

IN BRIEF

Pickleball courts could be coming to Cartwright Park in Seaside

SEASIDE — Pickleball courts are the most asked for facility at the Parks Advisory Committee, Seaside Public Works Director Dale McDowell said at last week's City Council meeting.

A preliminary proposal calls for four pickleball courts and a tennis court at Cartwright Park on Franklin Street near Avenue S.

McDowell and members of the Parks Advisory Committee presented the "mile high" version of the potential expansion of the park at the city's southern end adjacent to the former Seaside School District office. The city-owned property is now vacant after the school district's move to Spruce Drive and is likely slated for demolition.

Pickleball is described as a cross between ping-pong and tennis.

Costs will depend on the type of fencing, court construction, waiting areas and benches needed.

The neighboring playground, which will remain, was recently upgraded for Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility. The boat ramp at the park could be widened and stairs added. Restrooms also need upgrading.

A BMX pump track on the park property, constructed by volunteers from the North Coast Trail Alliance in 2018, gets a lot of use and could see an expansion with an additional lane, McDowell said.

"Again, this is first discussion," he said. "We're not asking you to do anything other than start thinking about it. We're hoping at some point when we dig a hole out there we find a bucket of money to do all of this work."

— The Astorian

Study finds red flag law on guns works as intended

A study of Oregon's extreme risk protection order law found the tool is working as intended but suggests wide adoption has been slow.

The law, colloquially known as a red flag law, went into effect in 2018 and allows law enforcement, spouses, immediate family, or household members to petition a judge for temporary restrictions on purchasing or possessing firearms if they fear a person poses a risk to themselves or others. The individual has 30 days to contest the order.

Oregon is one of 19 states, along with the District of Columbia, with similar laws on the books. The study, led by Michigan State University associate professor April Zoeli, sought to identify how the law was being used across the state and whether the characteristics of respondents differed depending on who was petitioning for the order — law enforcement of family members. It looked at all 93 petitions filed in the first 15 months after the law was implemented. During that time, 22 of Oregon's 36 counties had at least one petition filed.

The study found that 75% of people requesting a risk protection order reported the person in question had a history of interpersonal violence. And 73% had a reported history of suicidality. Half of those had threatened to take their lives with a firearm. The study also found that half of the respondents had threatened or attempted to take their life and also threatened or used violence against others, a higher rate than was found in similar studies conducted in other states.

The three-quarters of petitions involving interpersonal violence was noteworthy. States with similar laws, like Connecticut and Indiana, saw a substantially lower share of orders for similar circumstances.

Data from the study suggest the laws are being used as intended.

— Oregon Public Broadcasting

MEMORIALS

Saturday, June 5
LINDSLEY, Eileen
— Celebration of life at 2 p.m., 34742 U.S. Highway 101 Business. Parking is available across the street.

BENFIELD-SCHERTENLEIB, Melissa
— Celebration of life at

2 p.m., Coastline Christian Fellowship, 89386 Oregon Highway 202 in Olney.

WEAVER, Paul Linn
— Celebration of life at 2 p.m., Hamlet Historical Schoolhouse and Community Center, 80859 Hamlet Road in Seaside.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

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

Astoria Library Board, 5:30 p.m., 450 10th St.

WEDNESDAY

Warrenton Urban Renewal Advisory Committee, 3:30 p.m., (electronic meeting).

THURSDAY

Astoria Design Review Commission, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

the Astorian

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GROUNDWORK



TOP: Oscar Martinez, a shellfish worker with Pacific Seafood, moves a basket in place before filling it with oyster cultch on the tideflats east of Nahcotta.

LEFT: Cultch bags filled with shells holding oyster larvae, or spat.

BELOW: Dante Negrete, a shellfish worker, prepares to break up a cultch bag into a basket.

Photos by Luke Whittaker/Chinook Observer



Oregon police find marijuana laws difficult to enforce

By GARRETT ANDREWS
The Bulletin

'THE LAWS ARE TOO CONVOLUTED TO COMPREHEND. IF WE AS LAW ENFORCEMENT CAN'T EASILY DECIPHER THE LAWS, HOW CAN WE EXPECT THE CITIZENS TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THEM?'

one officer's written response in a survey

A recent study that draws heavily on Deschutes County found an overwhelming consensus among law enforcement officers that Oregon's marijuana laws are poorly written and confusing.

As a result, this perception has even led some local officers to stop enforcing marijuana laws altogether, according to the February report by Portland State University researchers Kris Henning and Greg Stewart.

"The laws are too convoluted to comprehend," one officer wrote in a survey response. "If we as law enforcement can't easily decipher the laws, how can we expect the citizens to be able to understand them?"

Wrote another: "I have just started treating weed as if it is legal regardless of the amount."

For their report, titled "Dazed and Confused: Police Experiences Enforcing Oregon's New Marijuana Laws," Henning and Stewart surveyed 301 police officers in the second half of 2020. Participants included officers and deputies from four agencies: Bend Police Department, Redmond Police Department, the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office and the Klamath County Sheriff's Office.

Among the results:

- More than 90% of participants felt that the illegal shipment of marijuana out of state had increased in the past three years.

- More than 90% believe instances of driving under the influence of marijuana had increased for adults and juveniles.

- More than 60% of respondents felt Oregon's marijuana laws make it difficult to determine if someone has broken the law.

In 2014, Oregon voters approved Measure 91, legalizing recreational use of marijuana for people 21 and older. What followed were a number of major changes to Oregon law in a short period of time. This included the Oregon Liquor Control Commission tightening its licensing guidelines in 2018. The next year, the Legislature afforded the agency more authority to restrict marijuana production licenses.

Today, there are six areas

where marijuana offenses are still charged, though the offending amounts differ from those prior to 2014: driving while impaired, the illegal use or possession of marijuana and the illegal growing, processing or distribution of marijuana.

In response to open-ended questions in the Portland State study, 3 of 4 officers mentioned confusion in understanding the laws. Many officers expressed a feeling they'd been intentionally written to be vague so officers would eventually give up on enforcement.

Officers surveyed spoke to confusion about enforcement of medical versus recreational cannabis laws. They also discussed a difficulty determining if a person possessed an illegal amount of a drug, or in determining if it was purchased from a licensed retailer. Many officers noted a breakdown in cooperation with state agencies that regulate cannabis, notably the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, the Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

This lack of clear understanding often manifests in roadside contacts between

officers and members of the public, according to the study. Officers said it can be difficult determining the authenticity of documentation showing a person is in lawful possession of large amounts of marijuana. They also reported a near-impossibility in determining if a driver in Oregon with large amounts of marijuana is heading out of state.

"Offenders often claim the product is hemp rather than marijuana, which also makes it difficult to determine what the product is," one officer wrote.

Many officers also reported declining to make marijuana arrests because they feel district attorneys will not prosecute the cases.

"It seems pointless to care about it when, in (redacted) county, even if someone has several hundred pounds, there will be no prosecution," wrote a respondent. "I would just prefer that it is legalized and then it is not an issue."

Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel said he prosecutes all valid arrests that reach his office. He noted some of the survey respondents work outside Deschutes County.

"It makes me wonder if the officers are correct. I mean, I'm pretty liberal on drug charges. And if I'm bringing charges, I don't imagine there's a county out there that's not," Hummel said. "Look, it's anecdotal — it wasn't fact-checked. But it's important in that it's telling us what the officers think. That's important to know."

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