

Seaside schools poised to launch K-12 building plan

Budget infused by bond approval

By R.J. Marx
Cannon Beach Gazette

The Seaside School District finds itself on solid ground as it launches a K-12 building project.

Members of the Seaside School District budget committee, along with the school's board of directors and administrator reviewed the proposed \$20.6 million operating budget for next fiscal year before the Tuesday, April 18, regular board meeting.

"I do feel good about it," Superintendent Sheila Roley said about the proposed budget. "We have had a few years in the past decade where we've had to hold steady or even reduce."

The school district's financial summary included breakdowns for general fund, debt service, special revenue and capital projects.

Proposed general fund revenues are 9.5 percent higher than this year's budget.

"An improving Oregon economy, timber revenue and excellent management will allow us to move forward without reductions in staffing or programs and with some modest additions," Roley wrote in a budget message presented by Business Manager Justine Hill.

The school district plans to hire an elementary school guidance counselor and a new high school science and math teacher, among other personnel additions.

The budget addresses rising student technology costs, with districtwide licenses for math and science software.

An additional \$112 million capital budget for construction of the new K-12 campus — including \$4 million from the state — was also present-



R.J. MARX/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Seaside School District Business Manager Justine Hill presents the proposed budget for next fiscal year to members of the budget committee and board.

ed for review.

The district anticipates paying out \$22.5 million next year toward the project, endorsed by voters in November, Hill said.

This includes costs for architects, project manager, geotechnical engineering, site work, civil engineers and surveying firms, among other expenses.

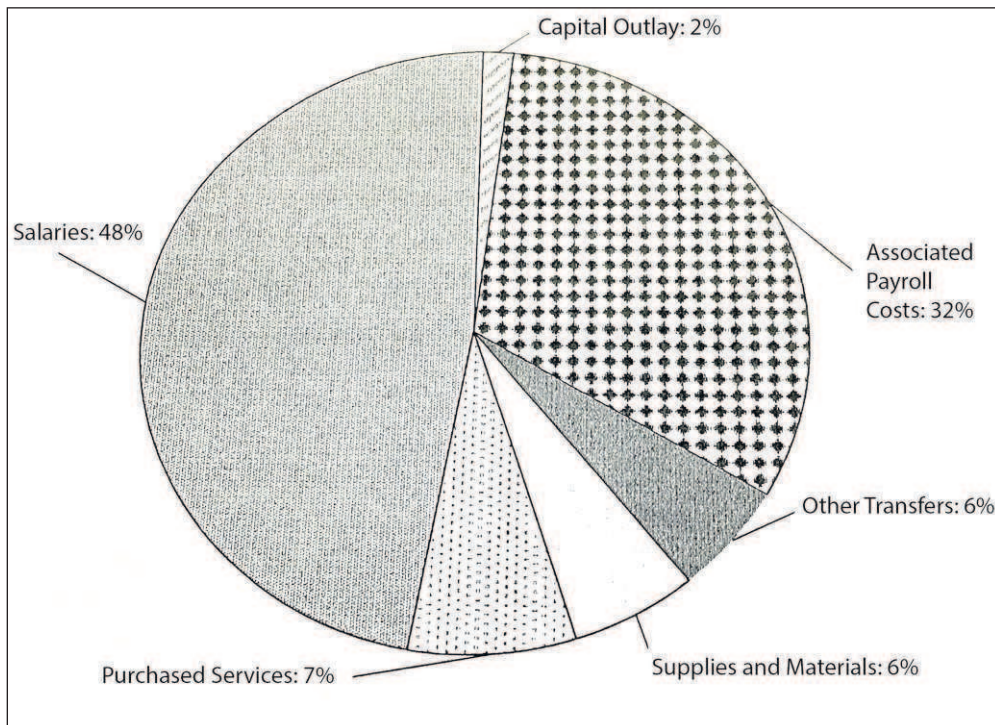
The bond's capital fund balance will reach almost \$90 million by June 2018, Hill said.

Pension costs

Proposed increases in district expenditures come with new hires, software licensing fees and employee benefits.

All employee groups are scheduled to receive 2.5 percent salary increases with regular step increases when applicable.

Public Employees Retirement System rates will see an increase in July with a need for additional higher contributions. Under the proposed budget, the district's contribution rate will increase from 7.07 to 11.31 percent, a 60 percent jump. "Our budgeted PERS rate increases, including the cost of both those funds, are slat-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Chart indicates Seaside School District's 2017-18 proposed expenditures. Salaries make up 48 percent of costs. Associated payroll costs are the second largest expenditure at 32 percent.

The district's contribution to employees participating in the state's public retirement plan will increase from 7.07 to 11.31 percent, a 60 percent jump.

"Our budgeted PERS rate increases, including the cost of both those funds, are slat-

ed to cost the district about \$473,000," Hill said.

ALEKS, a math software program, will cost the district \$20,000, Hill said.

Total costs for Microsoft licenses for students could reach \$6,000, she added.

The school district allocated \$250,000 to the new Cannon Beach Academy, which requires an enrollment of 34 students to open in September.

While enrollment is "picking up," Roley said, numbers must be determined by May 1.

Savings, revenue

Savings under the proposed document come from lower maintenance costs at older school buildings — Broadway Middle School, Gearhart Elementary School and Seaside High School — as the district transitions to the new campus adjacent to Seaside Heights Elementary School.

Reductions will also come with lower budgeted maintenance costs at Seaside High School, Gearhart Elementary and Broadway Middle School.

Potential revenue from the sale of the older buildings is not included in this year's budget package.

The district received \$1.8 million in timber revenues in 2015-16, with \$1.5 million expected this year, Hill said.

The lowered estimate comes as a result of fluctuations in the industry and changing harvest timelines, she added.

On May 16, the budget returns before the committee, with an opportunity for additional public input. A budget must be delivered by June 30.

"Sometimes the committee is ready to adopt at the May meeting, sometimes at the June meeting," Roley said.

Writers get wired: E-education workshops coming to Manzanita

By Dan Haag
For EO Media Group

Education in the 21st century often means more than brick-and-mortar classrooms. There is a bevy of online opportunities for all ages and interests.

Online students can learn from wherever and whenever they want, making "e-education" an attractive option for those with busy work and family schedules. Or for those who prefer learning from the comfort of their favorite chair and cozy bathrobe.

With that in mind, Manzanita's Hoffman Center For The Arts Writer's Series launched "Online and at the Beach" on May 1. Part of Hoff Online, the program will offer writing and visual arts workshops.

While Hoffman Center has always offered a broad range of workshops, the center's President Vera Wildauer said the time has come to expand their repertoire beyond the half-day, in-house format.

"It allows for a more in-depth learning experience," she said. "Students appreciate the flexibility and can work on their own schedule and from anywhere."

"Online and at the Beach" will reach people who might only come to the beach for holidays and weekends, as well as coastal residents farther south or north.

Wildauer said people in Clatsop, Tillamook and Lincoln counties often try to participate in the center's programs but aren't always able to because of work or weather conditions.

"Tillamook County is a very long county, and while we regularly get participants who live in Pacific City or Neskowin, offering online learning makes it easier for

them to connect with us," she said.

'A creative hothouse'

The five-week online course culminates in an optional writing retreat weekend in Manzanita the weekend of June 2, a gathering that will allow students to meet their instructor and fellow students, and enjoy additional craft writing sessions.

Participants will also have an opportunity to read their work at an open mic, try "Yoga for Writers," go on hikes, and dive into a "Prompt-O-Rama."

The intention, Wildauer said, is to complement the online courses with a weekend retreat as often as possible.

The initial series instructors will be prominent Pacific Northwest authors Megan Kruse and Jennie Shortridge.

Kruse will teach "Creativity Catalyst" while Shortridge will teach "Putting Your Prose to Work."

Both Kruse and Shortridge are "veterans" of previous workshops and readings at the center and were natural fits for the pilot program.

"We've always had great response to Megan and Jennie here as workshop teachers," the writer series organizer, Kathie Hightower, said.

Kruse, the author of "Call Me Home" and recipient of a 2016 Pacific Northwest Book Award, is excited to be on board.

"Life so often gets in the way of our work," she said. "I want this class to be a creative hothouse for dormant ideas and a jolt of energy."

Shortridge, author of five novels — including "Love Water Memory" and "When She Flew" — thinks the program will offer a necessary push to writers.

Academy reaches target, will open in fall

Academy from Page 1A

"The initial reason for wanting to start this school was because I wanted my son to be close to where I lived," Simmons said. "I think it's important for the young families who live in our community to have their children in school where they live and work so they can interact with their kid in the school day."

New director

There are a lot of things that are bringing the director of Cannon Beach Academy to the North Coast.

Amy Moore loves walking by the salty sea water with her dog, she said, and visiting Cannon Beach at her family vacation home for the past 20 years has let her get to know the place.

But the main reason she's taking the position comes from her passion for children.

"My passion for education comes from supporting students who have a hard time being supported in school," Moore said.

Moore, 40, has worked in special education in a variety of facets at public and private schools throughout Oregon for 11 years. She has served in leadership roles at La Salle Prep, a Catholic school in Milwaukie, and at Victory Academy, the only private school in Oregon that caters exclusively



BRENNIA VISSER/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Amy Moore, the new director of Cannon Beach Academy.

to students with autism.

"It will be beneficial to have this background, as we will likely have learners from all different backgrounds, and learners with varying levels of ability, strengths and needs" she said. "I think this lens is a good lens to use for all students, not just those who may have learning differences because each child is unique."

As the director, Moore will be in charge of hiring teachers, curriculum and constructing the overall vision for the academy.

In these early stages, Moore is concentrated on finding teachers and getting logistics squared away so the school can physically open.

"We want to think big, but we have limits with our space," she said. "I want to

partner with parents and businesses, and I'm trying to reach out to families outside of Cannon Beach to make (the academy) an education hub."

Cannon Beach Academy treasurer Barb Knop said that while there were many qualified applicants for the position, Moore's love for children is what shined in the interview.

"What I admired the most about her it was clear she loved children. Her face would light up at those moments, and I liked those moments," Knop said.

Simmons said he is confident in Moore's ability to lead and direct the vision of the school.

"I got the impression that she has the ability to understand what a problem is and figure out a way to solve it,"

he said. "As a leader when you take over an organization, the best way to start is to observe. But I anticipate that as we move forward she'll take more control."

While Moore is from Salem, she has had a house in Seaside for three years, and is ready to start.

"This place has been calling us to live here for a long time," she said.

Next steps

With students in hand and a director to lead them, the school must have its building permit approved by the city to start renovation of the former Cannon Beach Fitness Center. Once approved, the academy can move forward with construction over the summer.

Moore said she is reviewing teacher applications as well. If students are still interested in enrolling, there will be a second enrollment period through the end of June. In the second enrollment period, charter schools are legally obligated to choose students with a lottery system, meaning if there are more applications than open spots the school will randomly select students from the pool as spots become available.

"Overall, this was a community effort, including Seaside School District, and I'm just really proud," Simmons said.

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