

IN BRIEF

County unemployment rate declined in May

Clatsop County's unemployment rate was 3.9% in May.

The seasonally adjusted rate was down from 4% in April and down from 6.3% in May 2021.

The state's unemployment rate was 3.6% in May, the Oregon Employment Department reported, the same as the national unemployment rate of 3.6%.

County has new virus testing site

Clatsop County will soon have a new site for its drive-thru COVID-19 testing clinic.

Starting Friday, the county Public Health Department will administer tests at the household hazardous waste facility at 1780 Williamsport Road in Astoria.

The clinic will operate from 9 to 11 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, the county said. Tests are by appointment only.

Bat in Warrenton tests positive for rabies

The second bat to test positive for rabies in Oregon this year was found in Warrenton last week, according to the Clatsop County Public Health Department and the Oregon Health Authority.

A bat in Deschutes County recently tested positive, as well.

People who encounter a bat should not touch them, the county said in a statement. They should also contact the local office of the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, the county said.

Anyone who has contact with a bat should reach out to the county Public Health Department.

Cutter Steadfast returns from patrol

After 55 days patrolling the eastern Pacific Ocean, the U.S. Coast Guard cutter Steadfast has returned to Astoria.

The crew did search and rescues and performed counternarcotics operations off Central America. The Steadfast returned on June 18.

The Steadfast coordinated with Mexican law enforcement to intercept drug-smuggling vessels, seizing a total amount of cocaine worth more than \$100 million, the Coast Guard said.

This was Steadfast Cmdr. Craig Allen Jr.'s final patrol. He has served in the role since July 2020 and is slated to transfer command next month, the agency said.

— The Astorian

DEATHS

June 25, 2022

KNIGGE, David Scott, 56, of Warrenton, died in Warrenton. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

STAGNER, Rodney Donald, 80, of Astoria, died in Longview, Washington. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

MEMORIAL

Saturday, July 2

STERLING, Ronald Derek "Ulcer" — Celebration of life starting at 5 p.m., Sunset Beach in Warrenton, just south of the access ramp. There will be a bonfire and stories.

ON THE RECORD

Fleeing

• **Dakota Mathew Carras**, 28, of Battle Ground, Washington, was arrested on Sunday on U.S. Highway 30 east of Astoria and charged with fleeing or attempting to elude police officers, reckless driving and two counts of recklessly endangering another person.

DUI

• **Jonathon Rhea Hart**, 37, of Astoria, was arrested on Wednesday on U.S. Highway 30 and Bond Street in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants, reckless driving, being a felon in possession of a firearm, a parole and probation violation and possessing a criminal quantity of drugs.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Clatsop County Planning Commission, 10 a.m., (electronic meeting).

Astoria Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Warrenton City Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

WEDNESDAY

Cannon Beach City Council, Planning Commission and Design Review Board, 6 p.m., work session, City Hall, 163 E. Gower Ave.

THURSDAY

Clatsop County Recreational Lands Planning Advisory Committee, 1 p.m., Oregon Department of Forestry Astoria District, 92219 Oregon Highway 202.

the Astorian

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Buoy Beer Co./Facebook

Buoy Beer Co. has opened a pop-up pub in downtown Astoria. The new location at the Astoria Food Hub off Marine Drive allows Buoy to have a public presence through summer. The airy space, designed with a café in mind, features a commercial kitchen. A Buoy Beer building along the waterfront partially collapsed earlier this month.

Long Beach puts pause on vacation rental permits

By **BRANDON CLINE**
Chinook Observer

LONG BEACH, Wash. — City councilors voted unanimously this month to place a moratorium on allowing new vacation rentals after city staff said they had received a significant increase in permit requests.

Ariel Smith, the city's deputy administrator and community development director who handles vacation rental permits, asked for the pause — which can remain in effect for up to six months — to give the city time to revise its code and develop new regulations.

Smith specifically cited 28th Street and Sea Crest Avenue as seeing a "huge" increase in the number of applications for conditional use permits to operate vacation rentals in areas zoned for residential use. The uptick has been noticed by neighbors, who have submitted complaints to the city about the rising number of rentals.

"I've worked here for six years, and I've had more in

June (this year) than I've had in two years put together," Smith told the council.

She clarified that enacting a moratorium does not create any new rules on how the city regulates vacation rentals, "it just simply puts a stop to what's currently happening. There's no new permits being issued during this time period." She added that the five completed permit applications currently being considered will not be affected by the pause.

Under state law, a public hearing on the issue must be held within 60 days of the moratorium going into effect, which took place at 12:01 a.m. on June 17.

The moratorium, Smith said, will give city staff time to conduct research, allow the council to hold public workshops, and develop amendments to the city code that must be reviewed by the state Department of Commerce. The moratorium cannot exceed six months, unless extended for good cause as dictated by state law.

Ilwaco RV park owners moving forward with eviction attempt

By **BRANDON CLINE**
Chinook Observer

ILWACO, Wash. — The dispute between landlord and tenants that has been playing out over the past several months at the Beacon Charters and RV Park is headed to court.

On June 16, the new owners of the RV park at the Port of Ilwaco filed residential unlawful detainer lawsuits against 13 remaining tenants in Pacific County Superior Court.

The lawsuits allege that unsafe conditions at the RV park pose a threat to remaining tenants, that their presence impedes park staff's ability to complete the necessary repairs and that the new owners' lease with the port invalidates any rental agreements that the tenants had under the previous ownership.

The lawsuits had long been expected since the new owners, Michael and Denise Werner, took it over from Mayor Mike Cassinelli earlier this year. The Werners' intent is to turn the park into an RV resort, after it largely served as long-term housing for local residents during Cassinelli's ownership.

Filed by Vancouver-based attorney Mark Passannante on the new owners' behalf, the lawsuits make three claims that they argue should allow the Werners to terminate the tenancy of the RV park's remaining occupants, or constitutes an unlawful detainer



Chinook Observer

New owners have started a legal effort to evict the remaining tenants from the Beacon Charters and RV Park on Port of Ilwaco property.

and allows for the eviction of the tenants.

The first claim alleges that the defective condition of the park is so substantial that it is unfeasible for the landlord to remedy within the allowed time under a provision of the state's manufactured and mobile home landlord-tenant act.

The lawsuit cites a separate provision of the act that says if a court or arbitrator determines a defective condition is so substantial and that the tenant should not remain on the mobile home space in its defective condition, then the court or arbitrator may authorize the termination of the tenancy and set a reasonable time for the tenant to vacate the premises.

The lawsuit cites a notice in late February that was delivered to tenants that allegedly advised them of the issues and offered the tenants rental space in a different park owned by the Werners.

That letter, which has been reviewed by the Chinook Observer, claimed to residents that they were being provided with a 30-day notice to vacate the property due to the park being sold, "and the new ownership will need to start immediately on improvements to the park" — with a target completion date of September.

That letter, signed "Management," has been the center of much controversy, after Cassinelli, while he was still the RV park's owner, wrote to tenants in March that it had not come from him and to disregard it.

The second claim essentially makes the same allegations as the first claim, but instead cites similar language in the state's residential landlord-tenant act that gives a court or arbitrator the authority to terminate the tenancy and set a reasonable time for the tenant to vacate the premises.

The third claim alleges

that Cassinelli terminated the lease he had with the Port of Ilwaco for the premises of the RV park's location, and that Cassinelli had sent a notice to the residents of the park in February advising them that the term of the lease expired.

That February letter to tenants, as reviewed by the Chinook Observer, makes no mention of Cassinelli's lease with the port having expired, only mentioning that the property has been sold. And Cassinelli, in a letter to tenants several weeks later, said that notice had not come from him and was not authorized by him, and told tenants to ignore it.

Matt Gagliasso, the CEO of Deer Point Meadows Investments, which is owned by the Werners, told the Observer in May that he had received explicit approval from Cassinelli to deliver the February notice to tenants, and that he was shocked to see Cassinelli disavow it.

Oregon seeks community voices for climate equity committee

By **MONICA SAMAYOA**
Oregon Public Broadcasting

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is looking for members for its new climate equity advisory committee.

The department is looking for about a dozen members from around the state to provide feedback and hold the agency accountable for its goals under the newly implemented Climate Protection Program. The program is designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels used in transportation, residential, commercial and industrial settings by 50% by 2035 and 90% by 2050.

The Climate Protection Program was developed by the Department of Environmental Quality under orders from Gov. Kate Brown. It includes new administra-

tive rules that cap and reduce greenhouse emissions over time.

Companies can comply by volunteering in the Community Climate Investments program.

Nicole Singh, the department's senior policy climate adviser, said companies pay a certain amount of money to get credits that fund projects to reduce emissions across the state. She said that's where the new committee comes in.

"What we're doing differently in Oregon is we're saying, it's not the companies that are going to make the decisions about how these monies are invested," she said. "We tried to create a program where Oregonians, communities, decide where the money should be invested, and we have prioritized that those monies should

be invested in environmental justice communities."

Singh said the program is not just about reducing burdens in environmental justice communities, but ensuring that the benefits flow across the state, including to communities of color, low-income communities, communities with less access to infrastructure for renewable energy and communities that have been historically marginalized.

One of the first orders of business for the committee will be reviewing applications from nonprofits seeking funds. Singh said that can range from installing solar panels to electric water heaters that make homes more energy efficient.

But this can also present some challenges, she said. Since this is a new program, working with companies might make it difficult for the

committee to decide where the funds should be invested.

"Some challenges are going to be just learning to work with each other," she said. "They have to basically make decisions about how they're going to make decisions. That's going to be something I think that's new."

The Department of Environmental Quality is looking for people who have lived experience or interests in environmental justice, climate change and health impacts.

"Since the program does prioritize investments in environmental justice communities, of course, we do want to hear most from people from environmental justice communities or people who have served environmental justice communities," she said.

Those interested should provide a statement before the July 8 deadline.