

Three candidates to interview for Sunset Rec board seat

SEPRD debates how to fill vacancy

R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal



Rodney Roberts

Katharine Parker

Patrick Duhachek

After a close election in May for two Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District board members, a new seat became available after Veronica Russell stepped down in June.

At the July district board meeting, members John Chapman and Lindsey Morrison joined board president Jeremy Mills and vice president Michael Hinton in seeking to determine the process of appointing a fifth board member.

Candidate interviews take place at a board workshop on Tuesday, Aug. 13, at 5:15 p.m.

"I think because it's an elected position, we should take the person with the next highest votes," Morrison said.

Three people have expressed interest in filling that position: Katharine Parker, Patrick Duhachek and Rodney Roberts, executive director Skyler Archibald said.

In the contested election for Chapman's Position 4 seat, the first runner-up was Parker, who got more votes overall than Duhachek, runner-up in the Position 5 race, and Roberts, also a candidate in the Position 5 race.

Mills said comparing election numbers from two different races was not a solid basis for the choice.

"We saw people competing against people where it would have been a different result if they had competed

against others," Mills said. "The idea that we take the general results of the voting could in some ways be unfair to the other people who were involved, if they were in a different batch."

"If we did it the way the voters would want it, we'd have to have a run-off election," Mills said.

"Even though it was two positions, the voters still voted for people," Morrison said. "I think we should take that into consideration. I just want to make sure we're doing what voters wanted."

Russell served as board secretary before her decision to step down. Her term would have expired on June 30, 2021.

The application period is closed.

In the past, board candidates came in for a short interview and board members made their selection based on the interview and other personal interactions. But "that isn't necessarily the way you have to go," he said. "All three are neutral candidates, they're all coming in as a clean slate and that's how they should be viewed."

"We have to have a transparent public process," board member Michael Hinton said. "We can't sit here in a meeting and just appoint anyone as a board."

Ultimately the board unanimously agreed to interview each of the applicants for the position separately.

"I think there were good candidates for each of the positions," Hinton said. "Some have established experience in public service or board."

Hinton sought interviews with the candidates, he said. "I'd like to meet some of these people again who are applying for this vacancy. We have one thing in common: we're interested in a positive outcome for the district in the long term. We have to have a transparent public process."

"We can't sit here in a meeting and just appoint anyone as a board."

City annexes land in the Southeast Hills for water tank

City to seek ownership of reservoir site

By KATHERINE LACAZE
Seaside Signal



City crews will soon begin work on a reservoir tank in the East Hills.

Seaside Signal

'THE CITY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE NEW WATER TANK IN THE CITY, NOT OUTSIDE IN THE COUNTY!'

City Manager Mark Winstanley

In July the city approved a \$5.64 million contract to build a 5-million-gallon reservoir to supply the new school and surrounding areas.

At the Monday, July 22, City Council meeting, council members voted twice by title for a resolution to annex the land it sits on. The land is owned by the Seaside School District after being donated by Weyerhaeuser Co. in 2015 for construction of the new middle and high school campus outside of the tsunami zone.

"It is the normal process to bring something into the urban growth boundary, and when time dictates and need dictates, have it

annexed then into the city of Seaside," City Manager Mark Winstanley said. "In this case, need came very quickly."

After the third reading and potential adoption on Monday, Aug. 5, the property will be turned over to the city, which is funding the

water tank.

"The city would like to have the new water tank in the city, not outside in the county," Winstanley

said, adding they run into "cross-jurisdictional issues" when attempting to do a project on county property. "We would like to see

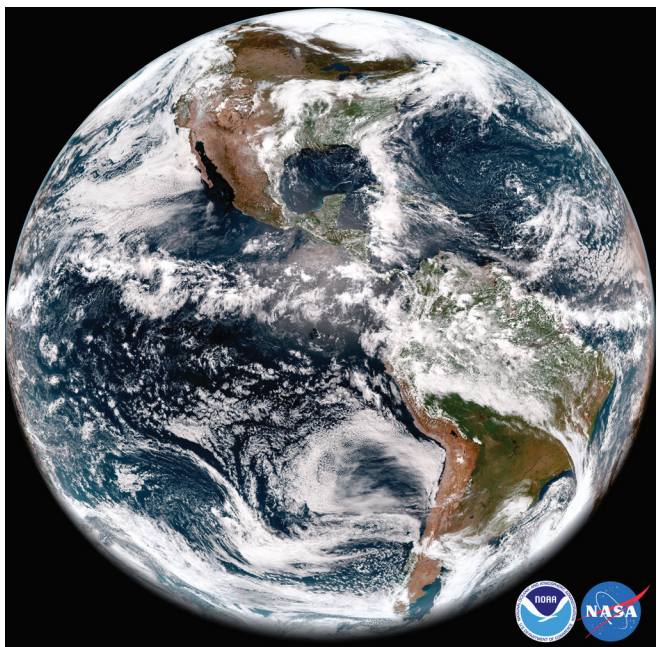
the remaining parts of this property brought into our jurisdiction, where we can continue to handle the property as far as our laws are concerned."

Once the reservoir is built, older pump stations currently serving the area — including nearby communities like Sunset Hills and Whispering Pines — will be decommissioned.

Work is expected to begin in August, completed concurrently at the time of the opening of the new school in September 2020.

As El Niño fades, winter forecast becomes a 'crap shoot'

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press



El Niño continues to fade, adding uncertainty to the forecast for next winter.

NOAA

The Pacific Ocean along the equator cooled in June and is expected to be at normal temperatures in a month or two, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported Thursday.

The cooling and rapid demise of an El Niño system was unforeseen a month ago by NOAA's Climate Prediction Center. The drop in sea-surface and subsurface temperatures leaves long-range weather forecasters with no strong clue about the months ahead.

"The bottom line is that it's pretty close to a crap shoot for this fall and winter," Washington State Climatologist Nick Bond said. "The deck isn't stacked one way or the other."

A weak El Niño formed in February. A month ago, NOAA said there was a 66% chance it would stay through the summer and a 50 to 55% chance it would last through the winter.

One forecasting model used by NOAA even predicted a moderate, rather than weak, El Niño in the coming winter. El Niño winters are generally warmer than usual in the Northwest, and less snowpack accumulates for use in summer irrigation.

In a turnabout, NOAA now says the odds favor neutral conditions, beginning next month and continuing through the winter. "Neutral means things are more up in the air," NOAA climate scientist Michelle L'Heureux said.

Last month's outlook, a 50-50 chance that El Niño would stick around, reflected uncertainty about the course of atmospheric conditions. In the past month, the conditions fell in line with a weakening El Niño, according to NOAA.

"It was very difficult for

us to predict what was going to happen," L'Heureux said. "This situation now is not as opaque."

In the mid-Pacific along the equator, the stretch that most influences seasonal forecasts, the sea-surface temperature cooled in June to 0.6 degrees celsius above normal from 0.7 degrees celsius above normal. The threshold for an El Niño is 0.5 degrees celsius above normal.

'THE DECK ISN'T STACKED ONE WAY OR THE OTHER!'

Washington State Climatologist Nick Bond

Subsurface temperatures were above average at the beginning of June and returned to near average by the end of the month.

As El Niño fades, the chances of a La Niña forming rise, though it's still a long shot. NOAA estimated the chance of a La Niña prevailing by December at 16%.

Last month, the chance was only 6%.

La Niña, a cooling of the sea's surface, generally means colder Northwest winters.

In the meantime, less precipitation continues to be seen in Washington. The U.S. Drought Monitor reported Thursday that 55% of the state is in severe or moderate drought, nearly unchanged from the week before.

Assistant State Climatologist Karin Bumbaco said more of Central Washington is drying out, but still not in a drought.

Recent rain in Western Washington stopped conditions from worsening, but did not pull the region out of drought, she said. "If you look at the long-term picture, the drought is not over."

Gov. Jay Inslee declared a drought emergency in about half the state in May. No area has been added to the declaration since then.

NOAA will release a new three-month outlook July 18. When neutral sea temperatures prevail, forecasters often base their predictions on recent climate trends.



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