



## Incumbents hold edge in park district board races



Celeste Bodner Katharine Parker Michael Hinton Erika Marshall Hamer Su Coddington

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

After a bruising campaign where challengers second-guessed the decision to purchase the former Broadway Middle School, the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board held their own in Tuesday's election. Su Coddington, Celeste Bodner, Michael Hinton, Erika Marshall Hamer and Katharine Parker led their challengers after most of the ballots were counted. All but Hinton were appointed to the board after resignations over the past few years amid turmoil and infighting. The rapid changes on the board and major developments at the park district made this year's election especially significant. Closures as a result of COVID-19 interrupted services in 2020 and led to layoffs or worker furloughs.

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## Park district selects consultant for rec center

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District selected a strategic consultant to plan the future of the Sunset Recreation Center.

Sports Facilities Advisory and Scott Edwards Architecture were chosen out of three finalists based on firm size and structure, project understanding, firm experience, work plan, proposed staff and fee proposal.

"It's the recommendation of that group to select the Sports Facilities Advisory working with Scott Edwards Architecture for the opportunity to partner with us on our plan for the future of Sunset Recreation Center," Sklyer Archibald, the park district's executive director, said in presenting the decision to the board last Tuesday. "This is a significant step forward in the district."

The park district purchased the former Broadway Middle School for \$2.15 million in January. The middle school, renamed the Sunset Recreation Center, was among Seaside School District properties relocated to the new Spruce Drive location outside of the tsunami inundation zone.

Board members Celeste Bodner and Michael Hinton worked with owner's representative David Dwyer of the Klash Group to evaluate the proposals. "We had three terrific responses from qualified firms," Archibald said.

The candidates "clearly delineated themselves," Archibald said.

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## Education service district eyes lease at rec center

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District and the Northwest Regional Education Service District are in talks to lease a portion of the Sunset Recreation Center in Seaside.

The former Broadway Middle School would be "the ideal hub for our services," wrote Dan Goldman, superintendent of the Northwest Regional Education Service District.

The service district is in the process of selling their 29,000-square-foot Clatsop Service Center location in Astoria and are seeking a space to lease, Goldman said. They hope to downsize to a 7,600-square-foot space in the Sunset Recreation Center.

"It would be a significant downsize, but it's what we need now," Goldman said at last Tuesday's park district board meeting. "We're looking to actually get in a space that not only is a better fit for us in terms of size, but also provides us an opportunity to do what ESD does best."

The service district is seeking classroom space for pre-school programs, community meetings and office space.

The service district brings additional school resources to students and school districts in Clatsop, Tillamook, Washington and Columbia counties. "We provide what you would

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## Seaside maestro steps down

By KATHERINE LACAZE  
For Seaside Signal

Over the past 19 years, under the direction of Terry Dahlgren, the Seaside High School band programs have thrived, performing concerts and claiming district and league titles. Yet, competitive success has never been Dahlgren's top priority.

For him, the relatively mammoth size of the band

— which surprises judges at competitions and makes Seaside stand out among other 4A schools — is what he takes the most pride in.

"The mission is to teach music to as many kids as possible," said Dahlgren, who will be retiring at the end of school year after a 32-year career as a high school band director, the majority of which was spent in Seaside. "I've really enjoyed being 'the monster band.' We're like the phenomenon. It's like, 'What's going on in Seaside?' That's been really

fun."

Dahlgren remembers his first visit to the Oregon Coast. It was 1991 and he and wife, Kathy, were traveling from Minnesota for their honeymoon. It was his first time seeing the ocean, and they quickly developed a love for the area.

Fast forward 12 years, when Dahlgren came across a listing for a job opening in the Seaside District. The couple made the move and Dahlgren started as the sixth through 12th grade

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Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Victoria Soprano, right, starts her leg of the double under relay with Jessica Hernandez.

## Ready to jump

By KATHERINE LACAZE  
For Seaside Signal

After having to miss three tournaments last year and two tournaments in 2021, Stacey Dundas was determined to make at least one event happen this year for jump-ropers around the region.

"These kids work so hard and they practice all the time," said Dundas, the founder and head of coach of the Tsunami Skippers Jump Rope Team. "They need to be rewarded, they need to feel special and have something to look forward to."

Her dedication — along with that of parents, the organization's board of directors and other supporters — translated into the return of the Oregon Coast Classic Tournament, which the Tsunami Skippers typically host every year.

The one-day event took place at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center on Saturday and brought together nearly 80 participants ages 5 to 50 years old.

Four teams traveled to Seaside for the classic: Hot Dog USA, Bainbridge Island Rope Skippers and West City Rope Ninjas from Washington and the Far North Jumpers from Alaska. About 20 of Dundas' own athletes also took part in the event.

In a departure from past years, Dundas focused the Oregon Coast Classic on non-competitive activities that aren't a regular part of tournaments — an approach that was even encapsulated in the 2021 slogan: "Just for Fun." Her goal was to host a fun and rewarding event for young people who practice consistently to take part in what she described

as "an obscure sport."

Typically, the Tsunami Skippers host the classic at the old Seaside High School building in April. This year, they moved it to the convention center and "pushed it off as far as we could," Dundas said. Even if Clatsop County had returned to the high-risk category in terms of COVID-19 cases, the group would have found an alternative plan.

"We were going to make it happen," she added. These types of jump-roping events often draw the same slate of teams and competitors, which becomes an enjoyable part of participating.

"We're a big, huge family now, so it's just fun all the time," said Seaside senior Victoria Soprano, who has been with the Tsunami Skippers for 11 years. One of her favorite memories was traveling to Norway for the World Jump Rope Championship and Camp in Norway in 2019.

Jessica Hernandez, another graduating senior who joined the team in fourth grade, agreed one of her favorite aspects is seeing other teammates and competitors on a regular basis.

"I've known many of them for, literally, almost my entire life," she added.

As Hernandez and Soprano grew up in the sport, Dundas helped them transition from not only competitors but also mentors to their younger teammates.

"Their position has been more coaching the past couple years," she added.

The Oregon Coast Classic Tournament served as the grand finale of the 2021 season for the Tsunami Skippers. The group will resume activity in December with tryouts and bringing in new recruits.

## Housing needs to impact firehouse land decision

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

A new firehouse and resiliency station on 30 acres on Highlands Lane just north of Gearhart will rely on a combination of planning and taxpayer support. Navigating a complex web of

state and local land use codes to bring the property into the city's urban growth boundary is the first hurdle.

"The city is evaluating planning and architectural proposals," City Administrator Chad Sweet said last Friday. "Staff will approach the council about those costs in June. It's possible that we will be ready for prelim-

inary conversations with the Planning Commission."

If the costs for the resiliency station, which is categorized as critical infrastructure, are reasonable and the location is suitable, city staff will make a recommendation to the City

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Katherine Lacaze

Seaside band director Terry Dahlgren is retiring after 19 years of leading the band.

