

Seaside School District sees 1.8 percent budget hike

Hospitality teacher to be introduced next school year

By Brenna Visser and R.J. Marx
Seaside Signal

The Seaside School District issued its nearly \$21 million 2018-19 proposed budget Tuesday, April 18, with a focus on real-world skills for students.

In her budget message to the community, Sheila Roley, superintendent of the district, announced the addition of a full-time culinary arts and hospitality teacher.

According to Roley, the position was lost several years ago and is now included due to the funds provided by the Oregon Student Success Program, funded by state voters in 2016.

The program is being diversified to include instruction of skills to work in the hospitality industry as well as the food industry.

The district will also be funding the addition of a full-time elementary physical education teacher. Currently elementary school students receive only 30 minutes per week of physical education. The addition of the new teacher will double that, she said, moving the district closer to the state mandate of offering 30 minutes each day for students to promote student health.

The general fund increased by 3.8 percent from last year, leading to a total year-to-year budget increase of 1.8 percent.

The Seaside School District's fixed tax rate is \$4.4105 per \$1,000 of assessed value for the general fund.

The general fund does not include taxpayer costs related to the \$99.7 million bond levy approved by voters in 2016 for a new school campus in the Southeast Hills.

A local option levy of .52 per \$1,000 and bond cost of about \$1.36 bring the overall amount to \$6.30 per \$1,000 for taxpayers.

The 2018-19 proposed Seaside School District budget.

Salary costs of \$10.2 million and associated payroll costs of nearly \$7 million make the largest portion of the budget. Other costs include purchased services, supplies and material and capital outlay.

The district has also been experiencing high workers' compensation claims. In four of the last five years, the district's workers' compensation carrier has paid out more per dollar than the premium amount with 51 claims totaling \$396,315 in losses, said the district's business manager, Justine Hill.

"The majority of our claims are related to slips, trips and falls. Several of our total incurred losses due to claims... have been significant (i.e., surgeries, employee time lost)," Hill said in an email. "Our workers' compensation carrier has been working with our safety committee and we are trying to figure out ways to improve safety."

The budget committee's next meeting is Tuesday, May 15, at 6 p.m. at 1801 S. Franklin in Seaside. That meeting is the target date for approval by the budget committee. A June 19 public hearing as approved by the budget committee will be held to enact resolutions to adopt the budget, make the appropriations and to declare the tax levy.



Proposed rendering of the new district high- and middle-school building.

Students expected to start classes by 2020

Campus from Page 1A

Midway through the design process, the district was a "bit over budget," according to a report from owner's representative DAY CPM.

Architects identified about \$3 million in cost savings using value engineering and eliminated an additional 3,000 to 4,000 square feet from the middle- and high-school building, now projected at about 140,000 square feet, Hess said. "The footprint hasn't changed, but how things are arranged in there has improved a lot. A lot of it had to do with minimizing hallways and using a more efficient layout."

While no classrooms have been eliminated from plans, there was "a little belt-tightening" in classroom size, Hess said.

The number of student lockers was reduced by half, with the goal of saving square footage in hallways.

Most high school kids don't use lockers, district superintendent Sheila Roley said, as electronic devices replace heavy textbooks. "If you go in Seaside High School and see all those lockers in the hallway, well over half of them are empty."

Students who want lockers may sign up for them, she added.

Permits ahead

The campus budget is expected to reach about \$112 million, about \$12.3 million more than the original \$99.7 million approved by voters. The difference is expected to be covered by bond interest and state grants.

A water tank at the campus site will be needed for fire safety,

at an anticipated \$6 million cost to the city, Seaside City Manager Mark Winstanley said at Tuesday's meeting.

"You have to have the capacity there whether they ever use it or not," he said. "Unfortunately, we didn't pass a bond issue."

After Seaside Planning Commission approval in April, site inspections from the Oregon Department of State Lands and the Army Corps of Engineers remain ahead, including an archaeological review.

The district's goal is a June 1 first construction start date. Officials hope to have a building permit by Aug. 8. Summer academic and sports programs usually held at the Seaside Heights campus will be relocated to Broadway Middle School during construction.

"Everything's a work in progress," Roley said.

At \$6 million, campus water tank makes up bulk of budget increase

Budget from Page 1A

Future capital projects swell the city's bottom line, with expenditures for convention center capital improvements at more than \$2 million. Funds for sewer plant replacement jump more than \$1.1 million from 2017-18, budgeted at \$1.4 million.

Street construction jumped from a zero budget to \$1.1 million for improvements on Holladay Drive between First and Avenue A.

Who will pay?

Looming large in upcoming hearings are costs to provide water, sewer and roads to the area of the campus, approved by Seaside School District voters in 2016.

The biggest question mark — and attributable for the largest portion of the budget jump — is the \$6 million estimated to be needed for a water tank at the school campus, with \$1 million allocated for 2018-19.

At the Jan. 9 Seaside School District school construction oversight meeting, Superintendent Sheila Roley said discussions at the City Council level indicated the city would pay for the water tank and sewer lines for the project. "The city explained

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City Manager Mark Winstanley

they would be responsible for updating the infrastructure which needed to be done anyway," she said.

"I don't know where this \$6 million is going to come from yet," Winstanley said Wednesday. "But here is where we start the conversation."

The city hopes to approve the proposed budget by May

25. Meetings continue on Monday at 6 p.m.; Tuesday at 6 p.m.; and Thursday, May 10 at 4 p.m. A June 25 budget hearing is scheduled to adopt the budget and make appropriations.

Budget highlights

The city has seen steady rises in budgeted room tax,

liquor and marijuana tax revenues.

The city is estimating a tax base of \$3.81 million, an increase of \$75,000 from the previous year.

Short-term rental room tax revenue for vacation rentals is proposed to rise to \$793,100, more than \$100,000 from the year before. This includes money from an increase in the tax from 8 percent to 10 percent, along with revenue from an agreement with Airbnb.

The city is on track to collect about \$770,000 in vacation rental room tax for 2017-18.

The city expects to receive in more than \$5 million for hotel and motel room tax,

slightly up from 2017-18.

Marijuana is budgeted at \$82,000, more than five times the amount budgeted in 2017-18.

The city pulled in about \$118,000 in taxes on retail cannabis sales in a period of five quarters.

Liquor tax receipts see a slight jump from 2017-18, from \$104,000 to \$108,000.

Police officer salaries comprise \$791,000 of the public safety budget, about a 5 percent increase from last year attributable to the addition of new officers. Salaries of the police chief, lieutenant and four sergeants also saw year-to-year increases.

Seaside business owners seek help in curbing aggressive panhandlers

City could take cue from Astoria

By R.J. Marx
Seaside Signal

Downtown business owners in Seaside want help controlling aggressive panhandlers.

"If we sit here and get wishy-washy, and don't take some real measures we're going to have a really, really ugly summer," business owner Neil Dundas said. "It's going to get worse."

At a forum Wednesday, April 25, hosted by the Seaside Downtown Development Association and Seaside Police Department, business owners asked police to take a "hard line" when it comes to aggressive panhandlers, who, they say, camp out on city streets, intimidate passers-by, play loud music and litter.

Business owner Jeremy Stevenson asked for greater police presence, describing panhandlers who station themselves outside his store for hours at a time, sometimes for days on end.

Wayne Poole, whose Pig 'N Pancake restaurant sits in the heart of Broadway, said the city should "take the aggressive side and figure out how to deal with it."

The perception of Seaside has gotten "sketchy," businesswoman Rebecca Buck added. "My children won't come here anymore."

Seaside has ordinances



Business owner Neil Dundas offers a call to action at the forum on aggressive panhandling. Brian Owen, executive director of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce, is at left.

designed to control begging, public performances and disorderly conduct.

In 2015, the City Council considered new regulations on panhandlers, musicians and itinerant merchants. The amendment would have required a \$50 per day fee for anyone soliciting "for any form of compensation or remuneration."

Opposition was swift. At a public hearing, the amendment was called "wrong," "brutal," "discriminatory" and "a street-sweeping technique."

The amendment failed to pass and the issue was tabled. Three years later, business owners say problems have gotten worse.

In November, they approached the downtown association and Police Chief Dave Ham with complaints.

A committee was formed to address the challenge, leading to Wednesday's forum, which brought about 60 people to City Hall.



Broadway in Seaside last summer. Business owners say panhandlers block the sidewalk and intimidate passers-by.

In 2015, police counted 17 unlawful lodging cases, issuing eight citations. Numbers were similar in 2016. In 2017, when police started tracking tents on the beach in addition to unlawful lodging, 79 unlawful lodging case files were taken. Police issued 15 citations for tents on the beach.

"They're not ticket-happy," Ham said. "Those who deserve the education are the ones who put the middle finger up and say, 'I don't need to listen to you.'"

This summer, police will increase their downtown visibility, adding foot or bicycle patrols, he said. A police in-

tern will add additional patrol capability.

Police will also seek greater compliance from complainants and witnesses. "We can issue a citation, but we need you as a witness," Ham said. "We're going to need your participation."

Other options include reconsideration of a permit process for panhandlers, limiting public Wi-Fi capabilities, outdoor utilities and even replacing wooden benches with less comfortable stone ones to discourage extended stays.

Seaside could also take a cue from Salem and Astoria, with a program that lets businesses authorize police to enforce trespassing laws on private property after hours.

In Astoria, more than 40 businesses have signed on this year for Property Watch. A one-year contract between

businesses and police allows officers to remove people engaging in loitering or disorderly activity.

State law does not allow police to prevent people from using public spaces — including for panhandling, sitting or lying down.

In Seaside, a sign-up form for businesses has been drafted and will go to the city attorney for review.

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