

# Neighbors voice concerns over Necanicum Avenue RVs



Mayor Jay Barber at the April 26 City Council meeting.

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

The city is “well aware” of the issue of RVs abandoned or left overnight — sometimes for weeks or months at a time — along Seaside’s roadways.

Necanicum between First and 12th, residents say, has become a long-term parking area, and a safety and health hazard for local residents.

“We’re concerned about the waste and the garbage,” Dave Eilenberger said at

Monday’s City Council meeting. “And these vehicles not moving.”

“I would reiterate: all the garbage, the sewage, the blocking of the streets,” resident Karl Schorr said. “What we’re wondering is why the city chooses not to enforce the code? ... We are getting fed up. And if we’re going to open up a free RV park, then let’s advertise it to the city of Portland.”

The RVs drive off tourists, Eilenberger said, who said they subsequently they park in the nearby neighborhood.

Seaside resident Randy Skeie said he and his wife Mackenzie contacted the city a year ago on the issue. “And we were given a stone wall saying nothing could be done. Now six, eight, nine months later, we have to come in here with and ask again. Can we have something done in a reasonable amount of time? We don’t expect the world to turn around in a day.”

On April 20, according to police reports, six days before the council meeting, an abandoned camp trailer, two abandoned motor

homes and abandoned truck were marked for tow by Seaside Police.

“Just let me say the city is very well aware of this issue,” Mayor Jay Barber said. “We are working on it. And we’re going to deal with it in a way that will deal with the challenge.”

“It takes some time to be able to do the posting, and all the other things that are required that we are very much aware of it,” Barber said. “I’ve been driving there every day. I’ve seen it with my own eyes. I know.”

# Forums on homelessness to begin with input from clergy

By R.J. MARX  
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The first of four forums on homelessness will be held May 6, Mayor Jay Barber said.

“Our goals are working on what we’re calling homeless strategies forums,” the mayor said. “We’re trying to educate ourselves and the community about how to

deal with the homeless situation, trying to bring different groups together.”

The first forum, planned for 6 p.m. at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center, will bring together members of the faith-based community to inform the city what they are doing for the homeless.

Forums on May 13 and May 27 will follow, concluding on June 3 in an

“open mic kind of meeting, to give people an opportunity to talk about their concerns, their solutions and how we navigate going forward,” Barber said.

In November, driven by a rising level of need and impacts to Seaside’s neighborhoods and businesses, city councilors asked the police chief, city attorney and city manager what can be done to manage the

growing number of homeless people.

City Councilor Tita Montero proposed public forums on the issue, but the dates were postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

At a goal-setting session in January, city councilors said they hope to address homelessness, addiction and mental health issues.

At a City Council meeting in April, Montero sought

to revive the forum process. “I believe with all of our goals, we are giving the citizens more opportunities to weigh in and to learn and to participate than ever before,” she said.

Funding opportunities to combat homelessness could come from American Rescue Plan dollars, City Manager Mark Winstanley said at a budget committee meeting last week. The city antic-

ipates \$1.4 million from the federal government as part of the government’s \$1.9 trillion COVID relief bill.

“We’re not going to solve the homeless problem, but we’re become more educated so we can be more responsive,” Barber said. “That’s our goal. We want to respond in a way that fits with our community. We’re working on that and will continue on.”

# Infrastructure: City plans to redesign and reconstruct Avenue S bridge

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financial investments need to be made.

The city’s infrastructure goals for the coming year include replacement of sewage disposal equipment, including a dryer and sludge processor in need of replacement. “When we started down this path with our sewage disposal arrangement, we purchased a used dryer which has served us well,” Winstanley said. “Unfortunately, it has reached the end of its life.”

Costs, estimated at about \$3.4 million, would be financed by bond sales.

As for the Avenue S corridor, it is still in design, Winstanley said. But with the opening of the new



Roadwork on the Avenue S bridge is a city priority.

R.J. Marx

campus on Spruce Drive, the traffic load will continue to increase.

“I expect that we will break ground on the Avenue S project during this

next year,” he said. “That street between the highway and Wahanna is going

to be used more and more and is very inadequate for the amount of traffic that

it will take. That’s a street that we intend to redesign and reconstruct so that it will be adequate for the traffic that it is going to need to have.”

Federal dollars through the American Rescue Plan could come from the federal government in two \$700,000 installments, this year and next.

“At this point, since we don’t have definition as to what’s going to be an eligible expenditure, we don’t know how we can move forward yet,” Winstanley said. “We just don’t know what the rules are yet.”

The city anticipates approval of the proposed budget by May 28, and approval of the final 2021-22 budget by June 28.

# Nonprofits: ‘Urgent resources are needed’

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The group provides drug and alcohol-free housing options with shelters in Astoria and Tillamook.

“It’s been a challenging year for us,” Alan Evans, Helping Hands’ executive director, said.

Changed protocols, social distancing, COVID pre-screening and widespread closures in the service industry added to the burden.

The community shut-down as a result of the pandemic also led to a significant job loss in the service sector, he said. “Most of the people that were working in our facilities work in the service industry and as you can imagine how many of our people became unemployed.”

“But in the middle of

all of that. We served 355 unique individuals in Clatsop County, and 126 of those came from Seaside.”

The state expects nearly 90,000 people will be facing eviction, Evans said. “We’re doing our best to prepare for that.”

Local organizations, including the Seaside Museum and Historical Society, Seaside House and Our Lady of Victory Sunday Supper program were among those seeking a portion of funds.

Seaside’s Restoration House, a residential treatment center for substance abuse, asked the committee for \$10,000 for improvements on their North Holladay building.

A new group, the Deliver Light Foundation, seeks to help the displaced population. They provide phone

service, deliver essential supplies, provide bus passes and “share stories” with homeless.

“Urgent resources are needed,” representative Michelle Trott said in requesting \$10,000.

The nonprofit provides phone service, job counseling and services such as hygiene, blankets, tarps, socks, jackets, boots, to homeless individuals “right where they’re at.”

Seaside Kids, a nonprofit operating in the city for 65 years, provides the opportunity for all children in the Seaside school district to participate in sports for free. President John Morris requested \$5,000 to be used to put a fence and gates around center Norway Field to provide the players with a safe, sanitary property protected from vandalism.

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