

Seaside group will seek sidewalk funds

The transportation commission has found new revenue routes

By Nancy McCarthy
Seaside Signal

Seaside's Transportation Advisory Commission may have found a way to obtain grants to pay for more sidewalks and other amenities in town.

Dale McDowell, commission chairman, told the Seaside City Council Jan. 26 that the commission will seek financial support from the federally funded Safe Routes to School Program, the state-funded Oregon Solutions Network and Oregon Consensus, an arm of Oregon Solutions.

McDowell said the commission has already discussed forming a partnership with Seaside School District Superintendent Doug Dougherty in seeking funds from the Safe Routes to School Program, which is administered by the Oregon Department of Transportation. Sidewalks could be proposed for U.S. Highway 101, Second Ave-

nue and Broadway to make it safer for children heading to local schools, he said.

The commission also will contact Oregon Solutions and Oregon Consensus to determine if funds might be available for sidewalks, bike paths, wetlands improvements and historical preservation projects.

The council expressed support for the commission's efforts and thanked McDowell and the commission for researching revenue sources. Councilor Jay Barber also suggested that the city's parks advisory committee be included in the plans.

Jeff Hazen, director of the Sunset Empire Transportation District, who was visiting the council meeting, told the council that the transit district also could partner with the city on the Safe Routes in Schools program.

In addition, Hazen said the transit district is embarking on a long-term transportation plan.

"I truly feel we need to get the 101 (bus) back to hourly status," Hazen said. "We're going to work hard as we can through the budget cycle to get that back."

The schedule for the

Highway 101 bus, which connects Astoria with Seaside and Cannon Beach, was reduced several years ago when the district suffered an economic setback that nearly shut it down completely. Since then, the district has restored some services.

In other business, the council:

- Approved rate increases for rental of the Seaside Civic and Convention Center. To rent the entire facility for ticketed events, the cost will go from \$1,200 a day to \$1,500. Fees for trade show or exhibits will rise from \$800 a day to \$1,000. Other fees, depending on the rooms being rented, will be from \$50 to \$100 higher per day. Rentals for funerals, however, won't increase. Fees for the smaller rooms, including Seahorse, Haystack and Seamist also won't change. Contracts reached prior to Feb. 1, when the increases go into effect, will remain at the lower fee schedule.

- Nominated Nancy McCune and Vera Kaarina to the Seaside Civic and Convention Center Commission. The council is still seeking members for the city Tree Board.

Tell me a story!



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Children's author Deborah Hopkinson shared her writing with Seaside Heights students during a recent workshop and then asked them to do their own writing. Later that evening Hopkinson shared her experiences with parents.

Seaside High School undergoing accreditation review

Outcome will determine if school meets national standards for education

By Katherine Lacaze
Seaside Signal

Seaside High School soon will begin the process of renewing its accreditation, which indicates that it meets national standards.

Accreditation "sets a standard that's recognized by other schools," both at a high school and collegiate level, said Seaside Principal Sheila Roley.

Accreditation is not required, but another high school or a college would not have to recognize a transcript from Seaside High School if it was not an accredited institution.

The high school has been fully accredited for about 75 years, although the process for accreditation has changed dramatically in the past five years. It used to consist of the principal filling out a checklist to show the school met guidelines and was "good enough," a process that led to more than 50 percent of Oregon schools labeling themselves perfect. Now it is a nuanced process for mapping

out school improvement and areas for growth.

"There's a much more detailed and authentic rating system," Roley said.

The system includes involvement from staff, students and parents, and the outcome results in a specific plan for improvement in five areas: purpose and direction; governance and leadership; teaching and assessing for learning; resources and support systems; and using results for continuous improvement.

The nonprofit AdvancED, one of the primary accrediting agencies in the world, will accredit the high school.

The process begins with high school staff completing a self-assessment, and the school gathering information from parents, students and community members.

Administrators also will review student performance, plan for a visit from an external review team and develop a school improvement plan.

The review team is scheduled to visit the high school Feb. 26. Dr. Jamie Juenemann, an educational consultant for AdvancED, will lead the team, composed of educators from around Oregon that Juenemann

will select. The team will collect evidence of the school's performance on the five standards, conduct interviews with staff, students and parents and observe a class run by each teacher.

Following the review team's visit, Roley said, a written report should be crafted within several days. The results will be shared with staff, the school board and district administration, and in a presentation for parents in the spring.

The school then will begin implementing the review's recommendations. From the process, the school hopes to accomplish "authentic self-evaluation," stronger family connections with the school and a "meaningful plan for growth," Roley said.

Accreditation versus assessment

Accreditation is separate from the state's assessment of how schools are performing based on attendance, graduation rates, meeting Common

Core State Standards and other factors, Roley said.

"They (AdvancED) don't look extensively at student results but rather that we are an institution that has all the structures in place for students to be successful," she said.

If students are not performing well in a certain area, though, the accrediting agency will request the school's plan for improvement.

Students are tested on Common Core State Standards as high school juniors. Last year, 91.4 percent of Seaside High School juniors met or exceeded the standards in reading; 67 per-

cent met or exceeded standards in math; 58.2 percent met or exceeded standards in writing; and 51.1 percent met or exceeded standards in science. Roley said she felt both good and bad about the results from last year.

"I was pleased with many of the results that our students had," she said. "I was happy with our increasing graduation rate, which was above the state average."

In 2012-13, the graduation rate, or percentage of students graduating with a regular diploma within four years of entering high school, was 75.2 percent, an increase of almost 7 percent

from 2010-11.

To help improve writing scores this year, the school is expanding writing instruction in every classroom, not just in English classes. The school's science score reveals a discrepancy between the curriculum being taught at the high school — which is based on the national Next Generation Science Standards — and the state standards the test is based on.

The Oregon standards will be replaced by the Next Generation Science Standards, so the high school is just moving forward faster than the state, Roley said.

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