

Stevens named to Port of Astoria Commission

Retired Coast Guard captain fills vacant seat

By Edward Stratton
EO Media Group

ASTORIA — The Port of Astoria Commission on Tuesday, Aug. 22, unanimously appointed retired U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Robert Stevens of Warrenton to fill the vacancy left by Robert Mushen, who resigned earlier this month because of medical issues.

Stevens, a veteran of 34 years in the U.S. Coast Guard and Navy and a merchant marine, said he would offer calm, quiet confidence to help the Port promote growth and stay fiscally responsible.

“The Port’s received a lot of criticism, some of it justified,” he said during introductions of the seven hopefuls for Mushen’s seat. “I’m here to make this a professional, deliberative body, the way that democracy is envisioned, and I know that several of you believe the same thing.”

He was joined in interviews Tuesday by former commission candidate Pat O’Grady, former budget committee Chairman John Lansing, land use planner Pamela Wev, former Yamhill County Commissioner Robert Johnstone, South County developer Russ Earl and retired inventor Ronald Meyer.

Stevens, a licensed captain of vessels large and small who recently retired from teaching and evaluating captains of offshore platforms in emergency management, ran Port Commissioner James Campbell’s successful re-election campaign against fellow incumbent Stephen Fulton in May’s special districts election. He said he was encouraged by others to apply for Mushen’s seat and felt he had something to offer the Port.

Stevens’ take

Stevens fielded questions from Port commissioners on several of the agency’s big-ticket issues.

A bond measure to fund infrastructure improvements at the Astoria Regional Airport narrowly failed in May’s special districts election. Asked by Commissioner Dirk Rohne about his outlook at the airport, Stevens said it was a shame the ballot measure failed, but that the Port can take baby steps to improve the facility, help medevac service Life Flight find a better location and attract more business.

“I would be supportive of maybe looking at going to the voters again with a bond measure and doing a better job of selling it,” he said. “I’d be welcome to help do that.”



EDWARD STRATTON/
EO MEDIA GROUP
Robert Stevens was unanimously appointed Tuesday to the Port of Astoria Commission.

Most of the people who voted the bond down were in South County, he said, and he’d be willing to stump for the project on behalf of the Port.

Stevens said he wants to help get government support on big issues such as the \$13.7 million difference between the Port’s and the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s estimates on damage from the December 2015 storms, and in dealing with stormwater-treatment requirements.

The Port Commission recently voted to send a letter to North Tongue Point landowner Washington Development Co. seeking to terminate the agency’s remaining lease and allow boatbuilder Hyak Maritime to negotiate a purchase of the property. Commissioner Hunsinger, who abstained from the 3-0-1 vote and has blasted the decision, asked Stevens whether he would want more history and public input on the issue.

“Tongue Point appears to me to be a classic example of opportunity exceeding resources,” Stevens said of the property, which staff has said loses the Port \$250,000 annually.

Stevens said the Port needs public input on the issue, but that the Port needs to consider turning the property over to private enter-

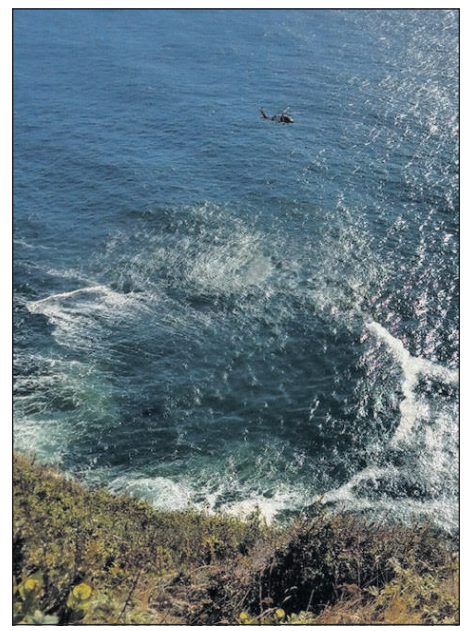
prise. “The Washington Group, if they agree with the letter we wrote to terminate the lease early — they come back and say that’s fine — then I think we need to take a look at public comment and testimony and make a decision.”

In other news, the Port Commission voted to:

- Spend up to \$29,500 on a rain garden at Astoria Middle School. The Port was fined more than \$36,000 last year by the state Department of Environmental Quality for not properly monitoring stormwater discharges. The agency was given the option to lower its fine by spending 80 percent of the total on a local supplemental environmental project. The garden will use plants collect and treat stormwater runoff, providing an educational site for students.

- Have a booth at the Pacific Marine Expo in Seattle in November. The Port had prepared to abandon the expo, with staff saying the benefits of the event are not worth the expense. Hunsinger, a commercial fisherman, argued for the event, with other commissioners seeking an option to share costs with Port customers attending.

- Extend a lease in the Pier 1 building with the General Services Administration, which manages the lease for Customs and Border Protection. Executive Director Jim Knight said the lease extension will run through 2034 and increase the Port’s revenue by \$2,000.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A Canadian man fell 800 feet to his death Sunday afternoon at Oswald West State Park. His body has not been recovered.

Man who fell at Oswald West identified

EO Media Group

Authorities have identified the Canadian man who apparently fell to his death Sunday afternoon at Oswald West State Park as Joseph McDonald Lescene.

Lescene, 51, of British Columbia, was hiking with his wife near Devil’s Cauldron when he reportedly lost his footing and fell about 800 feet to the water below, authorities said. His body has not been recovered.

No foul play is suspected, but the investigation is ongoing.

POLICE LOG

Aug. 25
10:16 a.m., 800 block Avenue S: A property line dispute between neighbors resulted in a call to the police. The dispute was verbal in nature only. The person talking the loudest was warned for disorderly conduct.

1:26 p.m., 300 block S. Holladay: A water rescue was enacted.

2:21 p.m., 800 block Avenue C: An intoxicated female driver who struck a tree was arrested and charged with DUII.

8:35 p.m., 2600 block S. Roosevelt: An injured deer struck by a moving vehicle was put out of its misery by police. ODOT was notified about the carcass.

Aug. 26
12:03 a.m., 2100 block N. Holladay: A person who intentionally took too many Ambien and then regretted it was transported to Providence Seaside Hospital by Seaside Fire and Rescue and Medix.

8:17 p.m., Beach and Turnaround: A missing person is reported.

3:57 p.m., 2500 block S. Roosevelt: A deceased person is reported. A death investigation is logged.

Aug. 27
12:29 a.m., Avenue S and Edgewood: A request for a welfare check resulted in police assisting another agency.

1:45 a.m., Broadway and Columbia: A minor was charged for possession of alcohol.

3:34 a.m., Avenue A: A sick person was cared for.

Aug. 28
1:36 p.m., Estuary parking lot: Property crimes are reported.

2:50 p.m., Seaside police headquarters: A person came in to register as a sex offender.

Aug. 29
9:52 a.m., Avenue G and Beach: A caller reports a dead cat in the area.

7:56 p.m., 700 block S. Prom: Police respond to a report of a man talking to himself for half an hour. The described person was unable to be located.

Sept. 1
11:02 a.m., Sunset Blvd: 2 orange/yellow armchairs were reported stolen from a residence.

11:27 a.m., Lea Way: A person is arrested for violating a restraining order against them.

4:35 p.m., 200 block Broadway: Officers assist in locating a child reported missing.

7:50 p.m., Tillamook Head: A motor vehicle accident is reported.

Sept. 2
12:04 a.m., Avenue U and Beach Drive: Officer on patrol observed someone rifling through the garbage cans at a restaurant. Subject says he works at that location and has permission from the owner; subject is warned that if the owner complains, the subject could be trespassed or cited.

1:13 a.m., 1st and Columbia: A person is arrested for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

3:36 a.m., 300 block Broadway: A person is cited for offensive littering.

1:48 p.m., Ocean Shore and Lifeguard Tower: Police respond to a report of a man taking pictures of girls on the beach. Caller is informed that is not an illegal activity.

Sept. 3
8:45 p.m., 900 block Avenue S: A power outage is reported.

8:56 p.m., 400 block S. Roosevelt: Subjects report fighting in the area. Witnesses are

interviewed.
9:06 p.m., Quatat Park: A disturbance is reported as well a woman with a wounded leg. The disturbance is over and the alleged woman gone prior to police arrival.

Sept. 4
1:06 a.m., Oceanway restroom: Police respond to a welfare check and then assist another agency with a medical call.

9:09 a.m., Quatat Park: Suspicious circumstances are reported on the docks.

10:02 a.m., The Cove: A caller reports 3 people in a van doing drugs. Police responding say no one is doing drugs and no evidence of drug use was found.

11:42 a.m., 1800 block S. Columbia: A domestic dispute remained verbal; parties agree to separate.

1:30 p.m., Turnaround at the Prom: Caller reports a person playing a violin who had roped lights around the Prom; the lights and the violinist were gone before police arrival.

Sept. 5
7:50 a.m., The Cove: Police respond to a report of people staying overnight in their van with a lot of trash all around. Subjects are advised of unlawful lodging; the trash is determined to have nothing to do with them.

9:38 p.m., Ocean Vista and Avenue W: Subject complains about people behaving suspiciously; officer on arrival determines they are placing rocks in the rock garden.

Sept. 6
3:12 a.m., 1500 block Spruce: An assault is reported. The person was also charged with harassment.

1:52 p.m., Avenue P and Neawanna: A couple having a verbal dispute are warned for disorderly conduct. The man

said the woman was upset and he was only trying to calm her down.

5:04 p.m., 300 block S. Roosevelt: Police respond to a report of youths damaging a concrete pole. Youths tell police the pole was already damaged and they were using it to skateboard on. Police advise them not to.

10:44 p.m., 2400 block Highway 101: A person is arrested for being in violation of a restraining order and also charged with harassment and interfering with a police officer.

Sept. 7
10:01 a.m., 17th Avenue:

Seaside police assist Gearhart police at a residence about a suspect vehicle.

11:04 a.m., 200 block S. Roosevelt: A person is arrested for driving under the influence on intoxicants.

11:31 a.m., 1500 block N. Roosevelt: An unknown person trespassed on a business property, using the back porch to smoke which started a small fire that caused no structural damage. The owner of the business requests extra patrols after closing to avoid a repeat occurrence.

11:46 a.m., 17th Avenue: Seaside police assist Gearhart

police to interview a subject at a residence.

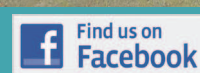
Sept. 8
12:11 p.m., Avenue I and Roosevelt: Police respond to a report of a subject lying in the middle of the roadway; when police arrive the subject is out of the road but lying nearby on grass. After it is determined there is no medical problem, the subject is given options for transients.

11:48 p.m., Downing Street: Officers assist in removing a person who was asked to leave the premises who refused to leave. When they left, they were trespassed indefinitely.

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