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## Sen. Johnson saw wake-up call in Salem

Cap and trade, vaccination bills at issue

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Astorian

Controversial bills in Salem over issues like cap and trade and vaccinations were a clarion call to people who feel underrepresented, state Sen. Betsy Johnson said.

"I believe this session has caused an awakening in the sector of the electorate that heretofore has not paid a lot of attention to the activities of the Oregon Legislature," the Scappoose Democrat told the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday.

State legislators tackled a host of hot-button issues, from reforming the Public Employees Retirement System to passing a plastic bag ban to a gross receipts tax on businesses expected to pump \$1 billion a year into education.

Among the most contentious was the failed

House Bill 2020, which would have created the second statewide cap-and-trade system in the U.S. after California. Large emitters of carbon dioxide would have been taxed for going over a cap on pollution and forced to buy offsets. The proceeds would have been invested in climate-friendly initiatives.

The bill died because of a lack of support in the state Senate. It drew the particular ire of the natural resources industry, including the #TimberUnity movement that protested in front of the Capitol.

"When all those log trucks came down to the Capitol, I believe that it was a clarion call to action on the part of a lot of loggers, timber workers, people in the woods who heretofore had taken the Legislature somewhat passively," she said.

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Betsy Johnson



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

An evacuation route sign stands by the Cove in Seaside.

## COUNTY WANTS TO IMPROVE EVACUATION ROUTES

Directions critical after a disaster

By NICOLE BALES  
The Astorian

Clatsop County is still working on making sure residents and visitors know where to go in a tsunami.

"We were really aware as people started surveying the routes that the signage wasn't sufficient, if only for people who aren't familiar with the area," Clatsop County Emergency Manager Tiffany Brown said.

The Emergency Management Division is in the last phase of the Tsunami Wayfinding Project, a three-phase effort to create evacuation routes to guide people to higher ground after a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami.

In the first phase, the state Department of Geology and Mineral Industries helped communities develop maps and brochures with evacuation routes and installed some signs.

In the second, the five cities in the county, unincorporated areas and military bases were convened by the department to create evacuation routes. They identified where to put the "You are here" and temporary assembly signs.

Now, the county is going to work with the same groups to clearly define the evacuation routes by determining where more signs need to be added.

Brown is submitting a request for proposals this week to hire a consultant, gather data and help the county organize the information.

After they figure out where the new signs need to be placed, they are going to catalog where all the signs are to make maintenance easier moving forward.

The catalog will also help the county identify and replace stolen signs, which have become a problem.

"Seaside has known for a while that people steal those signs," Brown said. "So, in addition to that problem, we can't even speak to how extensive it is because we don't have a clear record of how many and what types of signs comprehensively have ever been installed."

Once the location of each sign is recorded, Brown said they will be able to keep track of what signs go missing.

Brown is looking forward to finishing the project this fall, she said. Once the wayfinding system is organized, it will be easier and less time-consuming to maintain.

"We'll be able to start worrying about other things," she said.

*'WE WERE REALLY AWARE AS PEOPLE STARTED SURVEYING THE ROUTES THAT THE SIGNAGE WASN'T SUFFICIENT, IF ONLY FOR PEOPLE WHO AREN'T FAMILIAR WITH THE AREA.'*

Tiffany Brown | Clatsop County emergency manager

## Online squabble over Grocery Outlet echoes other campaigns

Similar pages on Facebook

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Astorian

In June, Responsible Growth Palmdale launched a Facebook page to protest a development project near a popular mall in Southern California. In July, Responsible Growth Lake Stevens created a Facebook group opposed to a new Costco in Washington state.

Responsible Growth Astoria emerged on July 17 to challenge a new Grocery Outlet near Mill Pond.

All three groups share nearly word-for-word introductions and the Facebook pages echo similar design and photo elements.

A man who said he manages the Astoria page said the groups are not linked. But it is not clear who is behind Responsible Growth Astoria.

This week, several

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## Two Pacific Northwest planners vie to oversee development

City post vacant for nearly two years

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Astorian

Two Pacific Northwest planners are vying to be Astoria's next community development director — a post that has been vacant for nearly two years.

At a public meet and greet Tuesday, Elaine Placido, the director of community services for Cowlitz County, Washington, and Jefferson Spencer, the former planning director for Jefferson County, mingled with community leaders, residents and city staff.

The city has not had a community development director since Kevin Cronin left in 2017. City Manager Brett Estes has filled in as interim director in addition to his regular duties, but the depart-



LEFT: Elaine Placido, center, answers questions at a public meet and greet Tuesday. She is one of two candidates vying for a community development director job in Astoria. RIGHT: Jefferson Spencer, right, interacts with community leaders, city staff and residents.

ment has relied heavily on contract consultants and planners to handle day-to-day work.

Placido is the director of community services for Cowlitz County, in charge of combined building and planning and health and human services departments. She oversees a staff of 60 people

and also runs a working farm in Rainier with her family. She first arrived in Oregon with the Coast Guard in the early 1980s.

Spencer was hired as the planning director for Jefferson County in 2016 and left the job in April. He was Jefferson County's first full-time planner since 2012. He has



Photos by Katie Frankowicz/The Astorian

worked primarily in Oregon and Washington, with a career in environmental and land use planning.

Both have relevant experience and appear eager to be in Astoria, said Jan Mitchell, a former planning commissioner and a long-time planner herself, after speak-

ing with the two candidates at the event Tuesday.

"So for me it's a matter of how would they work with other city staff and the city manager, how would they engage with the community," Mitchell said, adding, "Probably either of them could do this job."

The community development director oversees a department tasked with economic development, land use planning, zoning administration, building inspection, historic preservation and code enforcement, among other responsibilities.

In the past two years, the department has tackled complex code amendment projects tied to waterfront development, as well as complicated development applications.

Since Cronin left, Estes has recruited numerous candidates and made several offers without success. A woman he offered the job to earlier this year initially accepted but then backed out for personal reasons. Afterward, the

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