

IN BRIEF

Astoria selects executive recruiting firm to search for new city manager

The Astoria City Council on Wednesday voted unanimously to enter into an agreement with GMP Consultants, a Northwest-based public sector executive search firm, to conduct the recruitment of a new city manager.

City Manager Brett Estes will step down on July 4 after accepting a job with the state. Paul Benoit, a former city manager, will serve as interim city manager until the search is complete.

The City Council will work with GMP Consultants to create a schedule and timeline.

County survey seeks feedback on accessory dwelling units

Clatsop County residents are invited to participate in an online survey about whether accessory dwelling units should be allowed in unincorporated rural areas.

The units are secondary, self-contained housing that can be used by visitors or long-term renters. The county allows them in places hooked up to a community sewer system.

By state law, accessory dwelling units cannot be used as vacation rentals.

The survey, available on the county website, will close June 24.

State discloses virus cases at local schools

The Oregon Health Authority has disclosed 12 new coronavirus cases at schools in Clatsop County.

Eight of the cases were from Astoria High School, according to the health authority's biweekly outbreak report. Six were students and two were staff members. One case of a staff member was also reported at Lewis and Clark Elementary School.

The other three virus cases were students from the Warrenton-Hammond School District, with two from Warrenton Grade School and another from Warrenton High School.

State fishery managers expand salmon fishing days

Fishery managers have adopted additional opportunities for spring Chinook salmon in the main stem Columbia River following a run upgrade.

Starting Saturday, the daily bag limit will increase to up to two adult hatchery salmonids, Chinook or steelhead, per day.

The boat angling deadline has also expanded to the permanent boat angling boundary below Bonneville Dam.

The updated season runs from Saturday to June 15, with the open area being from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline.

— The Astorian

DEATHS

June 1, 2022

BUCKMAN, Elizabeth Edwina, 76, of Portland, formerly of Clatsop County, died in Portland.

GRANT, Lavina Ethel, 104, of Astoria, died in

Warrenton. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

LUNDY, Sandra Jean, 80, of Cannon Beach, died in Portland. Caldwell's Funeral & Cremation Arrangement Center of Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

ON THE RECORD

Harassment

• Billy Joe Walton, 25, of Pendleton, was arrested on May 27 near the intersection of Bagley Lane and Donald Marshall Road in Knappa for harassment and second-degree criminal mischief.

Unauthorized use of a motor vehicle

• Jack Thomas Fisher, 31, of Astoria, was arrested on Wednesday for unauthorized use of a motor vehicle and first-degree theft. The vehicle had been stolen from Warrenton and was found near the Astoria Riverwalk in late May.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

MONDAY

Astoria City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

TUESDAY

Seaside Community Center Commission, 10 a.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A.

Seaside Library Board, 4:30 p.m., 1131 Broadway.

Clatsop Care Health District Board, 5 p.m., 947 Olney Ave.

Clatsop County Fair Board, 5:30 p.m., Clatsop County Fair & Expo Center, 92937 Walluski Loop.

Cannon Beach City Council, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower Ave.

Seaside Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

the Astorian

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CO-OP STOP

U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici dropped by the produce section while touring the Astoria Co-op on a visit to the North Coast on Thursday.
Lydia Ely/The Astorian

Oregon botched drug treatment plan tied to decriminalization

Few seek help via new hotline

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — Efforts to get millions of dollars in funding to treatment centers and related services as part of Oregon's pioneering drug decriminalization have been botched even as drug addictions and overdoses increase, state officials and lawmakers said on Thursday.

Oregonians passed Measure 110 in 2020 decriminalizing possession of personal amounts of heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine and other drugs — the first in the nation to do so. A person found with drugs receives a citation, like a traffic ticket, with the maximum \$100 fine waived if they call a hotline for a health assessment.

But in the first year after the new approach took effect in February 2021, only 1% of people who received citations for possessing controlled substances asked for help via the new hotline.

The ballot measure redirected millions of dollars in tax revenue from the state's legal marijuana industry to treatment. But applications for funding stacked up after state officials underestimated the work required to vet them and get the money out the door, officials testified Thursday before the House Interim Committee on Behavioral Health.

“So clearly, if we were to do it over again, I would have asked for many more staff much quicker in the process,” said Steve Allen, the state's behavioral health director. “We were just under-resourced to be able to support this effort, underestimated the work that was involved in supporting something that looked like this and partly



Andrew Selsky/AP Photo

Oregon officials and lawmakers said efforts to get millions of dollars in funding to treatment centers and related services as part of the state pioneering drug decriminalization have been botched even as drug addiction and overdoses increase.

we didn't fully understand it until we were in the middle of it.”

Allen, who works for the Oregon Health Authority, told lawmakers in the remote hearing that this \$300 million project has never been done before.

State Rep. Lily Morgan, a Republican from Grants Pass, said lives are being lost while the state waits for the ballot measure to have a positive effect.

“Director, you've mentioned a couple of times that you're waiting to see, and yet we have overdoses increasing at drastic rates, in my community a 700% increase in overdoses and a 120% increase in deaths,” Morgan told Allen. “How long do we wait before we have an impact that we're saving lives?”

Secretary of State Shemia Fagan appeared before the committee and described her own mother's struggles with heroin and methamphetamine addiction. Fagan said Oregon remains in a drug abuse crisis, despite the ballot measure.

“When the voters of Oregon passed Measure 110, we did so because it was a change of policy in Oregon

for, he said. Advocates point out that the services are available to anyone in Oregon, not just those who were cited for possession.

“Getting these resources out to the community is incredibly important ... not just the harm reduction resources, but people who can support folks who are at risk for overdose,” Allen said. “So time is of the essence.”

Ian Green, an audits manager for Fagan, said the text of the ballot measure lacked clarity around roles and responsibilities of the health authority and the Oversight and Accountability Council that the measure established.

That “contributed to delays, confusions and strained relations,” Green said. He also blamed the health authority for not always providing adequate support to the accountability council.

Council co-chair Ron Williams said most of the available funds still haven't been released.

“I feel these challenges can be overcome and corrected with deliberate, intentional, focused effort and courageous, solution-oriented conversations,” Williams said.

The health authority said it has offered a three-month extension to grantees through Oct. 1, who will receive a prorated amount based on their prior award and bringing the total funds disbursed to \$40 million.

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