

**Civics** from 1A

“They are a whole bunch of future mayors and city councilors,” Henry said. Siuslaw Middle School student Chloe Aaron won the essay contest. She read the essay aloud to the councilors and the people seated in the audience.

“Florence, Ore., is a small city that doesn’t have much for kids. ... If I were mayor, I would turn a (vacant) building into a fun place for kids, such as a trampoline park, indoor batting cages, ice skating rink or

an arcade,” Aaron read. Her essay outlined fundraising steps and a business plan for an indoor recreation center that would both improve kids’ health and “give them something fun to do after school.” “If you think that some of our young people are not future leaders, I give you Chloe and her essay,” Henry said. “That was really great.”

Aaron’s essay and the posters from the fourth- and fifth-grade winners will be submitted to the state level of the contest.

Reynolds and Henry thanked the Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County Director Chuck Trent for his help in facilitating the contest.

“Thank you for giving us the opportunity to go and speak at both the elementary program and the Teen Center. Both of those are after school programs and have done a great job of

connecting the program with the community,” Reynolds said. “This was a great opportunity to share what we’re all about as a city government, and what that means for their future being civic leaders and involved in the community.”

Later in the meeting, City Recorder Kelli Weese gave details on how community members can engage in the civic process — by really running for mayor or city councilor.

According to Weese, three positions on the Florence City Council will be in the November election, including the mayor and positions currently held by Councilor Woody Woodbury, who was appointed to the position in January, and Councilor Susy Lacer, who has served two terms.

The election process for

November officially opens May 30, with the deadline to complete a preliminary application on Aug. 14.

“A lot of this is just getting the public aware of what is involved in running for council, as well as what the ‘job description’ is so people are well aware of what they are stepping into before they make that leap,” Weese said.

She clarified that the councilors are volunteers who serve as the governing body for the City of Florence, and that as city manager, Reynolds acts as the chief operating executive.

“You are one person out of five, and you have one voice out of all those five,” Weese said.

She also emphasized that serving on the council requires countless hours of study into the pressing issues of the city, as well as attendance at regular

meetings, work sessions and other external meetings.

Lacer said, “I do not intend to run for my seat, which will end at the end of this year. I have done my four years, my turn, and I am stepping aside to let someone else run for that important work.”

“I strongly encourage all my fellow citizens to consider running and being involved in local government. Your city and local government is really where it happens. What we do, the five of us sitting up here, really does impact your life and your neighbors’ lives. It’s important work, while time consuming and challenging, but I encourage everyone to consider running.”

She said that she hoped everyone would consider running, even students 18 years old, as Oregon has other cities with councilors that young.

Councilor Joshua Greene agreed and said, “Everything Susy said is true.”

“People in the community who want to get involved with local government, now is the time,” he continued. “If Florence has ever been primed to bring somebody in who wants to participate and embrace the work that has been done, follow the goals that are there and help solve these problems with a group of people all working together, this is a great time to do it.”

For more information on the timeline, residency requirements and time expectations for the council and mayor roles, visit [ci.florence.or.us/citymanager/mayor-council-openings-set-november-election](http://ci.florence.or.us/citymanager/mayor-council-openings-set-november-election).

**See pictures of the MAYOR CONTEST on 12A**

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**Port** from 1A

“Like all of the finalists, there were gaps in his experience that, at the time, helped us decide that we were not ready to put Dave or any of the finalists on,” Port Commissioner Bill Meyer said. “While he was interim, I’ve had a chance to work with him and observe how he conducts himself.”

One of the things that Meyer looked for in a candidate was someone who was cognizant of what they did, and didn’t, know.

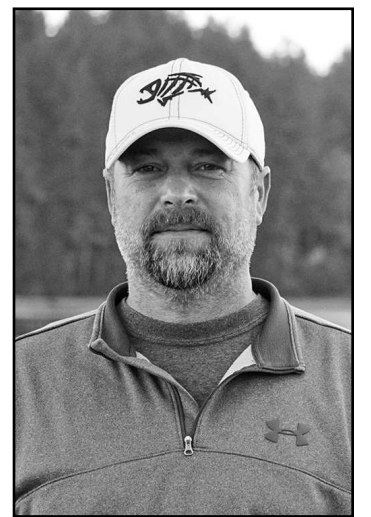
“To know what they don’t know and to be willing to seek advice from others to fill in the gaps,” Meyer said. “And I know from working with David that he has been doing a very good job with that. I’m very proud of the way he’s done it.”

Huntington stated that he sought the help of commissioners and port staff to help him find his footing.

“We have a great staff in place down here,” he said. “They’ve worked very hard during this transition and they’ve all stepped up and deserve a lot of credit.”

Huntington’s experience on the board for the past three years has also given him a broad understanding of what is needed in the management position.

“It’s a huge responsibility and I’m throwing everything I can into it,” he said. “It’s basically how to budget with a lim-



**New Port of Siuslaw Manager David Huntington**

ited amount of money to work with a lot of the projects that we have to complete. That’s absolutely the hardest part of the job. We have some failing infrastructural issues that we need to address. But I absolutely believe I can do it.”

Meyer was also attracted to the fact that Huntington knows the culture and history of the Port of Siuslaw.

Huntington grew up in the area with his family owning commercial fishing vessels. Huntington himself has owned and operated a commercial charter business, HuntingFish Charters, where he guides people on the river and offshore in fishing expeditions.

“David is in the people business and he’s had to keep customers happy,” Meyer said. “He has a service attitude toward dealing with people, and I think that’s important. I personally encouraged him to get out of the office and get into the campground and port and get his eyes and ears on what is happening, and head off issues in advance. Seeing how he deals with people, I know he’s going to fulfill that ‘people person’ role and find solutions to problems as they arise.”

Both Meyer and Huntington are keenly aware of some of the public controversies that the port has faced over the years, and Meyer believes that Huntington’s ability to work with people can help quell future contentions.

“Before I came on the port, it appeared that every issue became a crisis that matriculated all the way up to a port public meeting and became a controversy,” Meyer said. “This port belongs to the City of Florence and the Siuslaw area and is also Lane County’s port. I have a high priority in terms of improving how the port is perceived, and how the port conducts business and deals with issues. I know from the years that I’ve seen David working his guide business how well he can handle issues that come up and find solutions to them.”

Huntington said, “I know that we’ve gone through a little bit of controversy in the past, and I know we have a lot to accomplish in the future — and it’s not going to be easy. But I care deeply about what goes on at this port. I always have. I care about our community and I want to see great things here again.”

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