

City seeks input on three sites for firehouse

Park location draws pushback



Jeff Ter Har/For Seaside Signal

Gearhart residents packed City Hall Tuesday night to consider a new firehouse location.

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Driven by the need to replace a crumbling fire station located in the tsunami inundation zone, the city of Gearhart ramped up its push for a new firehouse and resiliency station.

After years of study and work by the city's volunteer fire committee, three sites went before the public at a town hall Tuesday night.

Gearhart Park, Highpoint Station and the current firehouse site at 670 Pacific Way were submitted as options

for consideration.

"As human beings we can survive, we have areas that have high ground," Mayor Matt Brown said. "We want to make sure we survive the most likely event."

That event would be a medium to large tsunami, geologist Tom Horning explained, due approximately every 330 years. The last tsunami hit our region in 1700 — 319 years ago.

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Governor Brown visits Seaside High School

Career programs are highlighted at school tour

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Students and staff welcomed a notable visitor at Seaside High School Thursday, Jan. 24.

Culinary teacher Chelsea Archibald presided over cooking classes, as students worked the stoves and prep areas. Students cued up for photos with the Gov. Kate Brown as she toured the school and touted state educational programs.

"Don't governors come to your school all the time?" Brown asked.

The governor mingled with kids as they prepared green chile in enchilada sauce, before rolling them in tortillas.

The program, one of three certified technical education programs at Seaside High School, received a boost two years ago with voter passage of Measure 98, the state's career readiness act.



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Gov. Kate Brown meets with the Seaside CYBORGS robotics club.

Seaside Principal Jeff Roberts said the measure provides funds for certified technical education programs.

Along with the culinary program, the offers programs in business marketing, information technology, and construction.

State dollars are indispensable, Roberts said. "We wouldn't have a full-time program without it."

It's a "huge deal," added superintendent Sheila

Roley, enhanced with donations from the community's food industry.

Local businesses pitched in about \$100,000 to transform a "traditional home ec room" into a commercial quality kitchen.

"This is how the private sector can really make a difference in career programs," Brown said. "Probably a small portion of these students will go on these careers, but they all need to learn how to cook."

Grocery Outlet ... or no outlet?

City councilors remand appeal back to Planning Commission

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

It's back to the Planning Commission for the developer of a Seaside property intended for construction of an 18,000-square-foot Grocery Outlet at 325 Avenue N.

In previous sessions, the commission told developers they could go ahead with plans to acquire a U.S. Highway 101 property for a Grocery Outlet.

But first they would need to install a left-hand turning lane to meet the increase in traffic, listed as one of eight conditions of approval.

At Monday's City Council meeting, Main & Main's Dan Dover said conditions imposed by the commission were "insurmountable," leading to the decision to appeal.

"ODOT is on the record saying they will complete the turn lane project," Dover said. "We feel this burden has been put unduly on us when it is a commitment by ODOT. We're here tonight to try to find a solution to help the city get what it wants and pave the way for development."

Costs to the developer should be proportionate to the increase in traffic, attorney David Phillips said on behalf of Main & Main, the capital group working with Grocery Outlet. "Our only option was to appeal and to get that particular condition removed."

The applicant's consultant Mike Ard said projected volume of about 1,300 daily trips would represent a traffic increase of about 3 to 5 percent along U.S. Highway 101.

The cost of a turn lane, estimated at \$2 million to \$3 million, is "out of scale" with a projected building cost of \$1.5 to \$2 million.

"It really shocks the conscience to think we'd have to spend far more than for an improvement existing public facility that we were told would be funded by ODOT when we started," Ard

said. "What's being asked is disproportionate to the scale of what we're doing. We'd sure like to see a left-turn lane. We just can't pay the price tag associated with that project."

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'WE'RE HERE TONIGHT TO TRY TO FIND A SOLUTION TO HELP THE CITY GET WHAT IT WANTS AND PAVE THE WAY FOR DEVELOPMENT.'

— Dan Dover, Main & Main

Seaside Chamber celebrates South County businesses

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Seaside's business community came together at the Times Theatre, Thursday, Jan. 14, to celebrate accomplishments of businesses large and small alike.

Brew 22 Coffee walked off with "Business of the Year," winning an internet campaign judged by the public.

The secret to their success?

Brian Owen, executive director of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce, which presented the business awards event, said Brew 22 owner Jeff Dunn has taken a one-off business and turned it into an experience prized by locals and visitors alike.

In delivering the award, emcee

Ken Heman of the Seaside Visitors Bureau, celebrated the entrepreneurial spirit and best customer service, marketing and social media strategy, "leads the way and sets an example for the community."

Westport Winery and Angelina's Pizzeria took runner-up honors.

Chamber board members offered a special recognition award to Traci Williams, who opened the Sweet Shop in Gearhart two years ago. The 100-year-old retail space is "more than just a store, it has become a gathering place for all locals and traveling public," Owen said.

Westport Winery won the rising star new business award, demonstrating a culture of risk-taking and trailblazing to achieve success.



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Ruth Swenson is overcome with emotion after winning the "Retail Excellence Award" at the Seaside Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards dinner.

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