

District wins \$2.5M for seismic upgrades

By R.J. MARX
Cannon Beach Gazette

Seaside Heights Elementary School was among the dozens of schools and emergency services buildings across Oregon to receive funds for seismic rehabilitation grants from Business Oregon.

A total of \$85 million was approved for 34 schools and six emergency service organizations, Business Oregon reported Friday.

The Seaside School District will receive \$2.5 million for work at the Heights. Total cost for the elementary school and gymnasium portion of school construction will total between \$14 million and \$15 million, project manager Jim Henry said at an April 6 meeting of the district's School Construction Citizen Oversight Committee.

The Heights project is part of the larger plan to move local schools out of the tsunami zone to the Southeast Hills, approved by voters with passage of a \$99.7 million bond in 2016.

The expanded school will



R.J. Marx/Seaside Signal

Members of the district's School Construction Citizen Oversight Committee visit the construction site in the Southeast Hills. District superintendent Sheila Roley is at center, in the yellow vest.

house current students as well as students from Gearhart.

Gearhart Elementary School will close in June 2020 and students relocated to the expanded Heights campus outside the tsunami inundation zone.

Project manager Jim Henry said funds from the seismic grant

will go to reinforcing the roof, exterior and interior wall connections, along with stiffer walls to provide additional shear capacity inside the school. Exterior concrete walls will be reinforced in their footings to help

SEISMIC GRANT PROGRAM

The program was created by the Oregon Legislature in 2005 and transferred to Business Oregon in 2014.

Public K-12 school districts, community colleges, and education service districts are eligible for the grant program. For emergency services facilities, the emphasis is on first responder buildings. This includes hospital buildings with acute inpatient care facilities, fire stations, police stations, sheriff's offices, 9-1-1 centers, and Emergency Operations Centers.

stiffen the building overall.

The maximum grant per school is \$2.5 million, District Superintendent Sheila Roley said.

Of the \$85 million delivered, about \$75 million will go to Oregon schools.

In announcing the grant, Business Oregon reported that the Seismic Rehabilitation Grant Program is a state of Oregon competitive grant program that provides funding for the seismic rehabilitation of critical public buildings, particularly public schools and emergency services facilities.

It is one of the infrastructure programs Business Oregon administers to help develop livable and prosperous communities in addition to business development services and programs.

CITY COUNCIL ROUNDUP

Site plan for larger tree work required

By CARA MICO
For Cannon Beach Gazette

The Cannon Beach City Council approved an amendment to the tree removal ordinance at the April 2 meeting. The new ordinance requires a site plan for any exterior work that may disturb any tree greater than six inches, including those within one tree protection zone of the project.

Emergency Manager Mike Myers and City Manager Bruce St. Denis requested that the council authorize either the city manager or the mayor to sign grants on behalf of the City. Meyers is currently pursuing a Business Oregon grant which could fund up to \$30,000 of staff time for tactical scenario planning and outreach.

Awareness month

April is now officially Sexual Abuse Awareness Month and Child Abuse Awareness Month at the request of Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn, which was unanimously by the council.

The council named April 12 as the official city of Cannon Beach Arbor Day. A tree planting ceremony took place at the Cannon Beach Academy to honor the importance of trees.

Utility relief

Public Works Director Karen LaBonte presented a utility relief request to the council on behalf of the owner of 2939 South Hemlock. A toilet leak caused over \$3,000 in excess utility fees which was paid by the tenant. By city ordinance, payment is required for any water leak that enters into the sewer system. Although the leak was caught and repaired quickly, and the owner paid the bill, LaBonte recommended to deny the request for relief based on ordinance. She also suggested that new meter modules which monitor daily usage and limits and caps on billing would eliminate this type of problem in the future. The council unanimously denied the utility relief request.

City Councilors Nancy McCarthy and Robin Risley invite the public to their open house meetings held the third Monday of every month.

School district alters Seaside Heights gym plan

By R.J. MARX
Cannon Beach Gazette

Faced with rising construction costs and a shortage of labor, Seaside School District Superintendent Sheila Roley and project manager Jim Henry presented designs for a new freestanding gymnasium and covered play area at Seaside Heights Elementary School.

The original plan, part of the \$100 million bond approved by voters to move schools out of the tsunami inundation zone, had been to leave the Seaside Heights building "as is," Roley said, and maintain the existing gymnasium.

The new freestanding 6,000-square-foot gymnasium, designed for elementary physical education classes, will feature regulation high school basketball

courts, offices and restrooms.

The modification could save the district \$500,000, Henry said after the April 2 Seaside Planning Commission meeting.

Plans for a classroom wing building on the west edge of the site have been replaced by new wing of six-to-eight classrooms on the north side of the Heights building, including an outdoor classroom area between the building and new classrooms.

The elementary school's former gym space will be reconfigured into classrooms.

The changes were driven by a 7 percent escalation in construction costs every year, Roley said. "Any way we looked at it, the original plan was not going to be within our budget."

The changes required city approval as "major modifications" to the school district plan, Henry said.

"We reviewed it with (Plan-

ning Director) Kevin Cupples and he thought it was enough changes moving the building and the amount of square footage that he thought it would be worthwhile for the Planning Commission to hear it," Henry said after the meeting.

The goal is still to provide one elementary school of approximately 800 students for the district, architect Dan Hess said in a memo to the commission.

By taking away the gymnasium and remodeling that into classrooms, a freestanding gym will be built at "considerably less cost," Roley said. "From the beginning we have been looking at the plans as we go and adjusting the plans as needed — you have to trim or cut back."

The district could save up to \$500,000 on the gym alone, Henry added.

Commercial-level building projects throughout the state and

region have created a shortage of skilled labor, Roley said. "We have a great team of our major players, but subcontractors are now in such high demand they can set their rates and go where they want to go."

To fill construction needs, the district has recruited teams from around the country, including a concrete masonry unit from Florida and sheetrockers from Alaska.

"It's put us in a daily exercise of how do we maximize the funds we have," Roley said. "We don't have the option to go over budget. It's meant we've had to trim some things along the way."

Planning commissioners unanimously approved the modifications.

Construction at the elementary school is scheduled to begin after spring dismissal.

"We're getting pretty close to having the final plans all dialed in," Roley said.



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