



Visitors face room tax hike in July



Seaside Civic and Convention Center

DON FRANK/SUBMITTED PHOTO

Money will fund convention center upgrades

By R.J. Marx
Seaside Signal

Visitors will pay a little bit more for their Seaside vacation this summer.

At Monday's City Council meeting, councilors unanimously approved a hike in the city's room tax from 8 to 10 percent in July, which will fund \$14.5 million in 30-year bonds to pay for upgrades to the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

The construction project will add about 10,000 square feet to the exist-

ing 62,000-square-foot facility, and renovate more than 13,000 square feet of the current space.

"Implementing a room tax increase requires some forethought, because it takes a little while for all of the properties to notify the different people that they're working with that the room tax is going up," City Manager Mark Winstanley said. "This will allow them 90 days to implement that increase with all their customers."

The city will collect the tax quarterly. Funds will be used to finance principal and interest on the convention center's construction cost.

Seaside's original hotel and motel tax was set at 5 percent in the early 1970s.

The rate, last changed in 2002,

stands at 8 percent. The tax does not include vacation rental revenue and covers accommodations only, excluding extra goods and services.

Work has already begun on the project, convention center General Manager Russ Vandenberg said.

"It sets the stage for our project to move forward," Vandenberg said. "We are now in selection for an architecture firm. We've hired a project manager. Soon after that we'll hire a construction firm. It's moving in the right direction and I'm totally ready and excited to get this thing underway."

The renovation's design phase could take six months and construction up to two years, Vandenberg

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Seaside considers inclusivity resolution

Resolution stops short of sanctuary city status

By R.J. Marx
Seaside Signal

Threading the politically volatile debate over immigration, the Seaside City Council will consider an inclusivity resolution but will not become a sanctuary city.

Astoria took the same track this month after guidance from Jorge Gutierrez, the executive director of the Lower Columbia Hispanic Council, who advised that sanctuary city status could be too polarizing.

Inclusivity resolutions allow cities to support and recognize the contributions of immigrants without getting drawn into the national clash with the Trump administration over immigration enforcement. Attorney General Jeff Sessions warned Monday that sanctuary cities — like Portland and Seattle — risk losing federal grant money by not cooperating with federal immigration agents.

"We made it clear early on we would not entertain that (sanctuary city) proposal, but we are pleased to be able to state we are an inclusionary city," Seaside Mayor Jay Barber said. "It's basically saying we're going to treat all of our citizens equally, with respect, regardless of their status. We want to make that clear. But we are not in a position to be a sanctuary city."

Gutierrez, who was not in attendance at the City Council meeting Monday night, is expected to address the council at its April 10 meeting.

Barber said the city's resolution would communicate "who we already are. We're not doing something we want to become."

The resolution reads, "The city resolves that Seaside is an inclusive city that embraces, celebrates and welcomes its immigrant and refugee residents and their contributions to the collective prosperity of all residents."

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READING OUTREACH IN CLATSOP COUNTY

Literacy program gets a boost



BRENNA VISSER/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Ian McHone and his mother Holly McHone of Astoria peek into one of the little free libraries being auctioned.

'You've got a Visa card, why not a library card?'

By Brenna Visser
Seaside Signal

There are lot of concrete benefits Reading Outreach in Clatsop County program has helped provide to the rural towns of Clatsop Counties. Since it started eight years ago, more than 700 kids in rural towns now have library cards to public libraries that previously weren't accessible to them.

But the most distinct change ROCC outreach coordinator Suzanne Harold said she has seen has been cultural: excitement about reading.

"I remember after organizing the summer reading program in Hilda Lahti some of the kids wrote me letters, saying things like 'I never realized the

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BRENNA VISSER/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Astoria Library Director Jim Pearson addresses the crowd at the Libraries Reading Outreach in Clatsop County auction, with Seaside Library Director Esther Moberg, Warrenton Library Site Manager Nettie Lee-Calog and former Astoria Public Library Director Jane Tucker.

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Lecture delves into the virtuous life of a Victorian woman

Pittock was a champion of women and children

By Rebecca Herren
Seaside Signal

Visitors to the Seaside Library had an opportunity to meet a Victorian heroine, Georgiana Pittock. Pittock championed for the rights of women and children, became a suffragette and founded Portland's Rose Society and Rose Festival.

She founded the Ladies Relief Society, joined the Portland Women's Union in 1912 as a suffragette, played a key role in building the Martha Washington Home for single women, supported the Boys and Girls Aid Society and the Parry Center for Children.

"It's so good to be back in Seaside after such a long time," said Pittock — never stepping out of character — as she thanked the Seaside

Museum, Seaside Library and guests for coming out to hear her talk.

Mrs. Pittock and her chauffeur, Herman Hawkanson, were the subjects for historical re-enactors Mary and Michael Hutchens during their presentation "Georgiana Pittock: Her Last 10 Years, 1908-1918" on March 16 at the library.

Pittock adored flowers, especially roses. Along with friends, she held backyard rose shows, which gave the Portland Rose Society its first exposure. She became a founder and the inspiration behind Portland's famous Rose Festival in 1907 with her good friend Harry Lane, a former mayor of Portland and supporter of the Lewis and Clark Exposition.

She married Henry Lewis Pittock when she was 15 years old. Henry Pittock, who was a typesetter when Georgiana married him, later became the owner and publisher of

The Oregonian for nearly 60 years. He became successful in real estate, banking, railroads, mining, lumber mills and the pulp and paper industry.

A role in history

It all began for Forest Grove actress Mary Hutchens in 2006 when she answered an ad for a Rose Festival historical re-enactor. She got the job and thereafter, Hutchens spent months preparing for the role. She researched and memorized Georgiana's life, down to the most insignificant details that make up both the public and the private life of a historical persona.

In 2007, "Georgiana" made her first appearance in 89 years at a rose planting and tea party held at her home, the Pittock Mansion.

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The real Georgiana Pittock of Portland around the turn of the 20th century.

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