



Lissa Brewer/The Astorian

The U.S. Coast Guard is leading the response to the pollution threat posed by the Tourist No. 2.

Ferry: More than \$65,000 has gone to pollution response efforts so far

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A lack of records about the ferry has complicated the response.

The Coast Guard does not have an estimate for how much fuel was onboard — although Caballero said the vessel took on 500 gallons of diesel several weeks ago. Christian Lint, the vessel's owner, has said he does not have records of the mechanics of the vessel.

Lint told the Coast Guard he does not have the money to fund cleanup efforts. The Coast Guard is making use of the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund as a result. More than \$65,000 has gone to pollution response efforts so far and up to \$200,000 has been authorized.

Caballero noted that the Coast Guard is only involved with pollution response, and will not be involved in future salvage efforts. The agency is working with local contractors to stabilize the vessel, which involves refloating the ferry so oil can be removed.

The ferry is located out-

side of shipping lanes and currently does not present any threat to other vessels on the Columbia River.

Caballero said the Coast Guard is working with Lint and state agencies on what to do with the ferry once the pollution issues are addressed.

In an update posted to Facebook, Astoria Mayor Bruce Jones, a retired commander of Coast Guard Sector Columbia River, noted that the National Pollution Funds Center is not authorized to pay for further work.

"Unless the state provides (other) agency funding to remove the wreck, transport it to a safe location and appropriately dispose of it, the wreck could simply be dropped back in place," the mayor wrote. "The ferry would inevitably break up, representing an unacceptable hazard to navigation, to the fuel dock nearby and to other waterfront structures."

Jones has requested involvement from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of State Lands to

remove the ferry.

The ferry was illegally moored on Department of State Lands property. The state sent Lint a warning and a citation in 2021. Jones said the state described Lint as "nonresponsive" to both notices.

To Jones, the situation with the ferry is an example of issues faced statewide when derelict or abandoned vessels sink at docks and ports. There is no one state agency tasked with responding wholly to such situations, nor is there adequate funding provided to the Oregon State Marine Board, which deals with the removal of recreational vessels.

But Jones said the state has been very responsive to his inquiries as he tries to coordinate a response to the ferry once the pollution issue has been addressed — and he has hopes that a broader discussion about the state's response to derelict and abandoned vessels is poised to become more of a priority.

As for the ferry itself, he said there are people in Asto-

ria who are not surprised by how things turned out given the age of the Tourist No. 2, the amount of work it needed and the expenses associated with restoring and maintaining it.

"I would say it was very predictable right from the start that it was going to end badly," Jones said, adding that a lot of people have dreams when it comes to these older boats.

"But unless someone with deep pockets is in there from the beginning, they usually don't end well."

The Tourist No. 2 was the focus of a restoration campaign by a local nonprofit, but the group was unable to raise the funds needed to fully restore the vessel and abandoned the project. The historic wooden ferry, built in the 1920s, was used to shuttle cars and people back and forth between Oregon and Washington state before the Astoria Bridge was built.

This story is part of a collaboration between The Astorian and Coast Community Radio.

Contract: 'We experienced a lot of heartache'

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To prevent a similar situation from happening again, Benoit said the city and subscribers of Astoria's dispatch center agreed to enter into a contract with the company.

Under the agreement approved by the City Council, Day Wireless Systems, a Milwaukie-based company that has provided support to the city for the past several years, will be required to respond to a major outage within four hours. The agreement will extend through June 2027.

The agreement includes two annual preventive main-

tenance inspections of all radio equipment and structures. The company will also provide a status report of the equipment, along with recommendations for equipment replacement schedules.

Astoria dispatch handles emergency calls for 15 agencies, including the Astoria and Warrenton police and fire departments, the sheriff's office and rural fire districts.

Seaside, which operates its own dispatch center and handles calls for seven agencies, is also expected to sign an agreement in the coming weeks.

Astoria leaders said having both cities enter into

agreements will ensure consistent maintenance of the emergency communications system for Clatsop County.

After staffing shortages at Astoria's dispatch center forced the cities to merge operations last fall, deficiencies in technology and interoperability were exposed.

The challenges revived talks about whether Astoria and Seaside should combine emergency dispatch centers into a single countywide 911 dispatch center. At the very least, the cities agreed to coordinate upgrades to improve interoperability.

"We experienced a lot of heartache with our radio sys-

tem over the last fiscal year just because of maintenance and other issues that came up, especially with our temporary merger with the Seaside Police Department," Jeremy Hipes, Astoria's emergency communications manager, said.

"We found a lot of issues we did not know we had with our radio system. So, with that being said, we're probably going to be looking at spending a considerable amount of money in our radio system over the next five years. And I think this contract will help negate some of that cost of the labor that we are going to be accruing otherwise."

Ordinance: 'We don't have a list of places you can camp'

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Camping will be prohibited in parks, on streets and trails, within 40 feet of a residence or residential zone and within 100 feet of a school.

People can sleep on sidewalks if 3 feet of space is maintained.

City Councilor Nancy McCarthy asked for clarification about where people can camp. She asked if the city has any shelter spaces.

Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn said there is no shelter space in Cannon Beach, but added that the police department is read-



Lydia Ely/The Astorian

The City Council has revised a camping ordinance.

ily available to take people to shelters in Seaside and Astoria.

"We don't have a list of places you can camp," Schermerhorn said. "It's

better to get a list out of the restrictions and places that they can't because that's something that we can enforce."

Emily Matar, an attorney at the Portland firm Beery Elsner & Hammond, added that based on the text of the code, people can sleep on sidewalks as long as 3 feet of space is maintained and they are not violating any of the other restrictions.

She said that other public property that is not specifically restricted would be allowed.

"There are places," Schermerhorn said. "It's just a fine line on what do you want us to be advertising."

City Council OKs resolution for library bond

The Astorian

The Astoria City Council adopted a resolution and draft ballot title Monday night that will ask voters to approve an \$8 million bond measure for renovations to the Astoria Library in November.

The ballot title states that the funds would be used to modernize the library and improve programming, technology and accessibility.

Hennebery Eddy Architects, a Portland-based firm that was hired in 2017 to

create conceptual plans, helped establish a \$10.6 million budget for a project.

City leaders have stressed that the designs could change with public feedback if the bond measure is approved.

Interim City Manager Paul Benoit said one-on-one outreach and a campaign by the library foundation will lead up to the election.

The tax rate is estimated at 57 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The life of the bond would be up to 21 years.

City Council outlines legislative priorities

The Astorian

After reviewing a list of issues, the Astoria City Council picked its top five priorities for the 2023 legislative session.

The council reviewed a list of 28 issues and narrowed it down to infrastructure funding to support housing, local funding to address homelessness, property tax reform, lodging tax flexibility and infrastructure financing

and resilience.

The selection will be submitted to the League of Oregon Cities, which appoints members to serve on seven policy committees. The committees are charged with analyzing policy and technical issues and recommending positions and strategies.

Each committee develops a list of recommended policy positions and actions for the association to take in Salem.

Cannon Beach to impose restrictions on psilocybin

The Astorian

CANNON BEACH — There was consensus among city councilors Tuesday night to impose time, place and manner restrictions on psilocybin businesses.

Oregon voters approved Measure 109 in November 2020, which allows psilocybin to be manufactured and delivered to state-licensed service centers, where the drug can be dispensed to people 21 and older. The measure passed in Clatsop County 55% to 45%.

The drug, which remains a Schedule I controlled substance under federal

law, is a psychedelic found in so-called "magic mushrooms." Studies show it can help treat depression, anxiety, trauma and other conditions.

The Oregon Health Authority will start accepting licensing applications in early January.

By enacting time, place and manner restrictions, the city can dictate where and how facilities will operate.

The state already prohibits locating service centers within residential zones or within 1,000 feet of schools. The manufacturing of psilocybin products is also prohibited outdoors.

Warrenton: 'There is now consistency in approach and content'

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Ultimately, Balensifer said, emergencies will be unpredictable and won't necessarily follow projections, but the plan will offer a framework to manage them.

"You plan to fail in a sense, then plan to manage those failures," he said.

'Disasters don't respect jurisdictional boundaries'

Earlier this year, the county sought to strengthen emergency management by adding a new department and recruiting a full-time director.

With the North Coast facing unique vulnerabilities from natural disasters, Lieuallen, whose focus is in emergency management, noted that the continuity between jurisdictions is important.

"Disasters don't respect jurisdictional boundaries. Clatsop County, the city of Warrenton, the city of Gearhart ... were all working in tandem to level up content and there is now consistency in approach and content and understanding of the document between communities," he said. "If anything, it really

started a great conversation and model for how the jurisdictions in Clatsop County are starting to think about planning and the nature of reaching in and out of your organization to be sure you're ready."

Tiffany Brown, the county's emergency manager, identified the disaster risk from the Cascadia Subduction Zone as an important consideration.

"It's really important for all of us to be leaning into that threat, understanding how we will respond," she said. "Everyone is woefully unprepared, simply because it's a relatively new understanding we have against the backdrop of all the infrastructure that we've developed in the inundation zone. Cities starting to engage with their emergency operations plans really suggests that they're diving into that work and understanding their response, needs, capabilities, where those gaps exist."

"Anytime you get a group of people — a city — sitting around the table talking about their EOP, that's going to be a benefit to the city and the community."