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Isom named Port director

Decision came after positive review

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

The Port of Astoria has named Will Isom the agency’s executive director after an overwhelmingly positive review from staff, tenants and outside stakeholders.

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Port updates cruise ship marketing agreement

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Isom, who joined the agency as a staff accountant from Columbia Memorial Hospital nearly five years ago, was elevated to the interim

leadership position after Jim Knight resigned in June. He is the Port’s sixth executive director since 2012.

Isom, a Knappa native, initially didn’t want the permanent job when he was appointed to replace Knight.

“Being in this seat a while, and sort of working to move a lot things forward, I do think I have sort of a vision of where I would like to see the Port get,” he said.

“I’m local,” he said. “I was born

and raised in this area. My wife, the same thing. She’s local. I don’t have any interest in leaving.”

Isom has received positive feedback from the Port Commission throughout his five months as interim director. He recently negotiated a contract with the local International Longshore and Warehouse Union tying worker pay to the Port’s performance.

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Will Isom

Astoria to consider library bond

Measure possible in 2021

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

The Astoria City Council has agreed to explore a bond measure in 2021 for the renovation of the Astoria Library, while potentially hiring someone to boost a lagging fundraising effort in the meantime.

The library, a Brutalist-style building constructed in 1967, has never been substantially remodeled and faces an estimated \$860,000 in deferred maintenance. A 2013 study found the building had reached the end of its useful life.

A full renovation, nearing \$7 million, would modernize the building with larger windows and spaces for meetings, reading, teens and families. It would open public access to the basement and include an expanded Flag Room for meetings, along with a training kitchen, gallery, media lab, collaboration and archival areas.

The city has set aside \$750,000 in carbon sequestration credits to support the renovation, along with \$900,000 in a memorial fund from former Mayor W.C. Logan, who the renovated library will be named after.

City councilors last year supported a full renovation, contingent on the library foundation’s ability to raise another \$5 million.

Since 2014, the foundation has raised about \$83,500 after expenses. The non-profit recently called on the city to invest more in the renovation.

City Manager Brett Estes asked the City Council for direction on how to move forward, since the last directive was against a bond measure.

David Oser, the secretary-treasurer of the library foundation, argued in front of the City Council on Monday night that it is unfair to lean on volunteers to do the work of professional fundraisers.

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Sprucing up Ocean View



Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

The Ocean View Cemetery could expand burial grounds north of the main area for natural burials.



Grounds coordinator Matt Moritz, left, and facilities coordinator Mark Montgomery position a casket lowering device in preparation for a burial.

City hopes to improve 122-year-old cemetery

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

WARRENTON — Astoria’s 122-year-old Ocean View Cemetery in Warrenton is breaking even operationally, with room to bury hundreds of more caskets and cremated remains.

But with the cemetery capturing a fraction of cremations and a growing trend toward more sustainable interments, the city and its consultants are looking to diversify the options.

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Recall petition by #TimberUnity against Rep. Mitchell fails

Organizers fall short of signatures

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Astorian

The recall petition by #TimberUnity against state Rep. Tiffany Mitchell has failed after organizers did not gather the required number of signatures to force an election.

The rural advocacy group made the announcement in a statement on its Facebook page.

“Despite not reaching our goal for signatures, I take pleasure in knowing that we have defined who Tiffany Mitchell is and what



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

A #TimberUnity sign stands off U.S. Highway 30.

she stands for,” Darren Mead, the chief petitioner and the owner of Action Sign Works in Miles Crossing, said in the statement Wednesday. “We already have folks lining up to run for her seat next year, and

it hasn’t stopped there. Now #TimberUnity members are stepping up to get involved on city and county levels too.

“Even though there won’t be a recall election next month, we are

starting the 2020 election cycle with thousands of voters, including Democratic voters, who are ready to take back the North Coast and elect common-sense leaders.”

Mitchell, D-Astoria, represents state House District 32. She is up for her first reelection campaign next year and vowed to continue to listen to differing perspectives and integrate those into policy.

“I’m basically just completely relieved that the effort failed, and that I get to continue to represent the community,” Mitchell said.

#TimberUnity launched the recall petition against Mitchell in September, primarily over her support for House Bill 2020, a cap-and-trade bill to help combat climate change.

The group needed to collect 4,883 verified signatures by 5 p.m. on Wednesday but had not submitted any by late afternoon, according to the Oregon Secretary of State’s Office. The cap-and-trade bill would have capped emissions for large industrial polluters and required them to buy allowances to go over, investing proceeds in climate-friendly initiatives. Locally, Fort George Brewery also faced backlash over co-owner Jack Harris’ advocacy for the legislation.

HB 2020 was approved by the state House but died in the Senate when majority Democrats fell short of the necessary votes and Republicans walked out to deny the



Tiffany Mitchell

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