back to look at the video.

Baker was in Portland, and instructed the program manager to "sit on it and we will deal with it tomorrow," according to the investigator's report.

Uncomfortable, the program manager reached out to Baker again by text about an hour and half later, shared the video and said she would prefer police view the footage as soon as possible. In a phone conversation, Baker again asked why the situation "could not be handled in the morning," but ultimately authorized the program manager to have police look at the video, according to the report.

After seeing the footage, police agreed that it appeared the other patient instigated the fight.

'WE WANT TO LEARN FROM THIS INCIDENT.'

Lt. Kristen Hanthorn
acting board chairwoman

The investigation — requested by the mental health agency's board, and conducted by Lake Oswego employment law firm Peck Rubanoff & Hatfield — concluded Baker did not violate policy regarding her availability that night as on-call administrator. The agency has no policy that requires on-call administrators be physically present near the crisis respite center, and staff was able to reach her in Portland.

But the investigation determined it was poor judgment for Baker not to advise the program manager she would be out of town while she was on call.

The investigation also concluded Baker did not respond appropriately when the program manager told her what the video of the fight showed or after Baker saw the video herself.

"If the program manager had not insisted on having the police view the video, (the patient) — a resident with a significant mental health condition — would have spent the night in jail for a suspected crime that he did not commit," the investigator wrote.

The mental health agency's board weighed the investigator's report and cleared Baker of wrongdoing. The board chairwoman and another board member resigned, citing concerns about the board and the agency's direction.

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Coast Guard misses first paycheck amid shutdown



Photos by Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Coast Guard spouses, from left, Amanda Gibbs, Jennifer Siems and Stacey Benson, interviewed Monday by news station KGW, said they have tried to remain upbeat and grateful for the community support during the government shutdown.

Families start to feel the strain

By **EDWARD STRATTON**
The Daily Astorian

The sole breadwinner in Amanda Gibbs' family of seven is her husband, an information technology specialist with the Coast Guard based at North Tongue Point.

Her husband is one of an estimated 1,500 Coast Guard personnel locally who today will

miss their first paycheck because of the longest government shutdown in U.S. history.

"It's devastating for us," Gibbs said. "He works all day, and I have five kids, and getting day care for five kids is ridiculously expensive. We live below the poverty line, according to America. We don't make a lot of money."

The Coast Guard, part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, is the only branch of the military not being paid during the partial shutdown. Other branches fall under the U.S. Department of Defense, which has already secured funding this fiscal year from Congress.

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An estimated 1,500 local Coast Guard missed their first paycheck today because of a government shutdown.



Tiffany Butler

Outgoing state Rep. Deborah Boone, D-Cannon Beach, left, was honored by state Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, during a Clatsop Economic Development Resources business awards ceremony last year.

Boone behind bill to tighten records requests

By **EDWARD STRATTON**
The Daily Astorian

In one of her last legislative actions before retiring, state Rep. Deborah Boone recommended a bill that would tighten requirements for public records requests.

State Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, introduced Senate Bill 609 on Monday on Boone's behalf.

Under state law, public records requests can be broad, covering an entire topic rather than a specific piece of information.

The bill Boone supports seeks to tighten the process, requiring people requesting records to specify "with particularity" a

description of the records being sought and how they will be used.

"It's to hopefully winnow out the fishing expeditions and allow the legitimate (requests) to move forward," said Boone, a Democrat who represented Cannon Beach in the House for 14 years.

Boone didn't point to a specific example that made her want to introduce the legislation. There have been multiple public records requests made of public officials over the past several years, and they can take a great deal of time and money, she said.

Senate Bill 609 does not specify how much particularity would be needed to describe records or how they will be used. Boone

said she will travel to Salem at the end of the month to work on clarifying the language.

While she understands that journalists often need to capture a breadth of information, maybe they wouldn't have to be so broad if they "would just be honest and say, 'This is what I'm trying to get at,'" Boone said. "I get that they want to be vague to capture everything, but maybe they don't have to."

Ginger McCall, Oregon's public records advocate, found a report last year that released governments often unreasonably delay releasing public records or charge too much for access.

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