

## IN BRIEF

## Gearhart approves new budget

GEARHART — Increased property values, a jump in building permits and lodging tax and inflow of federal dollars drove an expanding city budget.

The City Council approved the budget last week, showing \$2.57 million in general fund resources, up about 8% from last year's \$2 million budget. With additional budget funds, appropriations total \$7.62 million.

The permanent tax rate is \$1.005 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The city will levy about \$608,000 in property taxes necessary to balance the budget.

The new budget takes effect in July.

## Seaside School District adopts new budget

SEASIDE — The Seaside School District approved next school year's budget last week. The total of all funds was \$960,000 higher than in the proposed budget, following an adjustment to account for principal and interest for pension bonds.

After reviewing the budget with the Northwest Regional Education Service District, the school district made the change with the goal of being "as transparent as possible," Superintendent Susan Penrod said.

Total revenues and expenditures of \$49 million in the revised budget are about \$9 million lower than last year's \$58.2 million requirements, a result of reduced construction expenditures with the completion of the new campus on Spruce Drive.

## New commander named for Coast Guard cutter Alert

A change of command ceremony for the U.S. Coast Guard cutter Alert was held Friday outside of the Columbia River Maritime Museum in Astoria.

Cmdr. Matthew Kolodica replaced Cmdr. Tyson Scofield as the Alert's commanding officer.

"It has been a privilege to lead the Alert crew over the last two years," Scofield said. "Despite the challenges of the COVID pandemic, maintenance on a 52-year-old cutter, or the stormy conditions of the Pacific Northwest, this crew continuously rose to occasion to safely and successfully execute our missions."

Scofield will report to the Eisenhower School of National Security and Resource Strategy in Washington, D.C.

Kolodica moved from the Coast Guard's Maritime Force Protection program office in Washington, D.C.

— *The Astorian*

## Long Beach drowning victim identified

LONG BEACH, Wash. — The 14-year-old boy who is presumed to have drowned off Long Beach on May 31 has been identified by family members as Carlos Sebastián Quizhpi Valdivieso.

He was caught in a rip current and pulled away from shore.

His family, whose roots are in Ecuador in South America, have continued searching for him. A GoFundMe page has been set up by a cousin under the surname Quizhpi, an alternative spelling of his family name.

"His parents Lourdes and Carlos, his brothers Ines and Bernardo, are completely devastated as well as the entire family," according to the GoFundMe listing.

— *Chinook Observer*

## DEATHS

## June 8, 2021

**KELING, Howard** LaVerne, 90, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Caldwell's Funeral & Cremation Arrangement Center of Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

## June 6, 2021

**McKNIGHT, Laisane** Ray "Zane," 64, of Queen Creek, Arizona, formerly

of Astoria, died in Seaside. Caldwell's Funeral & Cremation Arrangement Center of Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

## June 4, 2021

**RUSSELL, Gwendolyn** Gail, 83, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

## ON THE RECORD

## Assault

• Robert Weaver, 57, of Astoria, was arrested Monday on state Highway 202 for resisting arrest, misuse of 911 and assaulting a public safety officer.

## Theft

• Jarret Dean Gleason, 43, of Warrenton, was arrested Monday near 28th Street and Marine Drive in Astoria for theft in the first degree.

## DUI

• Joshua Michael Daugherty, 35, of Long Beach, Washington, was arrested Monday for driving under the influence of intoxicants and reckless driving following a crash on U.S. Highway 101.

• Carmen G. Ricker, 61, of Warrenton, was arrested on June 3 in Warrenton for DUI, reckless endangerment and reckless driving.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

## THURSDAY

**Seaside Parks Advisory Committee**, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

## the Astorian

Established July 1, 1873  
(USPS 035-000)

Published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday by EO Media Group, 949 Exchange St., PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103 Telephone 503-325-3211, 800-781-3211 or Fax 503-325-6573. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Astorian, PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103-0210

DailyAstorian.com

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEMBER CERTIFIED AUDIT OF CIRCULATIONS, INC.

Circulation phone number:  
800-781-3214

Periodicals postage paid at Astoria, OR

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Printed on recycled paper

Subscription rates  
Effective January 12, 2021

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EZpay (per month).....\$10.75  
13 weeks in advance.....\$37.00  
26 weeks in advance.....\$71.00  
52 weeks in advance.....\$135.00

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## A CONGRESSIONAL VISIT

**ABOVE LEFT:** Angela Whitlock, Lisa Habecker and Kelli Ennis with the Haystack Rock Awareness Program point out puffins to U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Bonamici looks through a scope to see a black oystercatcher nest on Haystack Rock. The congresswoman visited Clatsop County on Tuesday to discuss conservation and ocean protection issues in Cannon Beach and to meet with local business leaders and learn about small business resources in Seaside. **BELOW:** Bonamici listens to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service volunteer Tim Halloran about his work observing and counting puffins.

Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian



## Warrenton debates spending on tourism promotion

Budget committee decided to zero out funding for effort

By NICOLE BALES  
*The Astorian*

WARRENTON — David Reid, the executive director of the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce, appealed to the City Commission Tuesday night to reconsider defunding a committee tasked with marketing tourism in Astoria and Warrenton.

The Lower Columbia Tourism Committee was formed about 30 years ago to combine the efforts of Astoria and Warrenton in marketing the cities as a combined destination. Reid said the committee has built a strong brand for the region, leading to longer stays and more spending year-round.

The committee is funded by a portion of lodging taxes from both cities and is made up of 15 members who serve five-year terms and represent various tourism related industries.

In May, Warrenton's budget committee decided to zero out funding to the committee and instead funnel the revenue into the Hammond Marina capital reserve fund.

The city distributes 6.8% of the lodging taxes it collects to the Lower Columbia Tourism Committee. About 19% of revenue is distributed to the marina fund.

"The chamber is the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce. We are still and always interested in the economic well-being and the livability of this combined community," Reid said.



Edward Stratton/The Astorian

Warrenton is debating whether to continue to fund the Lower Columbia Tourism Committee.

"It does make things awkward. LCTC is again, the de facto destination management organization, and there are growing organizations on the coast. There's a countywide group called Oregon's North Coast that is funded in part by LCTC that really is taking that concept that we've had here for 30 years, which is combining destinations so that we can get people to spend longer here, get fewer cars on the road and increase the economic impact to our communities, and expanding that countywide.

"And so now we're looking less at daytrippers and more at three- and four-day stays by combining the assets of countywide communities so that people have more things to do and

more reason to stay longer. So with a withdrawal from Warrenton from the LCTC, that would eventually create sort of a gap in that market, right? We're marketing everything but Gearhart and Warrenton in that Oregon's North Coast thing, just in terms of where the money comes from. That said, I don't think that the LCTC could or would or should

ignore what is available in Warrenton. It's just a question of emphasis."

Reid argued that it is important for the city to continue marketing so it can maintain and continue to grow its income stream from the lodging tax.

"And without any funding in the LCTC, with-

See *Tourism*, Page A5

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