Conference organizers to plot new course

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tioned how "current conditions have shifted the setting and our ability to offer open, safe and honest conversations about sexuality." The organizers also stated they value their relationship with the Seaside community and could not "in good conscience, hold a conference when we believe conference participants and our Seaside partners may be put in uncomfortable or unpleasant situations."

A small group calling itself the "Stop the Seaside Sex Conference" protested the event last year, and "it's no secret to anyone" the conference and portions of its content received some negative media coverage starting in late fall 2014, said Tiffany Tucker, treasurer for the Oregon Teen Pregnancy Task Force.

The task force responded the content was aligned with Oregon's Comprehensive Sexuality Education requirements as laid out in the Oregon Administrative Rules. Additionally, the conference was intended for educators, health personnel, administrators, counselors, social and youth service workers, parents, clergy, teens, community members and others wanting "to increase their knowledge and skills in addressing adolescent sexuality issues," according to the task force. The negative press, however, "seemingly impacted" those making decisions on behalf of organizations, agencies and districts about whether to send people to the conference, Tucker said.

There were a lot of people who were not able to attend because people in their school districts or departments had decided not to participate in the conference this year," she said.

The conference organizers set a benchmark for how many registrants were needed by a certain date in March for the conference to take place, since the conference primarily is paid for by registration fees.

"The day we called it, it was because there weren't enough people registered," Tucker said. A number of people had unregistered, she added.

The conference was "canceled

ing a conference in Seaside," Vandenberg said.

In 2015, the convention's April numbers were low in comparison to last year, according to convention center staff.

Community members had a different opportunity to learn more

'... it was because there weren't enough people registered.'

Tiffany Tucker, treasurer for the Oregon Teen Pregnancy Task Force

period this year," Tucker said, adding they did not just move it from Seaside.

The Oregon Teen Pregnancv Task Force - whose name still is tied to the group's original mission, although its focus has since evolved — remains the main sponsor for the conference. The group, which is run by a five-member board mostly based in the Portland area, is "still very much trying to figure what to do in future years," Tucker said.

She did not speak as to whether or not the conference will be held in Seaside again.

Calculating the economic impact on Seaside of the conference not taking place is difficult, Seaside Civic and Convention Center General Manager Russ Vandenberg said. According to an algorithm the center uses to estimate economic impact from any event, the conference brought in about \$284.375 in 2014. That report is based on the number of event days — which was two — and the number of attendees — 260. The direct impact was calculated to be \$81,250, and indirect impact was about \$203,125.

"The fact they did not hold the conference in 2015 makes this difficult to calculate because we don't know how many attendees would have attended, and the impact is based on attendees and number of days, not just by holdabout health and wellness during the recently formed Clatsop Teen Wellness Coalition's community organized Adolescent Mind & Body Health Seminar, hosted at Clatsop Community College in May.

According to a news release from the coalition, the mission of the conference, which was free for the public to attend, was "to inform parents and educators about evidence-based information concerning teen health."

'In doing so, we aim to provide the community with resources that promote wellness and safety during adolescent development and into adulthood," the release stated. "The intention behind this is to educate those who hold a position of authority in the lives of teens in Clatsop County, be it parents, teacher, counselors, etc. The hope is to create healthy dialogue in the community that will foster good choices in young minds."

The event featured a panel discussion with participants from Clatsop County Public Health, the Lower Columbia Diversity Project, a child and adolescent therapist and other community members. The keynote speaker was Dr. Glen Maiden, a certified sex addiction therapist, author and international speaker on recovery. He talked about how to connect with youth to have positive. healthy conversations about sexuality, understanding neurobiology and modern breakthroughs in the recovery of sexual obsession.

Other conference participants who led workshops included doctors, representatives from The Harbor and presenters from PFLAG (formerly Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) and Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, or GLSEN. They discussed topics such as abstinence and sex education within schools; trends in dating and sexual coercion; safe dating and creating healthy relationships; basics on safety and privacy when using technology, including cellphones, email, the Internet and social media; and gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation and how to create a safe school climate for LGBTQ students.

According to Meredith Payton, the coordinator of the Clatsop Teen Wellness Coalition, the formation of the coalition and subsequent seminar "was to fill a void in the absence of adolescent sexual health information within Clatsop County.'

'The cancellation did play a role in our formation, but our goal isn't to replace that conference," she said. "We hope to be the resource in the community for parents, educators and administrators about all things relating to teen sexuality."

The group plans to host another conference in the fall for everyone within education throughout the coast, she said.

Since canceling the Adolescent Sexuality Conference had nothing to do with organizers thinking it wasn't an important and good opportunity for the professional development of people working with youth in multiple capacities, Tucker said, area coalitions have formed to provide a similar resource and education.

"The beautiful thing about this, if there is something good about what happened, is communities have taken it upon themselves to fill the gap," she said.

Council OKs city budget for 2015-16

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The budget also maintains the municipal court clerk position, which was vacant for a year and a half before being filled at the end of 2014.

The city's budget also accounts for several special revenue funds that are legally restricted to be spent for specific purposes. The special revenue funds include the state tax street fund, the Seaside Downtown Maintenance District, 911 dispatch, economic development, emergency readiness, watershed enhancement and fire equipment.

'Sunset' of a taxing agency

The Greater Seaside Urban Renewal District, formed under the Seaside Urban Renewal Agency, will "sunset" on June 30, which means 2014-15 is the last year the district has taxing authority, according to Winstanley. That will release approximately \$77 million of assessed value to other taxing agencies for 2015-16, and those additional funds will go to the city, schools, Clatsop County and special districts.

Other aspects of the budget include trust and agency funds, capital project funds and enterprise funds. The enterprise funds are for operations that are financed and managed in a manner similar to private enterprises, which means user fees primarily cover costs.

The new budget will fund improvements on North Holladay from 2nd Avenue to 12th Avenue including water, sewer, roads, underground power and sidewalks. The Convention Center will see improvements, as will the airport, and the city will conduct a facilities study to prioritize maintenance and efficiency needs for public buildings.

While construction is still lagging in Seaside, Winstanley said, single-family inventory continues to decline, which should result in increased activity.

"What we see in this area is when revenues go up, business is good," Winstanley said. "I would anticipate or expect that businesspeople are very happy since we're seeing very good revenues, they must be seeing some very good revenues."





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