



»INSIDE

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Seaside approves homeless camping ordinance

City could clear camp at 10th and Necanicum

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

SEASIDE — A new ordinance designed to get homeless campers off the street and establish an overnight parking program was approved by the City Council on Monday night.

MORE INSIDE

School district renews focus on Broadway Field • A3

The City Council voted 5 to 2 to enact rules to close a homeless RV camp on 10th Avenue and Necanicum Drive and present alternatives for overnight shelter.

Tom and Roxanne Veazey, who live near 10th and Necanicum, see the ordinance as the first step toward clearing the camp.

See Ordinance, Page A6

Timber verdict overturned

Appeals court sides with the state

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

SALEM — The Oregon Court of Appeals has struck down a \$1 billion jury verdict that was intended to compensate county governments for insufficient logging on state forestlands.

A law that requires Oregon to manage the forestland for the greatest permanent value does not create an “immutable promise” to maximize revenue for the counties, the appeals court ruled Wednesday.

The appeals court said that “historically, ‘value’ has myriad definitions, some of which could relate to revenue production and others that do not relate to revenue production.”

See Timber, Page A6

After complex negotiations, the Port moves to clean up contamination along the waterfront



Lydia Ely/The Astorian

Slip 2 at the Port of Astoria is a source of environmental concern.

Old petroleum leaks caused environmental challenges

By ETHAN MYERS
The Astorian

After years of studies, negotiations and settlements, the Port of Astoria can finally move toward a full-scale cleanup of a contaminated section along the waterfront.

Throughout the 1900s, several oil companies, including McCall Oil and Chemical Corp. and ExxonMobil, occupied the central waterfront on Port property, where petroleum was stored and distributed through pipelines and storage tanks below ground. Over the years, releases from both the Port’s and

the oil companies’ facilities caused contamination.

In 2001, after an oil sheen appeared on the Columbia River, the state Department of Environmental Quality launched negotiations with the Port and the oil companies — which were no longer operating in the area — about investigating the extent of the pollution and performing a study of potential cleanup

options.

While not all were on Port property, the state identified five areas of concern with contamination, with the worst of the bunch — known as “AOC4” — in slip 2 between Pier 2 and Pier 3.

At a Port Commission meeting earlier this month, Will Isom, the Port’s executive director, announced a consent judgment between the Port, the oil companies and the state. The news was met with applause from Port commissioners, who commended Isom for his efforts on getting the agreement signed.

The Port of Astoria’s waterfront used to be occupied by several bulk fuel plants, seen on the left.

Clatsop County Historical Society

See Port, Page A3



In South County, county commission candidates differ over pace of progress

Thompson, Dillard face off in District 5

By ERICK BENGEL
The Astorian

As Clatsop County Commissioner Lianne Thompson seeks a third term, she said the county is on the verge of realizing goals long discussed.

She believes the skills, knowledge and relationships she has built up over nearly eight years representing South County’s District 5 will come into play as county projects, such as expanding child care and setting up



Lianne Thompson



Steve Dillard

broadband in underserved areas, get underway over the next four.

“It takes a while, but now I see things coming to fruition,” she said, “so that’s really exciting.”

In the May election, Thompson faces Steve Dillard,

See District 5, Page A6



Warrenton’s search for city manager goes on

Contract negotiations with finalist snagged

By ETHAN MYERS
The Astorian

WARRENTON — The city will have to look elsewhere for its next city manager after contract negotiations with the only finalist failed.

Earlier this month, the City Commission unanimously approved offering the position to Ben Burgener, the city manager in Stanfield. Mayor Henry Balensifer, who was tasked with handling negotiations, announced at a City Commission meeting on Tuesday night that several offers were made between the parties, but Burgener’s final offer exceeded the city’s budget.

Commissioners chose to move on and terminate negotiations.

“The city manager is a critical piece to the city’s leadership, there’s no doubt about it. But we also need to make sure that we’re not cutting services to just get the CEO in the C suite,” Balensifer said. “I don’t have any ill will or any issues with

‘THE CITY MANAGER IS A CRITICAL PIECE TO THE CITY’S LEADERSHIP, THERE’S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. BUT WE ALSO NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT WE’RE NOT CUTTING SERVICES TO JUST GET THE CEO IN THE C SUITE.’

Henry Balensifer | mayor of Warrenton

Mr. Burgener. I’m disappointed that we’ve reached this point but it is a tight job market, and housing is expensive and we are at where we’re at.”

The city made two offers to Burgener, with the second offer being final. Burgener made three counteroffers, according to the city, all higher than the city’s budget and raising his asking amounts each time.

Balensifer said Burgener’s offers, which were looking for a base salary far higher than the advertised amount, caught the city off guard.

He was also looking for significant relocation benefits, which the city couldn’t meet, Balensifer said.

Balensifer was sympathetic to concerns of housing, but Burgener’s lesser experience and room to grow had to be considered by the city in the process, he added.

The city held several staff and community receptions with

See Warrenton, Page A2

