

# Seaside announces finalists for city manager position

By R.J. MARX  
The Astorian

SEASIDE — Three finalists for city manager will go before the public next week as the city seeks to fill the role.

Spencer Kyle, Esther Moberg, and Matthew Selby were announced as the finalists on Monday after a four-month search.

City Manager Mark Winstanley, who has held the job since 2001, will retire at the end of June.

Jensen Strategies, a recruiting firm, conducted the search, with candidate interviews, City Council guidance, public surveys and listening sessions.

A former director of administrative services for South Jordan, Utah, Kyle

has 16 years of government experience. He has also served as assistant city manager and assistant to the city manager for Saratoga Springs, Utah, and finance intern for Lehi City, Utah.

Moberg, Seaside's library director and public information officer, has nine years of local government management experience. She served as youth services librarian and volunteer manager for Lane Library District/Creswell Library and assistant librarian for Gearhart Elementary School, among other library positions.

Selby, most recently interim assistant city manager for Yakima, Washington, has 11 years of local government management experience. Earlier, he served as the interim executive

director for Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce in Massachusetts, land use and economic development director for Acton, Massachusetts, as well as director of community development and health, economic development coordinator and conservation agent and zoning enforcement officer for Ashland, Massachusetts.

The position is budgeted at up to \$140,000. Winstanley receives an annual salary of \$130,620.

The community is invited to meet the finalists and share their feedback at a community reception from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday at City Hall. The City Council plans additional executive sessions on May 19 and May 20 to finalize the selection process.

# Music program: 'Really good progress'

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"There were a lot of things to overcome, but in general, the district personnel, teachers and many parents have been very supportive, wonderfully supportive," he said. "It's a slow start — small classes, slow start — but we've made really good progress this year."

One of Achilles' priorities is getting instruments in students' hands as early as possible. While second graders use recorders, third and fourth graders play big African marimbas. Fifth graders use concert instruments — ones made from plastic to maximize durability.

In building the program from the ground up, Achilles sees real value for the students and community with the return of music education.

"The science is in ... learning a musical instrument in the context of a group does



Ethan Myers/The Astorian

**The Knappa School District sees value in music education for students.**

teach you how to process information and learn," he said. "... What we're doing is we're opening the lives of these kids and it's something that will increase their value of life and enjoyment of life for the rest of their life. And if they run with it, they can play for the rest of their life."

Citing personal reasons, Achilles is stepping away at the end of the school year to

begin doing private lessons.

Fritz plans to keep the momentum moving forward and is interviewing potential candidates to take the reins.

"I wanted every child to find something they love about coming to school ... to now have (music) as one of our options, where it does so many good things for people, we owed it to them to do that," Fritz said.

# Estes: Time marked by rapid renewal

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While Estes said he was not searching for a new job, the position piqued his interest. A longtime planner, Estes said the new role gives him the opportunity to focus on planning-related issues and remain on the North Coast.

"I have truly enjoyed working with the citizens of Astoria during my tenure with the city in tackling sticky issues while at the same time achieving many community goals," Estes said in a statement. "We have a great, hard-working staff whom I have had the pleasure to work alongside over the years; and I've had the pleasure of working with a number of dedicated elected and appointed individuals who are focused on making Astoria a better place."

Mayor Bruce Jones praised Estes' leadership, calling him "extraordinarily effective and competent in overseeing the complete range of city operations."

"I rely on his deep expertise and background knowledge of myriad issues, ranging from personnel and finance to state infrastructure funding and economic development," Jones said. "He has always provided wise counsel during my 5 1/2 years on the City Council. While I am deeply disappointed to lose him, I am glad for his new opportunity and wish him the very best."

The City Council will consider the selection of an executive recruitment firm and possibly appoint an interim city manager.

"As we have seen with other cities in recent years, the market for highly qualified individuals is extremely tight," Jones said. "The rapid escalation of housing prices makes outside recruitment even more difficult."

Jones added, "the council will focus on its annual goals, and prioritize to keep key initiatives, particularly code changes related to housing density and the Port of Astoria waterfront master plan, moving forward despite the transition in leadership."

In Astoria, the city manager runs day-to-day operations. The City Council supervises the city manager and sets policy.

Estes' time in Astoria has been marked by rapid renewal.

In recent years, the city has focused on improving the local economy, livability and quality of life concerns by addressing issues such as homelessness, housing and child care.

This year, the city and the Port adopted a waterfront master plan to redevelop the area between Pier 1 and the Astoria Bridge in Uniontown. The plan is a joint effort to strengthen Astoria's working waterfront and provide living-wage jobs.

When Estes began as the city's community develop-

ment director, his first task was to develop a Riverfront Vision Plan that addressed issues and concerns about development along the Columbia River.

"That was really the first time having to dive in to some tough, sticky issues and really be able to get to understand the various perspectives and sides to land use and development within Astoria," Estes said. "I think working through that project, when I first came on, really set the tone for really kind of understanding the community and really appreciating the people here."

Estes said the city has worked to maintain Astoria's authenticity during times of change and keep it a place that is appreciated by locals.

He pointed to a mantra that things in Astoria are done "for locals first, and if visitors like it, even better."

"I really appreciate that perspective," Estes said. "And that's something that I really felt was important to be able to do in my work as community development director and city manager."

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# Campers: Police's ability to enforce new rules limited

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Without options, police are limited in their ability to enforce the new rules.

"It's going to be difficult for the city," City Manager Mark Winstanley said. "There isn't going to be a site where people are going to come to you and say, 'Oh, you found the perfect place.' It isn't going to happen that way."

Vehicles, including vans or motor homes, would need to be registered and in compliance with vehicle insurance responsibilities.

A proposal to move RV parking and tents to areas south of Alder Mill Road and east of public works could handle about 20 RVs and 20 to 40 tents, Police Chief Dave Ham said.

"We can fit many tents in there for people who are using tents as their shelter," Ham said. "The idea would be to put some Jersey barriers across there so motor vehicles wouldn't be able to physically go through there."

But parts of that property are owned by the city and the North Coast Land Conservancy, a natural area that was acquired in 2002 with private and grant money for the purposes of conservation, City Councilor Tom Horning, who serves on the land conservancy's board, said.

"It's encumbered," Horning said. "It's got contracts with the funders who gave us the money to acquire it. And we can't redefine the usage of the property without their permission."

With saltwater and freshwater ponds, Horning said, the success of the Neawanna River as a salmon hatchery is "unparalleled."

"Basically, it's one of the greatest salmon factories that you can have on the Oregon Coast," Horning said. "You get twice as many bird species as any other place in the county. Just because it's open and natural doesn't mean it's a wasteland or anything that

could be converted into some more urban usage."

The Mill Ponds is already off the list of permitted sites, he added, as camping on public parkland is prohibited in the ordinance.

City Councilor Dana Phillips asked the city to take all residential areas off the list of potential overnight camping sites.

"I really have apprehension about having any camping in a residential area anywhere," Phillips said. "I really have a problem with the fact that after driving through Portland and seeing what is happening in neighborhoods, that it's going to get out of hand."

Winstanley proposed a look at the contract with Recology, which operates the recycling center on land owned by the city. That space could be used for campers.

Other options could come through the purchase of prop-

erty or a building.

"There will be an obstacle or two with every piece of property that we are looking at," Winstanley said.

City Councilor Tita Montero suggested possible incentives for property owners to sell or lease to the city. "I would like people to maybe think about what kind of arrangements or enticements the city is willing to offer to some private landowner who might want to get involved with the city in this endeavor," she said.

Montero also proposed a centralized location, possibly with the help of agencies such as Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare and Clatsop Community Action. "I think it would make it much easier if they can go to just one place," she said.

The workshop ended with more questions than answers, including the structure of the

Mill Ponds deal, the availability of the recycling lot and potential sites for purchase or lease.

"In the interim, what temporary steps could we take as a council to be able to respond by the time the ordinance goes into effect?" Mayor Jay Barber asked.

The city could hold another workshop before the City Council meeting on May 23, with additional information about available land or buildings and property or lease contracts on potential sites.

"We need to do something now to make sure that we have access for our homeless people to go this summer during tourist season," Phillips said. "We as a city must take a stand and get something done on a short-term basis. And I would love it if the county would work with all of our cities and come up with a property somewhere in the county."



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