

CANNON BEACH GAZETTE



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Charter school proposal gets third hearing

School district hears testimony on Cannon Beach Academy proposal

By Dani Palmer
Cannon Beach Gazette

A crowd of roughly 50 spilled into the hall from the Seaside School District 10 conference room Tuesday, Aug. 18 for a hearing on a proposed charter school in Cannon Beach. The Cannon Beach Academy would serve students from kindergarten to fifth grade.

The district issued two previous denials to the academy in 2014, citing lack of an adequate location and secure start-up funds.

With these questions addressed by Ryan Hull, president of the academy's board of directors, many Cannon Beach residents at the meet-

ing said they hoped for a different outcome.

Real estate agent Alaina Giguere said Cannon Beach needs a school to attract young families to the area. "It is vital to the strength and viability of Cannon Beach that we have a school there," she said.

Having the charter would give parents the option of smaller classes and allow them to be more involved with their children's education, she noted.

But Seaside fifth-grade teacher John Meyer, president of Chapter 107 of the Oregon School Employees Association, said the plan could create inequities among students and cost teachers jobs.



R.J. MARX PHOTO

Members of the overflow audience at the Seaside School District board meeting Tuesday night.

Questions answered

Cannon Beach Elementary was once the city's school, a source of pride and community connection, residents

say. It was closed in 2013 for financial reasons and fears for student safety. The building, now shuttered, lies in the tsunami inundation zone.

Cannon Beach Academy initially presented its application to the Seaside School District in February 2014, and after a denial, went before the school board again in June. The board sent the academy a letter of denial citing a lack of long-term financial stability, safety issues regarding the proposed school site and the possibility of causing an adverse impact on the existing district school.

In response the academy appealed to the State Board of Education, but withdrew the appeal before a decision was officially rendered.

In Hull's presentation to the board Tuesday, Aug. 18, the academy addressed many of the concerns that led to previous denials.

He said the school now has a conditional use permit from the Cannon Beach Planning

Commission allowing it to modify and occupy a ground-floor portion of the former Athletic Club at 171 Sunset Blvd.

In addition, the academy has since collected donations and created a balanced three-year budget.

Operational costs would be covered by average daily membership funds, the amount a school receives per student from the state, and nonoperational money would be provided through donations, fundraisers and grant money, Hull said.

Teacher concerns

The academy would employ four classroom teachers, two instructional assistants and two full-time enrichment faculty, Hull said.

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Why are North Coast beach birds dying?



WENDY McLAUGHLIN/SUBMITTED PHOTO

Cannon Beach visitors Judy Grucella, Jane Santarsiere and Linda Petchell worked together to save a seabird by making a platform out of tennis shoes and dog waste bags to carry it to a lifeguard station on Thursday, Aug. 20.

Warmer waters, toxic algae could be contributing factors

By Dani Palmer
Cannon Beach Gazette

Judi Grucella and her friend Jane Santarsiere visit Cannon Beach every year. Dead birds spread out on the beach were an unexpected sight.

Wendy McLaughlin of Astoria also "noticed there were a lot of dead birds," at least 20 around Haystack Rock, as she and her husband Tracy walked

along the beach Thursday, Aug. 20. "I thought it was weird," she said.

Grucella, a Bend resident, noted they saw five dead birds in their short walk and encountered one so weak it could barely lift its head. "We went to the lifeguard station and said, 'Hey, there's a bird alive and still struggling.'"

Grucella, Santarsiere and fellow beachgoers came to the aid of the dying bird, constructing a platform made of tennis shoes and plastic dog waste bags for the injured animal. A lifeguard provided a blanket and box for transport before Cannon Beach police delivered the bird to wildlife rehabilitators for care.

Not the norm

Julia Parish, executive director of the University of Washington's Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team, said reports of dead common murrelets spiked about a month ago.

"There's a pretty raging debate among seabird biologists at the moment," she added. Parish said more dead birds this time of year, nesting season, isn't unusual. But they've seen two to three times more than they'd normally see from reporting beaches.

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Fire threat leads to Cannon Beach, county burn bans

By Dani Palmer
Cannon Beach Gazette

On Saturday, Aug. 22, smoke filled the air on the coast, stinging eyes and prompting worries of fires nearby. While agencies throughout Clatsop County received numerous calls reporting potential wildfires, residents were experiencing not local blazes, but wind carrying smoke from eastern Oregon wildfires.

There are nearly 20 active wildfires in the state burning roughly 450,000 acres, according to the National Wildfire Coordinating Group. So far, the county has been spared. "There's lots going on elsewhere, but not here," Cannon Beach Fire and Rescue Training Officer Matt Gardner said.

Officials are taking precautions, however. For the first time in state history, all open flames, including those bonfires enjoyed on the beach, are prohibited.

Cannon Beach closed its 1,040-acre Ecola Creek Forest Reserve and 55-acre South Wind site to the public on Aug. 21 for the second time this season because of high fire danger and liability purposes. If a fire starts in the reserve and spreads to commercial timberlands, the city could be held responsible, City Manager Brant Kucera said.

Gardner said Cannon Beach remains "very proactive in wildfire defense."

On Thursday, Aug. 20, due to the statewide ban, Cannon Beach rescinded all burn permits, including



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Matt Gardner next to the Cannon Beach fire truck in the staging area at the high school in Baker City.

campfire and burn barrel permits issued by rural fire departments and the Oregon Department of Forestry.

Fire pits, tiki torches and candles are included in the prohibition on all public and private property in Clatsop County, throughout Clatsop State Forest, in Clatsop county parks and on all properties owned and managed by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, including state parks and ocean shores.

"Our goal is to avoid any accidental fires on OPRD property that would further tax limited firefighting resources," said MG Devereux, Oregon Parks and Recreation deputy director. "Most communities have sent local firefighters and equipment to help with wildfires throughout the state. An unintentional fire in a state park would add an unnecessary burden to firefighting efforts."

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'It's hard to tell how bad it is or if it'll get worse.'

Julia Parish, executive director of the University of Washington's Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team

Local chef Jonathan Hoffman gets a 'taste' of competition

Hoffman competes in state culinary competition

By Dani Palmer
Cannon Beach Gazette

He didn't win, but a culinary competition featuring some of Oregon's best was considered a big success by Cannon Beach's Jonathan Hoffman.

Hoffman, 33, a private chef who runs Chef's Table, competed in the 32nd Annual "Bite of Oregon" at Portland's Tom McCall Waterfront Park Aug. 7, losing in a first round tiebreaker to James Williams, co-owner of Omar's Fresh Seafood and Steaks in Ashland. The "secret ingredient" competing chefs worked with was rib eye steak.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Cannon Beach chef Jonathan Hoffman.

Hoffman and Sean Whittaker of Astoria were connected to the contest through their local Food Service America representative. The two teamed together last year at Iron Chef Goes Coastal and took top honors.

This was Hoffman's first "Bite of Oregon" event, while Williams brought de-



SUBMITTED PHOTO/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Rib eye was the "secret ingredient" chefs were asked to work with at the competition. This is chef Jonathan Hoffman's rendition.

acades of experience to the competition, including a win at the 2014 Ashland Culinary Festival.

Whittaker, executive chef at Astoria Coffeehouse and

Bistro, ended up beating TV's "Chopped" runner-up Anh Luu, executive chef at Tapalaya in Portland, to make it to the second round. But Whittaker also fell to Wil-

liams, who went on to win the competition. "It sucks that I didn't win, but I went against a gentleman," Hoffman said. "I feel very good about tying somebody with that much experience when I'm mostly a seafood expert."

Some chefs experience stage fright in front of hundreds of spectators but Hoffman only glanced up at his family "once or twice."

"I don't really remember paying much attention to the audience," he said. "I just kind of went into the zone, kept my cool and did my job."

In addition to the Iron Chef Oregon battle, the Bite of Oregon offered a mixology competition, food vendors from around the state, a wine bar and live music.

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