

School board unanimously approves 2016-17 budget

Budget includes funds for preparation of bond measure

By Nancy McCarthy
For the Cannon Beach Gazette

A 14-member budget committee approved the Seaside School District budget Tuesday night with no discussion.

The approval process took less than two minutes from the time the budget meeting started until it adjourned. Committee members included seven school

board members and seven district residents.

Presented last month by district Superintendent Doug Dougherty, with a detailed explanation by Business Manager Justine Hall, the budget includes a \$19.53 million general fund, with revenue coming mostly from property taxes and timber revenues. A five-year local option levy, approved by voters last November, also added \$1.2 million to the budget.

Because its property values are higher than the average throughout Oregon, the Seaside district does not receive state education funds.

Taxpayers will pay \$4.41 per \$1,000 assessed valuation for the budget, plus 52 cents per \$1,000 for a five-year local option tax levy approved by voters last November. The total levy for property assessed at \$300,000 would be \$1,479.

The budget will cover district expenses from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

Among the expenses listed in the budget is the cost to prepare a bond measure for next November's ballot to relocate the district's schools out of the tsunami inundation zone. The district could spend up to \$540,000 for architectural and engineering fees and other services. However, that

amount depends on the proceeds received from the sale of district-owned property near Surf Pines. The district hopes to receive \$335,000 from the sale.

A \$128.8 million bond measure to relocate the schools on a hill east of Seaside Heights Elementary School failed in 2013.

The district's budget, however, doesn't include potential revenue from the sale of the former Cannon Beach Elementary School to the city of Cannon Beach. An item in the city's proposed budget reserves \$665,000 for the purchase and possible demolition of the building.

Of that, between \$400,000 and \$500,000 is supposed to go toward the school's purchase; the tentative purchase price hasn't been made public, and no sales contract has yet been signed, according to Cannon Beach City Manager Brant Kucera.

The school district's budget also includes 4.5 full-time-equivalent personnel to be hired; they are a social studies teacher at Broadway Middle School; a full-time teacher to reduce class size; a half-time curriculum director; a part-time technology support staff member; and a staff member who will serve as

a full-time "teacher on special assignment" to provide management support to students, staff, parents and the community at Gearhart and Seaside Heights elementary schools, according to the Dougherty's budget message.

The budget includes a 2.25 percent salary increase for district employees.

Although he is retiring June 30, Dougherty will continue to stay on half-time to shepherd the bond measure through the November election. Seaside High School Principal Sheila Roley will take over as superintendent beginning July 1.

Affordable housing task force gets to work

Housing from Page 1A

Carleton said the two sites would be similar in construction costs, and would both require city zone changes.

"This is what the city might do, if they wanted to, on these properties," consultant Teri Silva said.

Since February, the task force has been brainstorming ways to close the city's workforce housing gap.

"This is the first hope I've had of seeing anything concrete coming out of any of the discussions we've had in the past year and a half," Kucera said.

"I think we should do them both," resident and task force member Ken McQuhae said. "We could continue to have these discussions for the next 10 years if we wanted to, but we need a starting point."

The task force, formed to make recommendations to increase affordable housing, had its first meeting in January 2015.

A 2014 Cannon Beach housing needs survey found 92 percent of restaurant owners and 79 percent of hospitality business owners said finding housing is a problem for employees.

"We have staff right now that are critical to what we are doing that cannot find a place to live and might not be able to work for us this summer,



CARLETON HART ARCHITECTURE/SUBMITTED GRAPHIC

One design option for potential affordable housing units elevated over the Spruce Street parking lot in downtown Cannon Beach.

which provides serious issues for us as a business," said Jason Menke, co-owner of Sea Level Bakery. "We can't operate without them."

Menke said he was encouraged by the designs, and suggested that the affordable housing units be open for small business owners like him to lease and rent to employees.

"The need is out there," said Todd Johnston, task force member and Northwest Oregon Housing Authority executive director. People have returned vouchers the housing authority gave them since there is no housing available.

The city can't grow without affordable housing, Kucera said, adding, "I think these will be sold out before they're even built."

Residents offered suggestions and concerns during the

public comment period.

Downtown businesses may oppose the Spruce Street housing due to fewer parking spaces, resident Nancy McCarthy said, and a plan for parking is needed.

"To me, it looks very sterile compared to what we have here as a community," Jan Siebert-Wahrmund said. "I don't think it's a good idea to put everyone together. I would much rather be in a neighborhood that has different income levels around."

Siebert-Wahrmund questioned placing the Spruce Street housing in the tsunami zone and whether the city had enough water to service new units. She asked for greater community input.

"It's not as simple as it seems to be talked about today," she said.

Manzanita to vote on pot

Pot from Page 1A

Whether the measure actually passed in Manzanita is subject to debate, which prompted the Manzanita City Council to pass an emergency ordinance at its August 2015 meeting essentially putting the provisions of Measure 91 on hold, but allows Manzanita voters to decide for themselves this November. This time, the votes will not be lumped in with those from outside areas.

"It's the democratic way to do it," says Manzanita Mayor Garry Bullard, "and that was the consensus of the council. This is an issue that affects Manzanita and the registered voters of the city should decide, not those who live outside Manzanita's boundaries."

That's not exactly the way owners of Oregon Coast Cannabis, established in spring 2015 and located on Highway 101 in Manzanita, see it. Owners Andrew Buck and Hannah Hayes, two of the three business partners, said Measure 91, based on the overall approval rating, likely passed in Manzanita originally.

"We realized this was going to be an issue," said Buck, noting that his business has received a lukewarm reception from city officials since day one. That said, he and Hayes, maintain that it's their intent to run the business in a responsible manner.

"We want to be representative of how businesses operate in Manzanita and that includes educating our customers and employees on the use of cannabis and regulations regarding it," Hayes said.

Whatever the outcome in November, Oregon Coast Cannabis, which registered with the state prior to July 15, 2015, can still operate as a medical marijuana dispensary thanks to House Bill 3400. State law provides that the business can also sell limited recreation marijuana product, which it currently does, through the end of 2016. If voters do not uphold the city ban, Oregon Coast Cannabis will be able to expand and offer patrons a full array of cannabis products, including edibles, concentrates and other cannabis therapies.

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