

County manager strikes back over commissioner comments

New examples of infighting revealed

By Jack Heffernan
The Daily Astorian



Cameron Moore



Lianne Thompson



Kathleen Sullivan

Clatsop County Manager Cameron Moore will not attend Board of Commissioners meetings, citing repeated public criticism from Commissioners Lianne Thompson and Kathleen Sullivan.

The county manager has also threatened legal action, according to sources familiar with the issue.

Moore was not at the April 25 meeting. Commissioner Scott Lee, the board's chairman, read aloud correspondence between Moore and commissioners in which the county manager said he would not attend "for the foreseeable future."

"As we discussed last Thursday I unfortunately find myself in the position of having to take steps to protect myself from the abusive and hostile work environment being imposed upon me by Commissioners Thompson and Sullivan. One of the primary weapons that they use against me is to make me their verbal punching bag at board of county commissioner meetings," the email sent Wednesday,

April 25, and addressed to Lee and other county officials read. "It is extremely unfortunate that this is the situation that I find myself in but based on our discussion I know that you understand my need to take whatever actions are necessary to protect myself from further damage."

Moore could not be reached for comment. Other county officials did not publicly confirm if or why the county manager threatened legal action.

Sullivan declined to comment, while Thompson offered a statement via email.

"I've seen better setups in a Law & Order rerun than during this week's board meeting. To hurl a bucket of allegations at me and a fellow commissioner, without any prior notice or opportunity for discussion, was the height of irresponsibility and unprofessionalism," Thompson wrote. "I welcome finding better ways to work with the county administrators and my fellow commissioners, but turning board meetings into publicity stunts is not the

way to do it."

In early April, a county employee — whom Lee declined to identify — sent an email to Moore regarding a "confusing and also concerning" phone call with Thompson. Moore forwarded the email to Lee, who read it aloud Wednesday. The employee claims Thompson, after asking that her name not be said out loud, warned her to be careful about making certain public comments.

"Nothing was said by either of us that would cause question or concern. When I asked her where this was going she proceeded to say that she received threatening emails from county management and that it will end up in court and doesn't want me to have to be in court as she is sure this is my livelihood and even if I was not in this position that I would need a good reference from this job," the email read. "At that point, I was not only completely confused but also a bit upset by what was said."

Lee said the encounter with Thompson violated a chain of

command outlined in the county charter and board policy and that the action could expose the county to legal liability. He threatened to remove Thompson from any liaison assignments that would require her to interact with county staff who are not in management.

"You cannot threaten employees," Lee said, adding he has not seen any threatening emails from county management to Thompson. "This is unacceptable behavior, and I want it to stop."

Thompson responded to the allegations in part of her written statement to the newspaper. "The suggestion that I am threatening is laughable — I am 73 years old and 135 pounds soaking wet. It is clear they are threatened because I believe the manager is accountable to the commissioners that were elected to oversee his work."

Wednesday's revelations are the latest in a string of private and public clashes involving commissioners and county management in the past year.

County marijuana sales tax referred to voters

A potential 3 percent tax on retail sales

By Jack Heffernan
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Clatsop County voters will decide in November whether to place a tax on retail marijuana sales.

County commissioners voted unanimously Wednesday, April 25, to refer the 3 percent tax to the general election ballot. Revenue from the handful of dispensaries outside city limits would be about \$50,000 annually, county staff estimates.

The state ballot measure in 2014 that legalized marijuana sales gave cities and counties the ability to impose a tax of up to 3 percent if approved by voters in a general election. No recreational dispensaries existed outside city limits in 2016, the most recent general election. The tax would be effective 30 days after voter approval.

In other business Wednesday, commissioners:

- Continued a public hearing on updated flood-hazard maps and revisions to land use rules, including requirements for property owners to pay for a permit when developing their land or seek approval before altering structures.

The Federal Emergency

Management Agency has required the revisions in order for the roughly 700 affected property owners in unincorporated, flood-prone areas of the county to be eligible for the National Flood Insurance Program. Residents expressed their opposition to the changes both at a county Planning Commission meeting in March and to commissioners Wednesday. Despite the county's efforts since the Planning Commission meeting, the federal agency has not budged on any of its requirements, Community Development Director Gail Henrikson said.

Commissioners are scheduled to hold another hearing in May, when they may vote to adopt an ordinance. The federal agency has mandated that the county implement the revisions by June 20 in order for residents to remain eligible for the insurance.

- Appointed Robert Stricklin to the county Planning Commission. Stricklin has served on the commission before as well as the county Charter Review Committee and various other boards.

The commission makes decisions on land use issues and recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. Jacque Presley stepped down in February after four months in the position to focus more time on Angels for Sara Sanctuary — her nonprofit dog rescue organization.

CANNON BEACH POLICE LOG

April 13
9:44 a.m., Highway 101 MP 29: Police respond to a report of a tree down in the roadway. Police assist the Cannon Beach Fire Department with traffic control.

5:26 p.m., 600 block Larch: Police respond to a report of bullying and threats.

6:19 p.m., 3800 block S. Hemlock: Police receive multiple

reports from a seemingly intoxicated female complaining about incessant barking of a neighbor's dog. Neighbor is contacted and says the woman is a frequent complainer about their dog and other dogs. Resident said she will keep her dogs quiet.

April 14
10:32 a.m., S. Hemlock: Caller says that while they were hav-

ing breakfast inside a dining establishment their car was scratched by a sharp object.

April 15
12:59 a.m., 3600 block W. Chinook: Police assist on a medical call.

6:35 p.m., 300 block Antler: A Jack Russell terrier reported missing is spotted near the Fir Street Bridge. The dog was unable to be located.

8:29 p.m., 400 block Fir Street: A business owner reports a man who attempted to use a check without proper identification. Caller says the person had only one piece of identification on them besides a hospital wristband. Caller said the check may belong to the subject's father. Subject was gone on police arrival and police were unable to locate.

April 16
2:45 p.m., 100 block E. Fifth: Officer secured an open residence door. Premises were searched and nothing appeared amiss.

April 17
1:30 p.m., 2100 block Pacific: Police responding to a report of illegal tree cutting discover a person legally trimming branches.

April 18
11:15 a.m., 100 block E. Washington: Police respond to a report of a person going through garbage cans but are unable to locate.

3:15 p.m., Elliot Way: An impounded dog was returned to its owner.

April 19
8:22 p.m., 1100 block Spruce

Court: Police respond to a report of a dog bite in the past. The suspect and the dog are known but police were unable to locate. The bitten person did not request or seek medical treatment. Police will follow up with the dog owner.

April 20
10:43 p.m., Sewer Ponds: Subjects are warned against unlawful lodging.

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