

# Homeless: City Council considers strategies to manage homelessness

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because of the coronavirus pandemic. The event provides information and referrals, personal care items and haircuts for the homeless.

Prettyman said food and housing referrals can be found at Providence Seaside Hospital.

"It's a mini-CCA office in Seaside," Matthews said.

She said bringing additional services to Seaside are within reach.

The Astoria Warming Center is based in the First United Methodist Church and provides overnight shelter during the winter months for people experiencing homelessness.

A warming center open 90 days a year in Seaside would be an "outstanding thing to do," Matthews said. "We just have to get the right people helping CCA to see if we can open a warming center in Seaside."

**What is homelessness?**  
"Homeless," "houseless," "unsheltered" are all different ways of saying the exact same thing, Matthews said. "We don't have one specific word that will cover all of it."

There are some different definitions of homelessness and Clatsop Community Action serves them all, Prettyman said.

"Remember homelessness doesn't look the same to everybody. It's often-times our friends and families and co-workers," Prettyman said. "Be open-minded to what homelessness is and have a deep desire to want to see change in your community."

Jason Boyd, assistant



Susan Prettyman, lower left, and Viviana Matthews, lower right, address members of the Seaside City Council on behalf of Clatsop Community Action.

principal for Seaside High School, said many homeless families do not fit common preconceptions.

"Stereotypically we think of homelessness as the tent on the side of the road or people holding up a sign," Boyd said. "The vast majority of the homeless that we see in our schools is the family of five that's living in a Suburban that finds a new

when night falls, they try to find another spot to park. That's a real issue for a lot of families in our community."

Boyd works with the school district's population to connect them with food, shelter and education.

"A good percentage of the kids classified as homeless are either doubled up in our community or living in a hotel."

and lots of struggle everywhere for all of our kids."

A shelter in Seaside would be "super beneficial for our community," he said. "I know it would fill up really fast if we had one."

### Homeless liaison

The goal of the homeless liaison will be to connect the unsheltered population to services, work with police departments to address challenging behaviors and connect the homeless populations to services and their safety net, Matthews said.

The idea of a countywide homeless services coordinator was born out of an Astoria task force on homelessness. The position will be funded by the state, Clatsop County, grants and other partner agencies.

"We have five really good candidates, she said. "We're essentially making sure we're addressing behaviors that some homeless individuals are showing and want to make sure we keep our county as clean as possible, as healthy as pos-



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Kathleen Sullivan, the Astoria Warming Center's executive director, and shelter manager Cheryl Paul inspect the sleeping mats — set up 6 feet apart — to encourage social distancing. Councilors seek a similar resource in Seaside.



Seaside Police Department

A homeless encampment in Seaside.

sible for all of us, including the homeless population."

City Councilor Tita Montero said she saw the presentation as part of a continuing dialogue.

"I'm looking for ways to keep the discussion alive," she said. "If we don't keep discussions alive, we won't get to strategies. We want things to improve."

# Addiction: Temporary, safe housing considered a first step to recovery

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tions and Clatsop County.

CODA does not provide a needle exchange, a service provided by the county and local hospitals.

"As an industry, our weakness is the we sit at the front door and wait for people to come to us," Noice said. "The model needs to change. I think of it as the 'pre-work.' Before you start treating somebody, how can you reach them enough to see the value of trying?"

The Seaside clinic operates from 5:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Of 108 active CODA patients at the Seaside facility, 92% of them are housed or temporarily housed.

But for those living in encampments or on the streets, housing is an important step in beginning recovery.

"I have a hard time imagining how someone finds the motivation to begin recovery without a place to live," she said. "Temporary safe, low-barrier housing is often a strategy that works for a



A Sharps container, designed to hold needles, in the Mill Ponds.



Alison Noice, executive director of CODA.



Exterior of the CODA building on U.S. Highway 101 in Seaside.

lot of people. Some people will begin to thrive simply because they start to build

that back into their daily routine. There's an opportunity there to say, 'OK, today is

the day that we decide to go further."

The COVID-19 pandemic

# Parks: 'We're getting a lot of really good input'

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So far, respondents listed the Ridge Path and Lesley Miller Dunes Meadow Park as the most frequently visited parks, committee member Austin Tomlinson said at last Wednesday's committee meeting. "That's something we should start thinking about in the master plan."

Respondents seek a community center, restrooms, community gardens, more trash cans and more indoor space, among other features.

Favorite activities included walking, dog-walking, sports and

wildlife viewing.

Big things that have stood out, Tomlinson said, include calls for more trash receptacles, better park

spending on existing parks and 67% were in favor of more spending on future parks.

The survey is limited to

seek approval of the draft parks master plan in March before referral to the Planning Commission.

"What we're trying to collect here is qualitative information that adds more voices to the discussion," Van Hoomissen said. "We're more trying to get a sense of community views, and I think the survey is working really well to accomplish that. We're getting a lot of really good input. I view it as a work-in-progress and look forward to more coming."

## THE SURVEY IS LIMITED TO GEARHART RESIDENTS, WITH A MARCH 1 DEADLINE.

maintenance and opposition to beach driving.

"It seems there are a number of people who don't like the beach driving around 10th Street," Tomlinson said.

Eighty-two percent of respondents favored more

Gearhart residents, with a March 1 deadline.

The committee will continue to meet the third Wednesday of the month through June via Zoom. The next meeting is Feb. 17.

The committee plans to

# Blodgett named to dean's list at George Fox University

Seaside Signal

Niquilla Blodgett of Seaside was among those who

earned dean's list recognition at George Fox University for the fall 2020 semester. Traditional undergraduate students must earn a 3.5 grade point

average or above on 12 or more hours of graded work to earn a spot on the dean's list.

Blodgett is a junior majoring in elementary education.

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