

Center: Sunset Recreation Center to await district master plan

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new Spruce Drive location outside of the tsunami inundation zone. Three acres of the 5.4-acre property at 1120 Broadway are zoned medium-density residential and the remaining portion general commercial.

Fiber internet was installed this week for broadband data service, and an alarm system is in progress.

The park district is now conducting an inventory of items left behind after the school district's move, including desks, chairs, office supplies and paper.



R.J. Marx

Broadway Middle School has been renamed the Sunset Recreation Center after the building was purchased by the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District.

Significant changes or investments will wait for a master plan, a process involving staff, consultants, board and the community, Archibald said.

Major projects, if they come, may be managed by an external consultant, but for now are simply focused on cleaning, organizing and assessing the state of the building, Archibald said.

"Earlier this fiscal year we hired a second full-time maintenance employee, in partial anticipation of this opportunity," Archibald said. "It's possible that we will expand that department as the need arises."

Only the emergency child care program is operating without interruption in the former school.

While sports leagues have

not restarted as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the district has had interest in indoor facility rentals for pickleball, basketball, volleyball and soccer.

"We're defining our rental process until the time is right and COVID allows us to," Archibald said. "We want to make sure those spaces are adequate and everything is in good repair and then we'll be able to handle those rentals."

A Tuesday work session

discussed priorities for the executive director regarding the former school until the end of the fiscal year, June 30.

Board members agreed to change the park district's meeting date from the third Tuesday of the month to the fourth, in order to avoid a conflict with the Seaside School District Board of Directors schedule. The park district's next regular board meeting is Feb. 23 at 5:15 p.m.

Pool remains closed due to virus risk level

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

The Sunset Pool and Bob Chisholm Center will remain closed even as Gov. Kate Brown modified some guidelines for indoor activities and recreation facilities and Clatsop County remains in the state's extreme risk level for the coronavirus.

The modification allows for a maximum of six people indoors at facilities larger than 500 square feet for all activities except dining.

Skyler Archibald, executive director of the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District, said while the governor's guidance has changed capacity limits, the limit of six may still be too restrictive to allow safe operation of the pool and facility.

"We can only have the minimal amount of staff we need to operate," Archibald said. "We typically have extra lifeguards because of the rotation, and two people at the front desk with check-in and screenings."

For facilities smaller than 500 square feet, the new guidance allows for one-to-one customer experiences

such as personal training.

"We're still waiting for more details to come out," Archibald said. "As we get that information, we'll make a decision about the next two weeks. There are concerns about potentially reopening with a much more limited capacity but we have to balance that with our desire to serve the public and use the pool. We're in a bit of a wait-and-hold period as far as COVID."

The district's emergency child-care program will remain open as an essential service for working families.

Warming center: 'Clearly is the most pressing need'

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of directors. The park district purchased the building from the Seaside School District in January.

"This clearly is the most pressing need in Seaside during inclement weather and is a beginning step to do some specific things to deal with our homeless situation," Barber said. "I'll be asking the city to become a financial partner at some level, and clearly our police department and other first responders will be involved as referring agencies."

The conversation arose after a presentation at a City Council meeting in January that included representatives from Clatsop Community Action.

Viviana Matthews, Clatsop Community Action's executive director, and Susan Prettyman, the organization's social services program manager, explained what Seaside could do for the homeless, including opening a warming center.

Seaside is grappling with a surge in homelessness, challenging the city, law enforcement and social services. Last year, Clatsop Community Action provided more than 600 services to the homeless population in Clatsop



R.J. Marx

This former social studies classroom is one of the Sunset Recreation Center rooms planned for use as a warming center.

sop County, with about 25% of those services to people who reside in the Seaside area. Barber joined a walk-through at the Sunset Recreation Center with Archibald, Matthews and Alan Evans, CEO of Helping Hands.

Matthews said Clatsop Community Action will provide the funds and case management to assist people with intakes and reporting.

"I am hoping this will lead to future projects in Seaside to help the Seaside homeless population and overall residents as well," she said.

City Councilor Tita Montero will lead the City Council's role on next steps for the city's homeless situation.

With Helping Hands providing some staff and volunteers, Clatsop Community Action the finances and

furnishings needed — cots, sleeping bags, food — and the park district the facility, the plans just came together, Barber said.

The warming center could also help officials determine the number of homeless people in Seaside and what kind of services are needed.

How the warming center will fit into the park district's grand scheme will be determined by the board of directors, Archibald said.

"What I love about the buildings, we could meet three or four significant needs in our community or partner needs and we can still have a space to do what we want to do in our building, expand programming for our needs and the gym for sports tourism," he said.

"It's a good opportunity to use the space here for the short term, see what works, what doesn't, and we'll have a lot more information."

Winstanley: Will serve through June 2022

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some of the challenges the city will likely face in the coming years.

"In the next couple of years you are going to be looking at not the building of streets and the reconstruction of buildings like the convention center or the acquisition of \$1 million fire trucks, as much as the construction of electronic ways that we communicate with our constituency," he said. "The development of more interactive websites, our ability to communicate with our constituents — those are going to be the type of infrastructure you have to deal with."

Winstanley proposed a timeline for selection of his replacement, which should be underway by December or January, with options to choose internal or external candidates.

Winstanley recommended, Jon Rahl, who

was named assistant city manager in April 2018.

"Jon is every bit the talented individual I thought he was and I am even more impressed with him today than I was 2 1/2 years ago when I made the decision to hire him," he said. "I have no reservations in recommending to you that Jon should be that person. He has ties with the other communities in this county and knows all of the leadership in those different cities. That will serve you remarkably as you move forward."

The hiring process should be one of the city's highest goals for the next two years, Winstanley said.

Mayor Jay Barber said planning should begin sooner rather than later. A best-case scenario would include Rahl among the candidates. "I'll be bringing forward, with Mark's help, a proposal for a calendar to start succession planning. We have work to do," the mayor said.



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