



BRENNA VISSER/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Sandra Petersen is suing Manzanita in federal court over \$1.8 million in vacation rental fines.

Rental owner fights \$1.8M fine

Federal lawsuit filed over lodging tax dispute in Manzanita

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

MANZANITA — A property owner hit with \$1.8 million in vacation rental fines has filed a federal lawsuit against Manzanita

claiming the city's enforcement is unconstitutional.

Sandra Petersen, a co-trustee of the Kingwood Trust, which owns the home on Edmund Lane, was fined by the city in October for operating a vacation rental without a license and for not paying the lodging tax.

Petersen, who lives in Washington state, said the city notified her of the citations in one document, nearly two years after the first alleged violation in January 2015.

"When I got the letter, I was in total

shock," she said. "It was very unexpected. I had no idea that I was disobeying any ordinances."

In a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in Portland in June, Petersen has tried to block Manzanita from enforcing the citations, alleging the \$1.8 million penalty is a violation of the Eighth Amendment, which protects against excessive fines.

The city declined to comment.

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Flowers, and fun

flavor



PHOTOS BY COLIN MURPHEY/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Fresh fruits and vegetables are just one of the many options available at the farmer's market in Cannon Beach.

Farmer's Market showcases fresh summer bounty

By Colin Murphey
For Cannon Beach Gazette

Every Tuesday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. during the summer, the Cannon Beach Farmer's Market is alive with music, flowers, produce, meats and seafoods, organic cheeses and other foods through Sept. 25. The market is held in the east public parking lot at the intersection of Hemlock and Gower streets, next to City Hall.



Flowers for sale are displayed at a booth at the Cannon Beach Farmer's Market.



People gather at the farmer's market in Cannon Beach to check out the selection of vendors.

Levy renewal seeks to meet fire costs

Tax to bring in about \$1.2M over five years

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

Cannon Beach Rural Fire District is asking voters to renew a five-year fire chief levy.

The levy pays for the chief's salary, vehicles, administrative costs and supplies. It will go up to \$0.19 per thousand of assessed property up from an average \$0.14 voted in five years ago. With the new rate, a homeowner would pay \$19 a year on a \$100,000 house. Earlier in the year, the board indicated an intention to keep the levy rate the same out of fear that voters would have "tax fatigue" from multiple levies and bonds coming on the ballot in November, but decided an increase was needed to cover growing costs.

Between 2019 to 2024, the levy is estimated to bring the district about \$1.2 million over five years. The last levy brought in approximately \$700,000 over five years.

With the current rate, the district has had to dip into reserves to cover growing costs associated with the position, Fire Chief Matt Benedict said. Rising health insurance costs and PERS rates are the biggest increases.

If rates aren't raised, there will not be enough in the fund to cover the fire chief's position for another year, if the voters chose not to renew the levy, he said.

Raising the levy 4 cents allows the district to build up a reserve to prepare for future cost increases, including slowly raising the salary, Benedict said.

Benedict, who is paid \$80,000 a year, would make \$90,000 in two years.

Benedict said \$90,000 is on par with other chiefs around the county, and that if the district wants to encourage well-qualified people to fill the position in the future, the district must start gradually increasing the salary to be competitive. It will also help account for rising PERS and health care costs in the future.

"It's getting us up to where Cannon Beach needs to be to get someone experienced in the future," Benedict said.

Four board members supported the pay increase, saying it was necessary given the difficulty of the job and Benedict's performance.

Fire board member Sharon Clyde was the one dissenting vote, saying it wasn't the most prudent way to spend resources in a time when the district is short on cash.

"It's not about how well he's doing. It's about fiduciary responsibility," Clyde said.

Voters will see the levy on the Special Election ballot Sept. 19.

New owners, new location and new vision

Cannon Beach Fitness Center to reopen under new ownership on Sunset Boulevard

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

The Cannon Beach Fitness Center is going to have a new home — and a new vision — by the end of summer.

Christy Baker of the Cannon Beach Spa and Emma Molyneux purchased the local gym in June from Patrick Nofield. The two will move the fitness center from its current location in Sandpiper Square to 171 Sunset Blvd. by Labor Day, Molyneux said.

"It caters more to tourists and travelers in Sandpiper Square," Molyneux said. "We wanted this to really be for the community, and midtown is more accessible for locals."

The gym will retain a similar weight and cardio room that people can access with a membership. But past that, the two hope to expand the fitness center to have

a variety of family-centered fitness activities, running and cycling training groups and yoga classes — all for free.

"We want this to be a place where even if you can't afford a membership you can be a part of the fitness community," Molyneux said.

Molyneux, a triathlete with a long-held passion for fitness, moved to Cannon Beach about a year ago, but said she found herself missing the "town hub feel" of her former gym in California.

Baker and Molyneux met at the Cannon Beach Academy, where both of their children go to school, and bonded over a passion for loving health and wellness. They often discussed ideas on starting new athletic opportunities and amenities for the town.



CANNON BEACH FITNESS

Cannon Beach Fitness Center owners Christy Baker and Emma Molyneux with their children, Cayden, Kora, Emily, Ayden and Chloe.

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