



R.J. MARX/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE  
Cannon Beach has backed away from a 40 percent water rate increase.

## City drops 40 percent water hike

### Public works committee seeks alternatives

By Brenna Visser  
Cannon Beach Gazette

A 40 percent water rate increase is no longer being considered in Cannon Beach for next fiscal year.

The rate increase was proposed earlier this year to help finance the water and wastewater master plan that detailed about \$3.4 million in water infrastructure and \$1.3 mil-

lion in wastewater projects. The projects would focus on rehabbing or replacing a variety of systems, including brittle water lines and water storage tanks.

But concerns from the public works committee about discrepancies within the rate study and disagreements about how certain projects were prioritized has made a substantial rate increase a problem.

Instead, the city will consider a 3 percent rate increase to cover normal operational costs, as well as transferring up to \$250,000 and \$275,525 for water and wastewater capital projects, according to a draft of the budget.

Public Works Director Dan Grassick said that any rate increase after this fiscal year will be considered after the public works committee finishes reviewing the master plans and rate structure, which would have increased wa-

ter bills from about \$52 a month to \$70.

“That is a very complex and multifaceted discussion that will need to involve an in-depth and detailed discussion with the full council, and given this is Cannon Beach, with the greater residential and business community before any decisions about a potential rate increase are decided upon,” Grassick said in an email.

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# FLOCKING TO THE ROCK



BRENNA VISSER/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Participants in “Flock to the Rock” drive into the Sea Ranch RV Resort to start a weekend of motorcycle touring and camaraderie.

## Women’s motorcycle touring group finds community in new, annual event

By Brenna Visser  
Cannon Beach Gazette

Four years before leading a group of 80 women on a three-day motorcycle tour to Cannon Beach, Ruth Belcher was terrified of driving on the freeway.

It had been 15 years since Ruth Belcher had last ridden a motorcycle. She started riding dirt bikes with her grandma when she was 9 years old in Kentucky’s Appalachian mountains, but took a hiatus to raise her two sons until four years ago.

“I realized there was something that I was missing that I loved,” Belcher said.

Things were different when she returned. She said she felt “a little older, and a little heavier,” and some of her riding confidence had waned.

When she sought a way to reach out to other women motorcyclists, she found her options were limited.

So the Everett, Washington, native took it upon herself to make some options by founding Global Moto Adventures, an international, women’s only motorcycle touring group after trying to network with other women riders on Facebook and different clubs didn’t cut it.

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## Affordable houses proposed in budget

### City hopes to install four homes in RV park

By Brenna Visser  
Cannon Beach Gazette

Cannon Beach is proposing to build four new affordable housing units in the RV Park by fall as a priority project in the next fiscal year.

“Affording housing is the No. 1 issue we’re all talking about. It’s important everywhere, but especially on the coast,” City Manager Brant Kucera said.

The RV Resort on Elk Land Road and Haskell Lane was identified as potential site in a report compiled by the affordable housing task force last year, citing the fact the city owned the land, as well as relatively low startup costs as benefits.

Each house would be around 400 square feet and mobile, Kucera said. With rent anticipated to be \$600 to \$800 a month, the homes would be intended for single and working-class people with incomes of about \$15 an hour.

The project would be funded by a newly proposed affordable housing fund totaling \$429,740, which if adopted, would take effect in July. The homes would be paid for using a bank loan, rents and construction excise taxes if the City Council chooses to approve it, Kucera said.

If the pilot program is successful, the city could expand this program out to include up to 12 homes on this property, which in line with the city’s goal to build 25 affordable homes by July 2018, Kucera said.

### Excise tax

A citizen survey last year identified affordable housing as the top priority for the city. But the proposed excise tax — which would contribute an estimated \$92,000 of the total fund — has received a lukewarm welcome from some city councilors.

The proposed excise tax is a one-time 1 percent imposed based on the construction value listed on the building permit. Portland and Salem have implemented these taxes and one is being considered in Astoria.

The idea would be to use this revenue to help support affordable housing, as well as have private contractors contribute to supporting a service from which their own

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## Crowd gathers to celebrate 50 years of public beaches



COLIN MURPHEY/EO MEDIA GROUP

Tad McCall, son of late Oregon governor Tom McCall, far right, speaks at the Beach Bill anniversary presentation Saturday in Cannon Beach. The celebration was to recognize the efforts of those who sought to protect and maintain public beaches in Oregon.

### Former Gov. McCall’s son toasts Oregon’s Beach Bill

By Brenna Visser  
Cannon Beach Gazette

In a lot of ways, the relationship between the Oregon Coast and those who live here is like a marriage vow: you love it for better or for worse.

This love was tested Saturday, May 13, as about 30 people huddled under umbrellas and raincoats in a sporadic rain and hail storm, only the Pacific Northwest can provide, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Oregon Beach Bill.

The Beach Bill is what established public ownership of the Oregon Coast after a hotel in 1966 wanted to rope off a section of sand in front of the hotel for guests. On May 13, 1967, former Gov. Tom McCall flew his helicopter to Cannon Beach as a statement of his commitment to keeping all 363 miles of Oregon shoreline public for everyone.

Oregon is one of the few states with this broad an interpretation for public beach access.

### ‘Beach of history’

Now 50 years later, the late governor’s son, Tad McCall, addressed the crowd, unphased by the hail bouncing off the lid of his ball cap, to

celebrate on the beach his dad helped save.

“This beach is the beach of history. This is where the picture of freedom of the beach was painted,” McCall said.

The 73-year-old McCall traveled from Arlington, Virginia, back to the Oregon Coast for the first time in 30 years, he said. His coast roots were planted mostly on the beaches of Gearhart and Lincoln City, but his dad’s love for the beaches spanned the entire coastline, he said.

“He helped Oregonians understand themselves. He knew if you took care of nature, nature would take care of you,” he said.

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