

Low turnout sends levy back to ballot

Fire District is hopeful for future support

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

A local option fire chief levy for the Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District failed Tuesday night.

If this were a regular election, the five-year levy, which pays for the chief's salary, vehicles, administrative costs and supplies, would have passed 67 percent to 32 percent. But during a special election, a measure can only pass if there is at least 50 percent voter turnout.

Only 38 percent — 498 out of the district's 1,300 voters — cast ballots, according to unofficial county results.

The levy would have raised the tax rate to \$0.19 per thousand of assessed property value, up from an average \$0.14 voted in five years ago. At the new rate, a homeowner would pay \$95 a year on a \$500,000 house.

Between 2019 to 2024, the levy was estimated to bring



COLIN MURPHEY

Cannon Beach Fire Chief Matt Benedict makes the rounds of the garage doing routine maintenance and checking gear.

the district about \$1.2 million. The increase was designed to account for growing costs associated with the position, such as rising health care and PERS rates, Fire Chief Matt Benedict said.

While disappointing, Benedict said the results were encouraging and the district plans to put the same levy on the November ballot, where the 50 percent voter turnout rule will no longer be an issue.

"We will continue to educate more people about the levy before November," Benedict said. "It's a pretty decent

margin but we won't take this for granted."

The board decided to take a chance at a special election earlier this year out of fear that voters would have "tax fatigue" from multiple levies and bonds on the ballot in November.

"We thought in a small community like this we could see a bigger turnout with only one thing on the ballot," Benedict said. "It turns out we were wrong in this case. But you never know unless you try."

If the levy fails again in November, Benedict said the

district has about a year's worth of contingency funds that would pay for his position until the district could get the levy on the ballot again. Failing to renew this levy again would cut off the district's only funding mechanism to pay for a fire chief, leaving the board with the choice of finding a new way to fund the position, to make cuts in other areas of the general fund to pay for it, or to forgo the position altogether, Benedict said.

"We're already on a shoe-string budget, so we'd have to get creative and look at our priorities if this doesn't pass," he said.

Now that the levy will compete against the county's jail bond and marijuana tax on the ballot, Benedict hopes the work the district has already done to educate voters about the issues will carry forward as an advantage in November.

"It's always a threat, having competition, never knowing who is going to vote for what," Benedict said. "All we can do is educate. (Voters) are going to have to make that choice on what they are going to support."

Moore to retire as county manager

Administrator was hired in 2016

By Jack Heffernan
The Daily Astorian

Clatsop County Manager Cameron Moore will retire in January.

Moore, an experienced administrator, was hired in 2016 to help bring stability to a county that had nine managers in 16 years. A performance review from the county Board of Commissioners last year — written by Scott Lee, the board's chairman — was largely positive, but Moore has clashed with some commissioners.

"I thought Cam did a great job," Lee said. "I've really enjoyed working with him, one of the best county managers I've been able to work with."

Moore has been at odds with Commissioners Lianne Thompson and Kathleen Sullivan. While the two commissioners have asked for more

open discussions about county decisions, Moore has accused them of improper interactions with county staff.



Cameron Moore

Moore offered to resign at one point last year but was asked by the majority of the five-member board to stay. The infighting peaked publicly in April, when Moore skipped a board meeting, writing in an email that the commissioners had made him their "verbal punching bag." He later apologized for skipping the meeting.

"I thought he handled those rough spots with commissioners very well," Lee said.

Thompson and Sullivan could not immediately be reached for comment.

Moore, the former chief executive officer for the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, replaced Scott Somers, who resigned in 2015 to take a job in Maryland.

CANNON BEACH POLICE LOG

Aug. 19
Two incidents of overnight camping are reported.

1:56 p.m., Hemlock and Second: A male juvenile reported missing is reunited with his parents.

11:09 p.m., N. Larch: Several beach fires reported burning are advised of the fire ban.

Aug. 20
Nine incidents of overnight camping are reported.

1:51 p.m., Haystack Parking: A female came into the police station to report being threatened and menaced by a male driver who said he'd run her over while she waited for her family. Police located the driver and advised him his behavior could be construed as menacing.

Aug. 21
Three incidents of overnight camping are reported.

1:48 p.m., Ecola Creek and Beach: A daughter and her father who lost track of each other are reunited.

Aug. 22
Seven incidents of overnight camping are reported.

9:34 p.m., 100 block N. Hemlock: A father who reported his daughter missing called back to say she'd returned.

Aug. 23
Three incidents of overnight camping are reported.

11:37 p.m., 3400 block S. Hemlock: Police assist fire department evacuate a building where there was a fire on the first floor. Police stood by until the fire was extinguished.

Aug. 24
Two incidents of overnight camping are reported.

5:46 p.m., Breakers Point: A reporting party notified police about a

missing bipolar juvenile. When police spoke with the subject's father, the father refused to report his son missing, saying he'd seen police shoot bipolar subjects in the past, and he did not want anything to happen to his son. He told police he would contact another agency if he has further issues relating to his son.

Aug. 25
Six incidents of overnight camping are reported.

5:24 p.m., Fir Street Bridge: Caller reports youth preparing to jump off the bridge into Ecola Creek. Police on scene talk to the youth who denied he was planning to jump.

Aug. 26
Six incidents of overnight camping are reported.

1:15 a.m., 4000 block Ocean: A person is arrested and charged with DUI; police say their blood alcohol was .15%.

Aug. 27
Two incidents of overnight camping are reported.

2:35 p.m., Beach and Ecola: Police respond to a report of a naked man said to be frolicking in the ocean. He had his trunks back on when police arrived; he said he was not trying to arouse himself or others. He was warned there are children in the area.

3:50 p.m., Tolovana Park: A juvenile reported missing was reunited with parents.

Aug. 28
Three incidents of overnight camping are reported.

10:40 a.m., Arbor Lane: A man unsuccessfully trying to open a lock box reported as suspicious turned out to be a man trying the lockbox of the wrong rental. He was gone prior to police arrival.

1:16 p.m., Spruce: A disturbance between neighbors is reported.

5:08 p.m., Spruce: The neighbor issue continues; the reporting party is advised what steps they can take.

5:57 p.m., Second Street: Police receive a report of two juvenile females who attempted to use a fake \$50 at a shop to buy pastries. An employee of the shop used a counterfeit marking pen first on the bill and rejected it. The incident is under investigation.

9:43 p.m., Silver Point: Cannon Beach police assist Coast Guard with a fishing vessel 2 miles south of Haystack Rock that was disabled. Four subjects were on board. Police assisted the Coast Guard in towing the vessel out.

Aug. 29
Two incidents of overnight camping are reported.

4:48 p.m., Downtown: A child report-

ed missing is reunited with its parents.

Aug. 30
Two incidents of overnight camping are reported.

Aug. 31
Two incidents of overnight camping are reported.

9:09 Avenue U and The Tides: Cannon Beach police assist Seaside police with a report of a woman pointing a gun at two subjects. The female was located near Avenue S and Mill Pond. She was taken into custody without incident.

Sept. 1
Ten incidents of overnight camping are reported.

4:20 p.m., Ocean Shore/Tolovana: Police respond to a report of a man said to have gone swimming who did not return. The subject was later found walking on the beach.



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