



Fourth of July fireworks canceled over virus



Fireworks light up the sky at last year's Fourth of July show in Seaside.

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

The Fourth of July fireworks show in Seaside is canceled because of concerns over the coronavirus pandemic.

"It has become very clear in our current economic climate, for the safety of our community, as well as the unknown framework of when we're going to relax some of the large-scale gatherings, the fireworks show just doesn't work for 2020," Seaside Chamber of Commerce CEO Brian Owen told the City Council at Monday's meeting.

The show typically brings nearly 50,000 people to Seaside from throughout the Northwest. This year's celebration would

have fallen on a Saturday evening, drawing concern that it could bring record numbers. With cancellation of the 57th annual Fort Vancouver fireworks show, officials feared crowds could overwhelm Seaside.

"If we're the only one going, we could have 75,000 people at the beach," Mayor Jay Barber said.

Officials estimate an annual economic impact to the city of more than \$20 million.

Owen said he worked with the city to make the decision to cancel.

"It's a good decision, but a difficult one," Barber said.

Along with fireworks, the city hosts an annual Independence Day parade, drum and bugle corps and an old-fashioned social at the Seaside Museum & Historical Society.

Discussions are ongoing on

how the daytime celebrations will be treated, Assistant City Manager Jon Rahl said.

The city's visitors bureau has regularly provided \$20,000 to \$25,000 in tourism grant dollars to the chamber to fund the fireworks.

But the remaining cost — estimated at \$50,000 — is provided by local businesses and community donors for pyrotechnics, security, setup, port-a-potties and more.

"Every single year businesses show up and they're there," Owen said.

Seaside businesses are worried about their employees during the coronavirus. "That's the No. 1 thing I'm hearing — the health of their employees," he said.

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School budget factors in coronavirus uncertainty

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

When this year's budget process started, Seaside School District business manager Justine Hill described the district's financial outlook "favorable and stable." Due to the coronavirus pandemic, economic impacts are uncertain.

While the forecast shows "excellent financial indicators, it does not reveal a clear picture for Seaside School District's revenue outlook," Hill said at last week's budget presentation.

Capital projects, special revenue and debt service bring the total budget to more than \$58 million. With the near completion of the new campus in the Southeast Hills, the district continues to pay down general obligation bonds for construction.

Last year's budget showed almost \$83 million in the capital project fund, while this year's proposed budget reduces that to a little more than \$22 million. Next year's budget is expected to show about half that, Hill said.

The district expects the new campus, along with renovations and additions at The Heights Elementary School, to be complete for the start of the school year.

The \$23 million general fund budget is about 1% higher than last year's.

The district will keep a close eye on "financial markers," Hill said. "If there is a significant impact in financial projection, the district will prepare and present resolutions."

A downturn could lower tax

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On April 10, a group of more than a dozen community members and families participated in a "We Love You Parade" to cheer up residents at the senior living communities in Seaside.

SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITIES ADAPT TO NEW ENVIRONMENT

By KATHERINE LACAZE
For Seaside Signal

Life for residents at senior living communities in Seaside and elsewhere has changed dramatically over the past couple weeks as facilities continue ramping up health and safety protocols and guidelines in response to COVID-19.

"It hasn't gotten easier in the senior living world right now," Thomas Cloutier, vice president of sales and marketing for Avamere Health Services, said. "There's still that fear out there because it could quickly impact our residents and people we love and take care of."

Seaside has three senior living

communities that offer housing and services — Suzanne Elise Assisted Living and Avamere at Seaside — managed by Avamere — and Neawanna by the Sea.

Since March, the facilities have adopted numerous changes in an effort to curb the risk of the novel coronavirus spreading to vulnerable senior citizens. Social programs, events and activities are on hold, and none of the communities are allowing outside visitors, in line with Gov. Kate Brown's order, except for end-of-life situations.

Even then, safety protocols are more extreme. With on-site dining facilities temporarily closed, residents now eat alone in their rooms instead of with peers, which is "not ideal," Cloutier said.

"Part of the reason you live in assisted living or memory care or independent living is the socialization," he added.

For the protection of staff and residents, Avamere procured extra personal protective equipment for everyone to wear on campus. While the company can't control what staff members do when they're off the clock, Cloutier said, they are aware following social distancing requirements implemented at the national and state level is critical for the health and safety of the residents — and currently, there have been no reported cases of the coronavirus at either of Avamere's facilities.

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Sunset Rec to freeze wages, limit expenses

District lays off 50 employees because of pandemic

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District's proposed \$3 million budget for the next fiscal year comes with many caveats.

Be prepared for every scenario, Skyler Archibald, the district's executive director, told board members during a budget session last week.

With a likely decrease in revenue because of closed services due to the coronavirus, the district will freeze employee wages and there will be less expenses for administration, the pool, recreation and the community and youth centers. The spending plan is slightly lower than this fiscal year, which ends in June.

The district laid off 50 of 57 employees in March because of coronavirus. The district lost between \$100,000 to \$120,000 in revenue since the facilities were closed in March because of Gov. Kate Brown's executive order and could continue to bleed \$100,000 monthly during the shutdown.

All part-time program and maintenance staff with the exception of the meal site coordinator have been laid off, he said. That includes lifeguards, youth recreation leaders, patron relation specialists, special event leaders and others.

Three of those laid off in March have been rehired, he said.

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Special delivery for Seaside youth

Former pastor, franchise owner donates to backpack program

Seaside Signal

Seaside kids participating in the backpack program will receive a special delivery this weekend, courtesy of Papa Murphy's Pizza. Papa Murphy's delivered 150 mini-pizzas to Warrenton students last week.

Andy Klumper, who took over the Seaside pizza location three weeks ago with his wife, Ashlee, is sending 125 pizzas to district students. The backpack program provides children with food to take home over the weekends and when school is not in session, provided at no cost to any family that

requests it.

A former full-time pastor with a ministry at the Table Church in Seaside, Klumper said he was "just trying to fill the need. We were trying to find good opportunities to give back."

Klumper substitute teaches at area schools and coaches softball for Seaside Kids. Kids can choose from cheese or pepperoni for their pizza.

"We'll get them in their bags over the weekend to them," Klumper said.

The Klumpers received assistance in their efforts from their four children, Rikelle, Lydia, Riff and Kennadee.

Kennadee, a fourth-grader at Gearhart Elementary School, wrote a handwritten note of encouragement and taped them to the inside of each box.

"It was her idea and she realizes the hard times of not seeing friends and feeling sad in this time," Andy Klumper said. "She wanted to brighten up their day."



Andy Klumper, left, with family members Rikelle, Lydia and Ashlee. Front, Riff and Kennadee.

R.J. Marx

