



Brant Kucera

City manager heads to Sisters

Kucera has worked on the coast since 2014

By R.J. Marx
Cannon Beach Gazette

Brant Kucera, who has served as Cannon Beach's city manager since 2014, has been named the new city manager of Sisters in Deschutes County.

Kucera topped a field of four candidates who visited Sisters for public gatherings and interviews, according to Joseph O'Neill, the city's finance director. He was selected unanimously by the Sisters City Council Wednesday, May 24.

"I felt it was time for a change of pace as far as my job goes," Kucera said Friday, May 26. "Sisters is a small city but it's growing fast and I find that opportunity really appealing to me."

Kucera, 46, said he feels he has made a lot of "positive changes" at City Hall.

"I think that overall the direction of the city is positive, however there's still, in my mind, an aggressive agenda that needs to be pursued when it comes to affordable housing, how we're going to use our room tax money in the future and implementing the water and sewer master plans," he said.

Kucera's last day in Cannon Beach will be June 30. He starts in Sisters July 5, replacing Rick Allen, who has served as interim city manager since April 2016. Final approval is contingent upon the ratification of an employment agreement between Kucera and the city.

In Cannon Beach, Kucera succeeded interim City Manager Jennie Messmer.

The previous city manager, Rich Mays, held the position for more than eight years before retiring.

Nationwide recruitment

A University of Idaho graduate with a master's degree in public administration from Northern Michigan University, Kucera was chosen over three other candidates from a pool of 47 applicants. The nationwide recruitment effort was led by the League of Oregon Cities.

Over the past 13 years, Kucera has worked in municipal governments in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Idaho. He had previously managed Pennsylvania's Borough of Kennett Square before coming to the Oregon Coast.

At a 2014 meet-and-greet at the Surfsand Resort with community members and local officials, Kucera said that he envisioned himself settling down on the Oregon Coast for quite some time.

During his time in Cannon Beach, Kucera helped the city adopt its first strategic plan, which he called "the foundation we're going to need to move forward as a community." The plan was developed from a citizen survey that received a 40 percent response rate from the city's 1,700 residents.

He worked to prioritize and address housing, infrastructure and emergency services needs.

Kucera also served as the city's emergency manager.

"I had heard he was in the running, but I had not heard anything about any decision being made," City Councilor George Vetter said. "It's too bad, but I'm sure we'll get a good replacement."

City tests time limits on parking

Downtown streets will have a three-hour cap

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

In an attempt to create more downtown parking, Cannon Beach plans to impose time limits along a section of Hemlock

Street starting this week.

Residents and tourists will see three-hour parking limit signs on Hemlock Street between First and Third avenues, as well as on First, Second and Third streets between Hemlock and Spruce.

The City Council this month decided to move forward with the pilot program to see whether or not timed parking increases turnover in parking spots. This

in turn would help the city reach the goal of creating 50 new spots by the end of 2018.

This pilot area was chosen after a parking study contracted by the city surveyed the two busiest days of spring break, and found that Hemlock Street is the first to fill up — sometimes as early as 9 a.m., City Planner Mark Barnes said.

"Part of the congestion comes from a number of cars

cruising Hemlock trying to find parking," Barnes said. "If you can increase turnover, you'll get more people in spaces rather than going around in circles."

Enforcement

City Manager Brant Kucera said the first few weeks will be all about educating business owners and visitors about the rule change.

See Parking, Page 6A

Putting the 'cannon' in Cannon Beach

The eponymous artifact is home for good

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

After a long winding journey from the shores of Arch Cape and to the labs of Texas A&M University, Cannon Beach finally has reclaimed its cannon — for good this time.

About 30 people came to the Cannon Beach History Center and Museum reception Saturday, May 20, to celebrate the cannon that inspired the town's name change from Ecola in 1922. In 2012, the historic cannon and capstan were sent to Texas A&M to be refinished and returned to Cannon Beach in 2016.

Since then, the museum has spent the last year on final touches, such as installing a climate control system that keeps humidity at 40 percent to prevent degradation and exhibit displays, to ensure the cannon be shared with multiple generations, museum Executive Director Elaine Trucke said.

"We're celebrating the end of

See Cannon, Page 9A



Executive Director Elaine Trucke presents the new exhibit to a crowd of museum supporters, May 20.

BRENNA VISSER

'It's the icon of this town.'

—Elaine Trucke

PRSR1 STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 97
ASTORIA, OR

Building community, making connections

Michael Henderson joins Duane Johnson real estate team

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

Michael Henderson came to the North Coast in 1999 because of his passion for surfing. Before moving to Cannon Beach in 1999, Henderson, now an agent with Duane Johnson Real Estate, lived in Sandy in the shadow of Mount Hood. He would watch weather reports, and when the sun come out he'd head for the coast.

"The problem was that in a two-hour drive on the Oregon Coast conditions can change

very quickly," Henderson laughed.

But once he came to Cannon Beach, he found lots of reasons to stay. He built a business around action sports like surfing, skating and snowboarding before switching gears to do sales and marketing Columbia Distribution. He started building a family, too, after the birth of his two sons, 16-year-old Sam and 11-year-old Max.

As life kept moving forward, the idea of getting into real estate was always in the back of his mind as something he thought would be a good



Michael Henderson

fit, he said. But he was wary of jumping into a franchise — he wanted whatever he did next to be personal.

Eventually, a friend introduced Henderson to Johnson. Henderson had met him once before when he first worked alongside Johnson in 2005 on the Ecola Creek Forest Reserve Management Plan Ad-hoc Committee, and admired his commitment to the town.

"I wouldn't want to work for anyone else. I love what this office does for the community," Henderson said.

He's been a real estate broker for Johnson since April.

For Henderson, the most satisfying part of his job is being able to walk people through realizing their dream for a home into a reality.

"I like getting to know peo-

ple and their dream for their home. I try to listen to people and key on their values, then take on the challenge of connecting the dots to help them find the home they need," he said.

Personal connection is important to Henderson, and not due in any small part to the fact that he was the recipient of community kindness when he first moved to town and was trying to find a home.

When Henderson and his wife first moved to town, he remembers Bob Cerelli, Cannon Beach resident and Cannon Beach Rural Fire District board member, helping him find a rental. As they got settled, Henderson remembers appreciating the time he took to "show the ropes" of Cannon Beach.

"He's the type of guy

who would offer to fix your windows," Henderson said. "Meeting him was a greater reflection of what this community is about — a commitment to doing nice things for people."

Now, almost 18 years later, he no longer surfs because of some old injuries. Instead, he said he spends time teaching his kids the keyboard and drums and managing his growing vinyl record collection, which he said has reached to about 700 records.

There are lots of reasons to live near the ocean, but working in Cannon Beach is special, he said.

"It's the only town where people really care about what they do. They care about the ambiance, the quality, the service," he said. "Everyone cares."