

# Port ponders delay in airport chief replacement

*The Columbia Press*

A group that advises the Port of Astoria about its airport made a plea Tuesday in hopes the agency doesn't neglect hiring a replacement for Airport Manager Gary Kobes, who is retiring.

"The airport isn't something you just write grants for," Warrenton Mayor Henry Balensifer told the Port of Astoria board.

Balensifer is chair of the Airport Advisory Committee and works for Lektro, an aircraft tug manufacturer based at the airport, one of the port's largest tenants.

But finding a replacement may be delayed. The port's finances are tight; the agency had been struggling even before the COVID-19 crisis took away an estimated \$1 million in revenue so far from lost hospitality, cruise ships and fuel sales.

The airport has the potential to help the port recover financially through development of its industrial park and other activity, Balensifer said. But that won't be realized without someone coordinating projects.

Scoular, a 127-year-old international company, has proposed building a plant at the park that would turn fish byproducts into pet food.

"There's a golden opportunity with the Scoular project," Balensifer said. "There's a lot of potential for the airport to have an economic return for the port."

Several port commissioners acknowledged that finding a new airport manager is essential to future stability.

"It's a challenge everywhere; it just

*See 'Airport' on Page 4*

# Youngest students expected back on campus

**BY CINDY YINGST**

*The Columbia Press*

The school district's plans for re-opening a year from now are running smooth and on schedule.

Excavation is nearly complete on Warrior Way, the road leading into the new middle school, and concrete for the campus will be poured beginning Monday, Aug. 24.

But there's nothing smooth about plans for *this* school year.

With less than a month before children start, local school leaders are drafting what is, in reality, a continually changing plan.

"Part of the reason it's a draft is we've had guidance since June 10," Superintendent Tom Rogozinski told school board members at their Aug. 13 meeting. "Tuesday of this week, ODE came up with changes to the guidance."

Oregon Department of Education's guidelines include a mixture of advice contingent upon metrics, or the numbers of COVID-19 cases both statewide and locally.

"Are you able to settle in on a plan for opening so staff and others can begin to understand what's going on," asked board member

*See 'Reopening' on Page 6*



**Above:** Warrior Way, the entrance into the new middle school complex, is about 70 percent excavated.

**Left:** Superintendent Tom Rogozinski and other administrators are working to comply with state requirements for reopening schools on September 14. But the requirements keep changing.

Cindy Yingst  
The Columbia Press

# Election deadline nears; Hammond man enters race

Tuesday, Aug. 25, is the final day to file to run for a city office.

Three seats are open on the Warrenton City Commission, those of Pam Ackley, Tom Dyer and Mark Baldwin.

Both Dyer, in the Position 3 seat, and Baldwin, in the Position 5 spot, seek re-election. Ackley, in the Position 1 seat, will not run for another term.

Ackley, a real estate broker with Windermere Realty Trust, will remain active on the city's Hammond

Marina Committee and with Spruce Up Warrenton, she said. And she'll continue her work with Warrenton-Hammond Healthy Kids and other charitable groups.

As of Wednesday, Allen Berry, 56, of Hammond had filed papers to run for city commissioner in the Position 3 spot against Dyer.

There also will be a countywide measure on gun rights. The measure asks voters whether the county should prohibit the use of county resour-

es to enforce local, state and federal laws restricting a person's right to keep and bear firearms, such as taxes and fees, the tracking of ownership and restrictions to open or concealed carrying of firearms.

To run for a seat on the Warrenton City Commission, contact City Recorder Dawne Shaw at cityrecorder@ci.warrenton.or.us. She'll provide the appropriate forms by email. The forms also are available at the front desk at City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.