

Arch Cape: ‘I feel that public engagement was duly done’

Continued from Page A1

Campbell claims the water board has not addressed questions from the community. He said the petition, which was sent to the board in March, has also been ignored.

“I am trying to represent the community’s interest in getting the community to make a decision,” he said. “Sure, I have an opinion on everything. But I’m not weighing in on whether the forest should be purchased or not. Whether there should be recreational use or not. It’s really about, let’s have full transparency by the board with the correct complete information. And let’s get the community to be involved in making the decision. That’s what I’m all about.”

Campbell has served on Arch Cape’s sanitary district board and is on the board of the Castle Rock homeowners association, which represents a 35-lot subdivision that borders the forest.

“We share a direct border with the proposed forest,” Campbell said. “So clearly, people at the 35 lots in this community definitely have concerns, but I think they’re concerns that are representative of the full Arch Cape community.”

Phil Chick, the water district’s manager, said the forest purchase has been an agenda item for the water district’s



Arch Cape is moving forward with a purchase of timberland to protect drinking water.

board for years. There have also been numerous workshops, tours and town halls.

A Facebook page and website were set up for the project, which includes surveys, answers to frequently asked questions, project information and timelines.

The water district hired an outreach coordinator in

2018 through a state grant. A finance committee was formed in 2019 to develop a feasibility plan.

The water district held a town hall in March with presentations from various project partners and a question and answer period. The district also followed up with

responses to questions raised during the meeting.

“I feel that public engagement was duly done,” Chick said. “All of our meetings have been public, and this has been a long, very intentional, deliberate process in not only planning, but public engagement.”

“And that process is going

to do nothing but continue, even after acquisition is complete, which we’re anticipating will happen in the early part of June.”

The water district will begin developing a recreation and access plan for the forest beginning in May, a public process that will last several months. The district will

work with an advisory group, the land conservancy, Lewis and Clark Timberlands and the National Park Service to complete the plan.

Chick said the goal with the process is to maintain the character of the land and its traditional local uses and gather community feedback.

The water district also needs to complete a forest management plan, which will be developed by the district’s forester and a forest advisory committee.

“Managing a water source is exactly the kind of work that a water utility should be focused on — on protecting its source water and providing clean, safe water to the people that it serves,” Chick said. “Owning the source achieves this in perpetuity.”

“Although community forestry isn’t especially common right now in this neck of the woods, there are some municipalities that have owned their own watersheds for many years,” he added. “And the people that are responsible for making those decisions — the city councils, the staffs — those organizations have little to no forest management experience in house either. They rely on professional consultants to do that, in much the same way that we rely on engineers and different partners to operate our wastewater and our water utility service.”

Sisley: Has added her name to the list of great jumpers in recent school history

Continued from Page A1

“With my asthma when I came into high school, I was like, ‘I don’t think I can do the 300,’” she said. “I used to play basketball. I did summer ball my freshman year, then I just chose to focus on two sports (soccer and track). For training, I’m usually in the weight room during the winter, or out hurdling for coach Donna (Sunell).”

In addition to her main track events — at first just the long jump and 100 hurdles — Sisley found herself with free time during meets in her junior season. So toward the end of the year, she took up the triple jump.

Less than a year later, Sisley is ranked No. 1 in the state at the 4A level, and she has added her name to the list of great jumpers in recent school history, including former state champions Charlene Harber and Darian Hageman.

Another Sisley specialty is the 100 hurdles, where she’s ranked second in the state behind Molalla’s Elizabeth Grandle. She’s also second in the long jump. Sisley is first in the triple jump, by nearly 2 feet; and she runs a leg on Astoria’s 400-meter relay.

Not bad for having just two-and-a-half years of track. The 2020 season was canceled, and 2021 was just half a season, with no official state meet.

With help from a few other athletes, and the points Sisley could bring at state this season, it could be another top three team finish for the Astoria girls.

The 2022 season also brings Sisley together for one last victory lap with her young sister, Ashley, a sophomore sprinter who spent two years with Maddie as a teammate in soccer. Now the two are on the same track as part of the short relay.

Last year, “I tried to get Ashley to do track,” Sisley said. “All her friends tried to get her to do track. We pushed her this year too, but she didn’t come out the first week.”

“But three weeks into the season, I see her walk in the door at practice, and I said, ‘What are you doing here?’ I thought she was waiting for me or just to hang out with friends.”

“Harlie (Wiedmaier) said, ‘She’s doing track!’ And I was super excited. It’s



Gary Henley/The Astorian

Maddie Sisley was also an aggressive player on the soccer field for the Lady Fishermen.

‘IT’S FUN BEING ON THE SAME TEAM WITH A SIBLING. AT THE SAME TIME, IT’S A LITTLE HARD. WE GOT TO PLAY SOCCER TOGETHER FOR TWO YEARS, AND WE SNAPPED BACK AND FORTH AT EACH OTHER A LITTLE. BUT OVERALL IT’S FUN AND I LOVE IT.’

Maddie Sisley

fun being on the same team with a sibling.”

But, “at the same time it’s a little hard,” she said. “We got to play soccer together for two years, and we snapped back and forth at each other a little. But overall it’s fun and I love it.”

Ashley — the fifth-ranked 100-meter runner in the Cowapa — “is quick,” Sisley said. “I knew if she and the soccer girls came out, they would do well. Track is a sport that a lot of kids do to keep in shape for other sports. Then they grow to love it. I think (Ashley) will stay with it. She and Harlie both have a chance to go to state. Our 4-by-1 is sitting pretty high right now.”

At this time next year, Sisley will be attending Washington State University in Pullman. She has no plans to play varsity sports.

“I had some offers from different schools. I went back and forth on it. I’m

committed to Washington State, to study athletic training and sports medicine.

“I thought about walking on and competing, but they don’t allow you to take that major and also compete as an athlete. So I just take it as a sign that it’s time to hang up the cleats,” she said, although she has not ruled out competing in club sports.

The move to the Palouse will bring another challenge, once she experiences one of those harsh eastern Washington winters.

“It felt like the longest drive of my life when I went to visit,” she said. “Two hours away, and it felt like we’re in the middle of nowhere. I was like, ‘Where did I decide to go?’ But once we entered Pullman, it felt like home. It’s very much a college town. Everything is involved in and around the college campus. I’m excited.”

Veterans: The veterans transport service has one volunteer, and is struggling to find more

Continued from Page A1

where around 4,000 veterans live.

Rural veterans have a 20% increased risk of death by suicide, due to contributing factors such as isolation, firearm access and limited access to mental health services.

In 2020, Oregon had the 13th highest rate of suicide in the country, 18.3 per 100,000 of population, with 833 deaths, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Suicide rates on the North Coast are typically higher than the state average.

“There’s amazing people doing really amazing work out here, but you’re not close to a VA, there’s not a vet center out here, and we feel like this is an area where we can actually make some changes,” Drucker said.

Around 30 attendees at the American Legion, including homeless liaisons, veterans services officers, case managers and clinical teams, were asked to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of services for veterans in the community. The majority of attendees were veterans.

During discussion, one theme stood out: accessibility.

“Right now, for a veteran to get into the North Coast Clinic at Camp Rilea, it’s a three-month wait,” said Josh Davis, the veterans services officer for Clatsop County,

where around 4,000 veterans live. “It’s everything from the VA not paying practitioners enough to come to work for the VA, to low availability of housing for professionals coming to work way out here. It’s a lot,” he said.

For those needing services, getting there is a challenge. During the discussion, the word “transportation” elicited groans from a table in the back.

The Sunset Empire Transportation District has a van service in place to drive veterans to local health care appointments. Sometimes it takes them as far as Portland.

Jason Jones, the transit district’s mobility manager, said the majority of veterans live off of the fixed-route bus system and can’t afford to repeatedly call taxis.

The veterans transport service has one volunteer, and is struggling to find more.

“There’s a lot of need out there in this community,” Jones said. “We need to get to medical appointments. This seminar has a lot to deal with what ails our community of veterans out there: mental health. We want to make sure that if there’s someone in crisis, that we can be available to them to take them where they need to go.”

Attendees also discussed a lack of internet access or understanding of technology, especially for the elderly.

They said services often require email addresses.

Further marginalization can increase suicide risk. Jones said homeless veterans, veterans of color, LGBTQ veterans and those who have been incarcerated need additional support and resources.

Together With Veterans is receiving \$100,000 over three years from the VA, and is working on an action plan for the funding, which will incorporate suggestions from the event.

“We are being creative as to how the funding is used,” Davis said. “The suggestions from the SWOT event will help us determine the community’s readiness to tackle rural veteran suicide prevention.”

Davis said he was pleased with the turnout. He hopes it will start a longer conversation about suicide prevention.

“I would like to see folks who are part of our community take an interest in how we can make it a priority. If you look at the long-term plans of the county commission, or long-term plans of Clatsop Behavioral Health or any number of agencies that would assist veterans or families in crisis, suicide prevention is not even on their radar,” he said.

“So what are we, as a community, going to do to make it a priority and have it be in front of us?”

This county election is one you don’t want to miss!

Keep **LEADERSHIP** Depend on **EXPERIENCE** Count on Pam!

Your vote matters!



Ballots due: May 17
Be a Voter!

RE-ELECT PAMELA
WEV

Clatsop County Commissioner • District 3