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# Siuslaw News

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SERVING WESTERN LANE COUNTY SINCE 1890

FLORENCE, OREGON

## City officials hold annual retreat

*Looking back on 2016, forward to 2017 and the importance of ethics examined*

BY JACK DAVIS  
Siuslaw News

City management, employees and councilors met for the Florence City Council retreat at Driftwood Shores' meeting center on Wednesday.

The half-day retreat included reports on the accomplishments of the city in 2016 by city consultant Larry Patterson, as well as a roundtable discussion on goals and priorities for 2017, and a training course on council meetings and ethics presented by City Attorney

Ross Williamson.

Mayor Joe Henry said, "This format gave each staff member and councilor an opportunity to report on their achievements for 2016 as well as to voice their wishes and expectations for 2017 and beyond."

He added, "A summary of the results achieved in 2016 reflected 155 action items in the work plan, with 101 of those marked 'completed.'"

Henry said the majority of the remaining items should be completed in 2017.

Citing past Lane County

"A summary of the results achieved in 2016 reflected 155 action items in the work plan, with 101 of those marked 'completed.'"

— Florence Mayor Joe Henry

lawsuits as examples, Williamson told commissioners, "It is OK for you to share your view, one on one, but then you lose control of where it goes

from there. Cut it off at your mouth and we won't have to deal with problems down the line."

Williamson referenced the legal problems Lane County and two commissioners faced in two lawsuits, Dumdi v. Handy (2011) and Handy v. Lane County (2015) regarding violations of public meeting laws.

According to Williamson, in Dumdi v. Handy, two Lane County commissioners were

See **RETREAT 6A**



JACK DAVIS/SIUSLAW NEWS

**Florence City Attorney Ross Williamson (standing, left) instructs city employees and councilors on the importance of ethics and public meeting protocols during the annual City Council Year End Retreat held Wednesday at Driftwood Shores.**

## Volunteers sought to fill City committee vacancies

BY JACK DAVIS  
Siuslaw News

*Applications need to be turned in by Dec. 30*

City of Florence is requesting applicants to fill 24 vacancies on 10 boards and committees by Dec. 30.

City Economic Development Coordinator Kelli Weese said, "These boards and committees are the City's boots on the ground source for public information."

Weese said these positions offer citizens an excellent opportunity to volunteer their services on significant matters.

"In addition to monthly meetings, on average, applicants will have about a five-hour per week commitment," Weese said. "Some committees, like the Planning Commission, have a much higher time commitment."

She added, "Committee member contributions are invaluable to the mayor and the city council, as well as the City."

Mayor Joe Henry and council members will review the applications in January and make position decision before the end of the month.

According to a city press release, the following boards and committees are currently filling vacancies for varying term lengths, with positions set to begin on Feb. 1, 2017.

- Airport Advisory Committee: 2 open positions
- Audit Committee: 1 position
- Budget Committee: 2 positions

See **VACANCIES 6A**

## RELIEF EFFORT



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

**Siuslaw Outreach Services provides clothing, tents, blankets and other supplies to the homeless in Florence year round. They are asking community members to donate at KXCR or City Lights Cinema on National Homeless Awareness Day, coming up this Wednesday, Dec.21.**

## RALLYING FOR HOMELESS, AWARENESS

*Local relief organizations join effort to help area homeless during the holidays*

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

The sight of a homeless person standing in the pouring rain on the corner of Ninth Street and Highway 101 is not unusual in Florence.

According to figures from the

Lane County Poverty and Homelessness Board, the number of individuals who are without shelter on any given night in Florence fluctuates based on a number of factors.

Regardless, the latest figures from the state are the most telling: Lane County has the highest percentage of

homeless families and students in the state.

The overall economy is central to the issue, but seasonal weather changes, substance abuse and mental illness are also major contributors to the situation.

The National Coalition for the

Homeless has declared this Wednesday, Dec. 21, to be National Homeless Awareness Day, to draw attention to this chronic and challenging problem.

Local support agencies like

See **HOMELESS 6A**



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

## Senior Center shares major changes in mission

As the Florence Senior Center approaches its sixth anniversary, its board of directors wants the community to

**Lunch is just one of the activities that draw hundreds of are residents to the Florence Senior Center each week.**

BY MARK BRENNAN  
Siuslaw News

know there have been some major changes in the center's mission.

The original construction of the building was financed primarily with federal money, which came with some restric-

tions. These constraints prohibited use of the facility by persons under age 60 for five years.

That time frame has passed and the Senior Center can now schedule programs and activities for all age groups.

According to board chairman Ron Borge, this change will

benefit both the center and the community.

"During the week, we have classes and activities scheduled, and we want to encourage more groups to come in and use the building," said Borge. "Especially evenings and

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