

School levy up for renewal



Erin Jackson, left, and Lori Lum, members of the Vote For Kids committee, hold up signs of support for renewing a local option tax for Seaside School District 10 during a football game. The tax will be up for vote during a special election Nov. 3.

Tax from Page 1A

allowed to ask their patrons for temporary taxing authority above the permanent rate limitation. This authority is known as a “local option tax.” Local option taxes are limited to five years for operations and up to 10 years for capital construction purposes.

Each year the tax would provide funds for the district, from \$1.22 million in 2016-17 up to \$1.4 million in 2020-21. Overall, more than \$6.5 million would be raised through the local option tax. This estimate is based on current data available from the Clatsop County assessor. Seaside’s total school budget for 2015-16 was just over \$21 million.

The additional revenue has to be used for operational costs, or to maintain current programs, services and staffing levels — items that directly impact students’ classroom experience. It helps offset

the costs of extra-curricular activities and sports making them more plentiful and robust, which is “very attractive to prospective teachers” and helps the district bring in and retain quality teachers, Dougherty said.

‘Good education leads to good community.’

Lori Lum,
co-chair, Vote for Kids

If the measure does not pass, the district will need to make reductions in programs and increase class sizes.

Lori Lum, co-chair of the Vote For Kids committee, said she believes the measure “is vital to the school district.” The committee, established

Where to vote

Voters can turn in their ballots at several local drop sites:

- Cannon Beach City Hall, 163 E. Gower, Cannon Beach
- Clatsop County Clerk & Elections Office, 820 Exchange St., Suite 220, Astoria
- Gearhart City Hall, 698 Pacific Way, Gearhart
- Seaside City Hall, 989 Broadway, Seaside

All drop sites will be open until 8 p.m. on election day to receive ballots. For more information, visit www.co.clatsop.or.us/clerk/page/elections.

about four months ago, raises awareness for the measure through presentations, handing out information and setting up signs.

Lum has four children in the school district and has seen the positive benefits of the additional revenue, but she said she would still be in favor of the measure, even if she didn’t.

“Good education leads to good community,” Lum said. “I’m all for a greater, stronger community and educating our kids.”

The local option levy is not related to building new school facilities at a different location. A bond measure to do so was proposed in 2013 and failed. Dougherty has said the district likely will present a new bond measure some time in the next year and a half. Renewing the local option tax is the first concern, however.

“We’ve been trying to keep that separate,” Dougherty said.

Seaside robotics team gears up for contest

Lighthouse Church, 3-Course Challenge fundraisers help program raise money

By Katherine Lacaze
EO Media Group

At Seaside High School high school, the robotics team gives students real-world experiences — but that comes along with real-world costs.

Each year, the program tries to raise at least \$20,000 to cover materials and the cost of traveling to competitions. The CYBORG Seagulls — the acronym stands for “Creative Young Brains Observing and Redefining Greatness” — got an early boost in fundraising this year as the recipient of a portion of proceeds from Lighthouse Christian Church’s bluegrass carnival held Sept. 19.

Church secretary Dorene Sheldon said the barbecue is a long-standing tradition for the church. Live bluegrass music was added a few years back. This year the church expanded the event to include a carnival fundraiser “and then decided to share with the community,” Sheldon said.

Church staff asked Seaside High School administrators what would be a good program to adopt, and they mentioned the robotics program, Sheldon said. If the carnival fundraiser becomes an annual event, the church may choose a different school, organization or program to adopt next year, she said.

“We’re hoping to make it a tradition,” she added.

Once the proceeds from the carnival are calculated, they will be split between the church’s women’s ministry and outreach programs and the robotics team.

The carnival featured obstacle courses, a dunk tank, inflatable bouncers, bingo and a bake sale. Seaside students attended the fundraiser to represent the team, share information about the program and demonstrate three robots they created.

Other team members were busy the same weekend selling T-shirts and lending assistance with registration during the Seaside Cross Country Team’s annual 3-Course Challenge. In exchange for the help, the cross country team generally donates about \$1,000 to the robotics program.

With the addition of the two fundraisers, the robotics team is starting the year off well, with about \$15,000, Brown said.

“Real-world projects have real-world costs, and that’s great that students get to work with real stuff, not just tape and string,” Brown said.

Since its creation six years ago, the Seaside program has grown from having a single robot to four full-sized robots and spare parts.

The program only recently started for the 2015-16 school year with an initial meeting two weeks ago. About 20 students showed interest. The team will solidify in the coming months, and January and February comprise the busiest part of the season for the team.

“The fall is kind of preparation and tune-up,” Brown said.

On Jan. 9, all teams participating the FIRST Robotics Competition worldwide will receive this year’s competition design rules. Students then have six weeks to build their robot before heading to district tournaments. In past competitions, robots have been programmed to stack boxes, throw Frisbees and shoot baskets.

Seaside offers one of three FIRST robotics teams on the Oregon coast. Students from Astoria High School join Seaside’s team, Brown said. High school robotics features “a pretty supportive community” that may not be found in sports or other competitive activities, he said.

The program also offers a wide variety of tasks for students with differing skills. Sophomore Melanie Castle said she is “more on the artistic side,” and the designing aspect drew her to robotics. Now that she’s a part of the program, “I’m interested in it all.”

Senior and returning team captain Austin Calder joined the team his freshman year with a friend. Over the years, he has developed a number of real-world and transferable skills through the program.

“It just gives me a more hands-on experience and gets me closer up and deeper than a piece of paper would,” he said.

Calder is one of two students taking part in a 3-D printing endeavor for their Pacifica Project. The students will work with Enabling the Future to design and print plastic robotic “helper hands” for children and adults missing their hands. Castle hopes to help with the project.

To develop critical STEAM — science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematic — skills, students need those kinds of hands-on experiences, Brown said.

“The robotics team gives students that opportunity,” he said. “They get to design, they get to build and they get to learn to use tools.”

CB Academy gets green light

Academy from Page 1A

Board Chairman Steve Phillips said the limited number of students that first year will make the charter “economically more viable” for the district.

Charter had planned higher capacity

Cannon Beach Academy had planned on a student capacity of 85 for the first year. Superintendent Doug Dougherty noted the loss of a little more than half that number of students will drain roughly \$255,900 from the district.

Board member Hugh Stelson said Seaside will not only see a small reduction in staff, but likely cuts in programs.

“This district seems to piece little pieces together and run on duct tape sometimes,” he said. “There’s not a lot of extra money around.”

Phillips said Seaside School District 10 will adjust. Cuts have been made in the past and “we still have a great school district,” he said.

Other conditions include the academy’s ability to secure proof of its English Language Learners program by March 1, building safety permits by Aug. 15, proof of insurance by Aug. 30, documents showcasing financial stability and an ability to comply with any tsunami in-

undation zone line changes.

Stelson said the academy should have an accountability metric to prove it is “just as good as the district.”

Vice Chairman Mark Truax said the school will be a part of the district and under its responsibility.

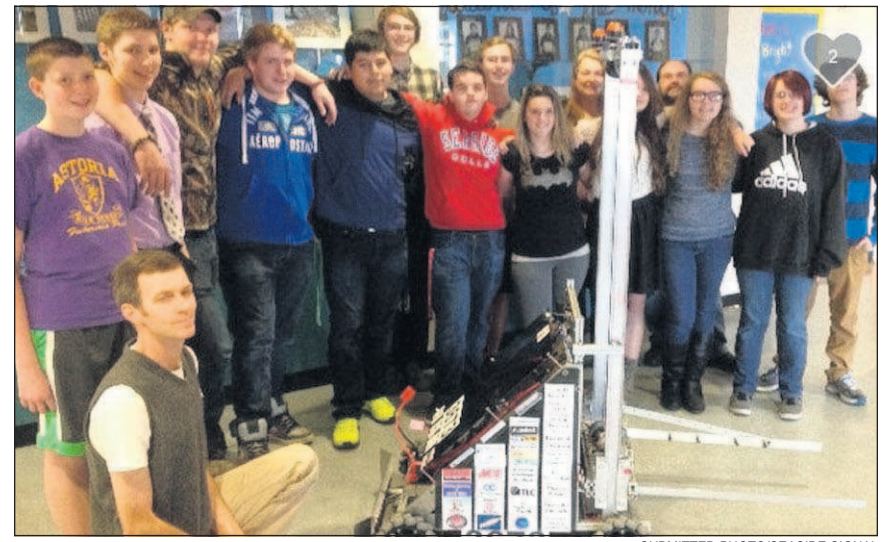
While negotiations remain, Hull said none of the conditions seem unreasonable. “I think we can achieve every condition imposed,” he added.

Building requirements top priority

Top priority for the academy is meeting physical building requirements at its temporary location at 171 Sunset Blvd. The vacated space, which takes up 3,500 square feet of the 6,000-square-foot building, once housed the Cannon Beach Athletic Club. The charter school plans to open next fall if it can meet all conditions.

The school district had issued two previous denials to the academy last year, citing lack of an adequate location and secure start-up funds.

The school plans to eventually settle into a permanent site south of town and east of U.S. Highway 101.



Members of the Seaside High School Robotics club. Lighthouse Christian Church in Warrenton helped raise funds for the club’s upcoming efforts.



“Astoria really pulled at my heart, the people and the relationships here are what brought us back.”

Paul Hayner, MD
Renaissance Health

Paul Hayner, MD and his family recently returned to Astoria to open Renaissance Health, an independent primary care clinic. During their time away, they relied on the Daily Astorian to stay informed on what was happening in the community and with the people they knew.

“I read the Daily Astorian and followed it to know about general developments in town and to keep up on what was happening with former patients and other folks that we had relationships with. Astoria is a special place and the Daily Astorian does a great job in capturing the uniqueness of the community and its people.”

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