

## IN BRIEF

## Seaside woman dies after being hit by vehicle on Highway 101

A Seaside woman died Thursday night after being struck by a vehicle on U.S. Highway 101 near Gearhart.

Police say the driver of a Chevrolet coupe was traveling northbound when he saw a pedestrian cross into his path and was unable to avoid her.

Emergency crews arrived at about 9:30 p.m. and Rachel Faith McCune, 35, was pronounced dead at the scene.

The highway was closed to one lane for about three hours after the crash.

## Coast Guard rescues two teens near Fort Stevens

Two teenage girls were rescued Wednesday near Fort Stevens State Park in Hammond after getting caught in a rising tide.

Emergency crews were called at around 5 p.m. to a report that a 14 year old and an 18 year old were stranded on rocks in a lagoon.

They were reportedly unable to paddle their inner-tubes back to their starting point and the rising tide prevented them from walking back to the park.

Crews were unable to reach the rocky area by boat due to the shallow water.

A U.S. Coast Guard aircrew ultimately hoisted the teenagers out of the water. No injuries were reported.

The Coast Guard said the rescue was a reminder to always check the weather, including tide tables, and wear a life jacket.

— *The Astorian*

## Pacific County adopts vacation rental regulations

SOUTH BEND, Wash. — The Pacific County Board of Commissioners voted Thursday to adopt new regulations for short-term vacation rentals, while also voting to lift most elements of a moratorium in place since February on new vacation rental applications.

The board unanimously voted to adopt amendments that cover an array of issues, the most notable of which aims to prevent clusters of vacation rentals in residentially zoned neighborhoods.

The board also unanimously voted to lift the moratorium on new vacation rental applications in R-2 and R-R zoning districts, while keeping intact the moratorium on R-1 zones for the time being.

The votes were held following a virtual public hearing that lasted about an hour, which included comments from more than a dozen people on all sides of the issue.

The biggest issue for those opposed to the additional regulations is the density rule, which requires new short-term rentals to have a radius of at least 300 feet — from all property lines — from any other short-term rental property in R-2 and R-R zoning districts.

They also asked the county to conduct a study on how the new regulations would impact the county's economy.

— *Chinook Observer*

## DEATHS

July 28, 2020

SPATH, Antone Ernest, 58, of Warrenton, died in Warrenton. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

July 27, 2020

SMITH, Kevin Kelly, 65, of Astoria, died in Seaside. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

## ON THE RECORD

## Criminal trespass

• Roy Hall, 44, was arrested Wednesday at Ninth and Astor streets in Astoria for criminal trespass in the second degree.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

## MONDAY

**Astoria City Council**, 7 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

## TUESDAY

**Seaside Community Center Commission**, 10 a.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A.

**Clatsop County Board of Commissioners**, noon, work session, (electronic meeting).

**Seaside Library Board**, 4:30 p.m., Seaside Public Library, 1131 Broadway.

**Clatsop Care Health District Board**, 5 p.m., (electronic meeting).

**Astoria Library Board**, 5:30 p.m., 450 10th St., (electronic meeting).

**Miles Crossing Sanitary Sewer District Board**, 6 p.m., 34583 U.S. Highway 101 Business.

**Seaside Planning Commission**, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

## the Astorian

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Luke Whittaker/Chinook Observer

A jeep barrels through the surf near Seaview last weekend.

## Sewage spill disclosed in Cannon Beach

Overflow estimated at 26,000 gallons

By NICOLE BALES

*The Astorian*

CANNON BEACH — Dump trucks carried 28 loads of sand off of Cannon Beach in late July after a sewage overflow.

The city said it was notified of a wastewater pump station failure on the morning of July 24 that led to more than 26,000 gallons of sewage spilling onto the beach at the end of Nelchena Street.

While the city worked to correct the problem, it was unclear there was a sewage overflow until the afternoon.

A report by Karen La Bonte, the city's public works director, said she received a phone call from a resident at around 4 p.m. informing her that he noticed water coming from the southernmost outfall during his walk on the beach that morning. When public works staff went back out to inspect the area, they found specks of toilet paper.

The city notified the state Department of Environmental Quality and Oregon State Parks.

Barricades and caution tape were placed around the area, along with sand-



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

A sewage spill was discovered in Cannon Beach on July 24.

wich boards with warning signs. Signs on the beach will remain for several more weeks.

The city's excavation contractor brought four dump trucks and removed 28 loads of sand from the beach. The sand was taken to an area east of U.S. Highway 101.

The city said the spill did not reach the ocean and that the cleanup was completed before high tide.

Notifications regarding the incident were sent the evening of July 24 to the City Council, city attorney, nearby hotels, the Ecola Creek Watershed Council and Surftrider Foundation and committees that partner with the city on environmen-

tal projects.

La Bonte's report said the city's electrical contractor concluded that the valves on two of the wastewater pump stations were adjusted incorrectly. The incorrect valves caused the pressure to increase, which damaged the pump stations. Other malfunctions were also exposed by the incident.

"We will be reviewing our training procedures for new employees starting to do routine maintenance in our pump stations, in addition to adding signage that make certain procedures more clear," La Bonte said in the report.

Public works will also reexamine routine mainte-

nance intervals.

In her report, La Bonte said another contributing factor was that the wastewater department has been short-staffed for some time.

"Team members from other departments and agencies have stepped up to assist the wastewater team whenever possible," she said. "This has resulted in a level of inconsistencies in who was performing various operations."

She said there also needs to be improvements to the utility systems, but funding will require adjustments to utility rates.

The incident is expected to be discussed Tuesday at a City Council meeting.

## County, Warrenton partner to dissolve water district

By EDWARD STRATTON

*The Astorian*

Clatsop County and Warrenton will work together on how to dissolve the Skipanon Water Control District and disperse two remaining flood control structures.

The water district, whose board decided last year to request dissolution from the county, oversees a flood control structure at Cullaby Lake that would go to the county. The district's Eighth Street Dam in Warrenton would go to the city.

County Manager Don Bohn organized a joint meeting between the two governments Friday to find a collaborative way to dissolve the district and disperse assets.

Warrenton city commissioners were wary of taking on the Eighth Street Dam,

which Mayor Henry Balensifer equated to "a piece of ground right now in terms of its operational use and maintenance."

The water district and the city once had a partnership with Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce to replace the aging dam with a single-lane, \$1.2 million bridge funded by the Bonneville Power Administration as part of a fish habitat rehabilitation project.

But some at the city and in the community questioned the water district's argument that the dam was no longer useful for flood control. The city, which at one point declared an emergency over the issue, also spent more than \$110,000 on an attorney in a failed bid to claim ownership of the dam.

Warrenton is still await-

ing the final results of a hydrological study from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers related to the dam's effectiveness. The city would like those results before taking on the dam, Balensifer said.

"I would hate to just take ownership of something that frankly we don't have a clear picture of," he said. "It just feels like it's being dumped, so to speak."

Collin Stelzig, the city's public works director, said it appears from the study so far that the dam is a useful water control structure during periods of low to exceptionally high tides, but less so during 100-year flood events. The water district, expecting the dam would be removed as a hazard, kept the tide gates up since 2012 and took them off in 2015.

The dam has become

more important with proposed development nearby, such as Jason Palmberg's Chinook Village RV Park. The family of Mark Kujala, a county commissioner and former Warrenton mayor, also owns significant amounts of land nearby and has contemplated residential development.

Balensifer, Commissioner Mark Baldwin and Commissioner Pam Ackley agreed that having the county organize an election of affected voters on whether to dissolve the water district would be the best way forward.

"I don't think it would make November, so it would happen sometime next year," Bohn said of an election. "And then that would, I guess, give us a little time to figure out some of the other details."

## Election season underway in South County

By R.J. MARX

*The Astorian*

SEASIDE — Election season is underway in South County, with three open seats on the Seaside City Council and two in Gearhart.

Gearhart Mayor Matt Brown's term will also come up for reelection in November.

Aug. 25 is the deadline for candidates to declare they are running.

Candidates submit their signature sheets to the city and they return them to the board of elections to verify.

"Once they are verified we notify the city and they will then submit an official candidate list to us by Sept. 3," County Clerk Tracie Krevanko said.

No candidates have yet to file.

In Seaside, the City Council terms of Randy Frank, Seth Morrissey and

Tom Horning will expire.

Frank, who serves as councilor-at-large for wards 1 and 2, joined the council in 2012 and was unopposed for reelection in 2016.

Morrissey was appointed in 2015 to complete the term of Stubby Lyons.

Tom Horning, a geologist who has called for greater disaster preparation, was elected in 2016.

In Gearhart, Brown is up for reelection as mayor and the City Council seats of

Dan Jesse and Reita Fackerell are in play. Brown won election in 2016 and dominated the mayor's race with a platform of a "sustainable, residential Gearhart."

Fackerell was appointed in December 2018 after the departure of Sue Lorain.

Jesse would be making his third City Council bid in Gearhart, defeating his opponent in 2012 and running unopposed in 2016.

He served on the Planning Commission before election to City Council.

