



Raising money to recharge Warrenton parks

BY CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

When school and civic groups need to raise funds, they may turn to bake sales.

Members of the Warrenton Parks Advisory Board, a volunteer group appointed by the City Commission, set about a similar task recently when the mayor asked them come up with ideas to raise funds for parks.

“We don’t have a parks department,” Mayor Henry Balensifer said. “Public Works maintains and repairs our parks. There’s no real dedicated funding stream. So we wanted to figure ways to produce revenue through or in our parks, which we could dedicate to parks, while adding value to users.”

Finding a few funding sources is preferable to having residents pay more taxes, city officials have decided.

The parks board came up with more than a dozen ways the city could bring in money to help maintain city parks. While bake sales aren’t on the list, a yard sale of excess equipment, such as old fencing, is.

“The parks board is really excited to get moving forward,” board Chair Sara Long said. “We’re struggling with maintenance.”

She presented the group’s ideas to the City Commission last month.

Many of them have merit, Balensifer said. The City Commission will schedule a joint meeting with the parks board to discuss them in more detail and de-

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Above: The kayak dock at the east end of Second Street.

Left: Bert and Debbie Little work in the concession stands at Robinson Community Park during the 2018 Fourth of July Car Show.

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New election cycle begins

Seats open on school, transit, fire and port boards

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The country may have just settled one election, but the next election season opens Saturday for Clatsop County.

That’s the first day candidates can file a declaration of candidacy for any of the open seats in the May 18 special districts election.

Residents can run for dozens of spots on local school boards, the college board, the port commission, and fire and water districts.

Four of the seven seats on the Warrenton-Hammond School Board will be open. Candidates can apply for the four-year spots currently held by Leonard Mossman, Neal Bond, Darlene Warren or Dan Jackson.

The five-member Port of Astoria will have three seats coming up for election. They are the spots currently

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More state funding will go toward alternative modes of transportation

Residents who don’t own a vehicle may find encouragement in a state funding shift toward bicycling and walking.

The Oregon Transportation Commission, which decides how to spend the state’s transportation money, approved \$255 million in nonhighway funding at the end of last year. The money set aside for bicycle, pedestrian and transit programs was a record and an increase of nearly \$100 million over the previous four-year funding cycle.

The boost for nonhighway funding in the 2024-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program is in line the state’s focus on increasing investments in alternatives that improve multi-

modal mobility, enhance equity and address climate change, three priorities in the agency’s most recent strategic action plan.

Highlights of the funding include:

- \$36 million for off-the-road pedestrian and bicycle paths that connect communities.
- \$55 million for Safe Routes to School infrastructure projects to help children walk and bike safely to school, and \$4 million for complementary Safe Routes education and encouragement programs.

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More state transportation funding than ever before will go toward bicycle and walking paths.

Courtesy Oregon Department of Transportation

