

# the Astorian

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## Cannon Beach considers increase to utility rates

Water and wastewater rates could go up

By NICOLE BALES  
*The Astorian*

CANNON BEACH — With improvement projects underway and inflated costs, the City Council is evaluating how much to increase utility rates to keep up with water and wastewater needs.

The initial recommendations by city staff were to increase water rates by 15% and wastewater rates by 9% in order to raise the contingencies to the water and wastewater reserve funds, but the city will likely pursue smaller rate hikes.

During a special City Council meeting Tuesday, city staff presented other options to reduce the burden on ratepayers while also keeping the city on track to pay for improvements and other expenses.

“We’re doing a lot of stuff,” City Manager Bruce St. Denis said. “And we’re taking care of things that have been wrong for a long time, like the generators, controls and some other things. And so we’re using contingency because that was the only funding source available.”

St. Denis said that in the case of water, most of the work is based on loans, so the need for contingency is less because the loan can be adjusted if issues arise.

That means the city could avoid water rate increases for the fiscal year starting in July. However, water rates have not increased in a few years, and without an increase, St. Denis said it is harder for the city to move forward in a prudent manner.

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Gearhart mayor resigns  
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## BACK HOME

The Lightship Columbia has returned to the Columbia River Maritime Museum after being repaired in Portland.

Lydia Ely/The Astorian

## Coast Guard finds negligence in fatal capsizing of Warrenton fishing boat

Two died near Tillamook Bay bar

By ERICK BENGEL  
*The Astorian*

A failure to navigate through the south entrance of the Tillamook Bay bar, combined with fatigue and marijuana use, likely led to the capsizing of a Warrenton commercial fishing vessel and the deaths of two crew members last year, an investigation by the U.S. Coast Guard found.

On Wednesday evening, the Coast Guard presented the find-

ings of a formal marine casualty investigation involving the Coastal Reign during a town hall at Garibaldi City Hall, where the victims’ families were present.

“The investigation confirms that the sinking of the (Coastal Reign) was a preventable accident,” the report said.

The report recommends that Brandon Anderson, the master of the Coastal Reign, be referred

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Facebook

The Coastal Reign capsized in February 2021 near the Tillamook Bay bar.

## School plans for graduation look more traditional

Bouncing back from the pandemic

By ETHAN MYERS  
*The Astorian*

High school and college graduations took on many different forms over the past two years amid the coronavirus pandemic.

A number of school districts aimed for in-person graduation while enforcing mask requirements and social distancing. Others tried drive-in events. Some were held entirely online.

This year, graduations are expected to look like something closer to traditional.

The feeling is also different, Craig Hoppes, the Astoria School District’s superintendent, said.

“It’s a time, not only for graduation, but an end-of-the-year celebration, and it means more this year because we were able to stay in school all year,” he said. “You can really tell a difference with kids graduating, as well as kids’ emotions and attitudes just being in school all year.

“... Kids love coming to school and they’ll say that now.”

The school district’s graduation will take place at 4 p.m. on Saturday at CMH Field. Livestreaming will also be available on the school district’s website.

Graduates will be provided four tickets to on-field seating. Additional seating will be available in the grandstands.

Warrenton-Hammond School District’s graduation will be at 6 p.m. on June 10 at Warrenton High School.

Tom Rogozinski, the Warren-



Astoria School District

Astoria High School seniors gathered at the Flavel House Museum on Thursday as part of the annual Grad Walk.

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Craig Hoppes | Astoria School District’s superintendent

ton superintendent, said while they were able to hold a successful in-person graduation last year, this year’s commencement holds

special significance.

“All the uncertainty, even when we were bringing some of this back last year and maybe through

this year, there was still this, ‘OK, alright, sure, we’re planning it,’ but at the end there could still be anything – you could get that rug pulled out from under you,” he said. “So I think (graduation) is an indicator that there’s a certain peace of mind that if we’re committing to it, we’re able to follow through and do it the way we used to do it.

“Circumstances are allowing that now.”

The Knappa School District

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## Housing authority appoints director

Gertler worked in planning at Oregon Metro

By NICOLE BALES  
*The Astorian*

The Northwest Oregon Housing Authority’s board appointed a new executive director Thursday after working with a consulting company for more than a year to stabilize operations.

Elissa Gertler, who has spent nearly a decade as the planning and development director for Oregon Metro, will assume the role on June 27. Prior to Oregon Metro, Gertler served in public and government affairs in Clackamas County, where she worked closely with the local housing authority.

Jim Evans, a director at Quadel, a Washington, D.C. based management and consulting firm, has served as the agency’s interim director since 2020. He will continue to work with the agency as a consultant.

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