

Results: 'I'm excited to continue working with our board'

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When two board members resigned in July, the new board changed direction and pursued the purchase of the middle school, which had closed after the Seaside School District relocated students to a new, bond-financed campus outside the tsunami inundation zone. The park district completed the purchase from the school district in January for \$2.15 million.

The board saw it as an opportunity to preserve and utilize a landmark space in the heart of Seaside.

They ran as ProgressforSEPRD.com and advocated for the development of the middle school as a community resource, stressing child care, recreation for all and sports tourism.

Self-governance, transpar-

ency, improving the board's connection to the community and support for Skyler Archibald, the park district's executive director, were among their goals.

The Facebook group Transparency for SEPRD Taxpayers helped launch a slate of five challengers under the slogan, "It's time for a change."

Al Hernandez, John Huisman, Patrick Duhachek, Jackie Evans and Stephen Morrison saw the middle school purchase as an overreach for an aging building that had little value.

They stressed "foresight, insight and oversight" in their campaign material, along with fiscal responsibility and a voice for taxpayers.

Coddington, a nurse, led Hernandez, a retired accountant, 57% to 43% for Position 1.

Bodner, the executive director of FosterClub, led Huisman, a retiree in sales, marketing and management, 60% to 40% for Position 2.

Hinton, a contractor first elected to the board in 2001, led Duhachek, a former U.S. Navy aircraft maintenance officer and private sector project manager and logistics engineer who owns Wheel Fun Rentals, 54% to 46% for Position 3.

"I'm grateful for apparent victory!" Hinton said in an email. "Our board hitched their wagon to a star! The opposition didn't see it coming!"

Marshall Hamer, the director of global human resources for Mercy Corps, led Evans, who retired after management roles at Fred Meyer Jewelers, 61% to 38% for Position 4.

"Having grown up in Seaside, and experiencing Sun-

set parks and recreation for the last 40 years, I feel so privileged to have been on the Board of Directors at this critical juncture in our community's history," Marshall Hamer said in an email. "No matter the outcome of the election, I feel good within myself that I stayed positive, that I had a bold vision for Seaside and the district, and that I stayed true to myself and those residents who I represent. There is nothing more important at this point in our community's history than to be positive and uplifting, and to find a way to increase programming and options at the district for all of our residents."

In an email, Evans wrote that she wants to "extend a sincere thank you to the people in our district who voted for me and the other candidates who challenged the incumbents. I will support the mission and

vision of SEPRD by volunteering for SEPRD sponsored events and attend board meetings to follow the work being done to meet the needs of the community. I want to serve my community by offering my talents and business expertise through opportunities to sit on community committees when possible.

"We are blessed to have so many people who are caring, committed and knowledgeable; who desire to ensure SEPRD is the jewel of the community for future generations."

Parker, the head secretary at Seaside High School, led Morrison, who retired after management roles at trucking companies, 56% to 44% for Position 5.

Looking ahead, the board has to help manage through the coronavirus pandemic, new

programs, a \$3 million budget to adopt by the end of June and a Sunset Recreation Center strategic plan. The park district anticipates an opportunity to expand services and revenue by 27% in the next fiscal year.

Potential partners going forward include the city and the school district. The park district is in lease negotiations with the Northwest Regional Education Service District for a portion of the building.

"I'm excited to continue working with our board and helping our community grow," Archibald said in a statement. "All five of these board members have a heart for service and genuinely care about improving the quality of life for patrons in our district. We also encourage community engagement as we develop our plan for the Sunset Recreation Center."

Lease: Spaces would be used for community programs and services

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consider a co-op of services across school districts," Goldman said.

In Clatsop County, this includes technology and administrative support to school districts, early learning, migrant education, child care and special education.

"I am struck by the alignment in our organizations' visions," Goldman wrote to the park district in a March letter. "We lead our community toward a healthy, active lifestyle and foster a sense of community through inclu-

sive, sustainable, educational and recreational programs. ... The collocation of our services will undoubtedly multiply our respective capacities to serve Clatsop County children and families."

Areas of interest to the service district at the former middle school include three classrooms along the southwest corner of the building, the computer lab adjacent to the library, administrative office space and a counseling room.

These spaces would be used to provide programs and services to children and fam-



R.J. Marx

A former classroom temporarily used for miscellaneous storage in the Sunset Recreation Center.

ilies in the community. "We shift resources to where there is the greatest need," Goldman said.

The lease would likely include installation of temporary doors and walls to secure their part of the property.

Bathrooms in the west hallway could be shared.

The service district will be leaving their Astoria location at the end of June. "On the short-term side, we would, we would really like to execute something quickly," Goldman said.

If a deal doesn't come together immediately, the service district is "prepared to be remote for a little while," he added.

"We really like this option for the reasons I stated," Goldman said. "But if the park district felt like it couldn't move forward, we'll be OK."

Board member Su Coddington viewed the proposal positively. "What an opportunity in having purchased this building, to have opportunities like this," she said. "I am grateful to them for being interested."

Board member Michael Hinton said he would enjoy working with the service district. "I think they would be a healthy partner for us," he said. "I would like, at an appropriate time, to have Skyler (Archibald, park district executive director) begin some kind of negotiation so we can define the lease."

Consultant: A fresh set of eyes

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The park district has budgeted \$75,000 for the strategic planning process. Sports Facilities Advisory provided a \$61,600 cost estimate. Oregon-based Winning Mark Technologies' bid proposal was \$44,760. Board members felt they lacked the experience for the project. Ballard-King & Associates, which has worked with the park district before, presented a project estimate of just over \$55,000.

"We did feel that we needed a fresh set of eyes," Hinton said. "That also put us back to the sports advisory group."

The Sports Facilities Advisory group's experience — 18 years in 2,000 communities with over 1,000 employees — impressed Bodner. "They have a lot of information about how to both build facilities and they also operate facilities."

The firm has experience working in communities of all sizes, she said, with both new buildings and rehabilitation.

"One of the compelling pieces about this particular firm, is that they come to the table with a lot of lessons learned and data to back that up," she said. "And they also are experienced in the categories that we're looking for, of course, expanding recreation for all, but they are the largest sports tourism contractor in the country."

Based in Clearwater, Florida, the advisory group works with Scott Edwards Architecture, a Portland architectural firm which has done projects throughout the state, among them the Gladstone Civic Center, Civic Park in Eugene and the Tualatin Parks and Recreation Department office.

"They know this area, they know our Northwest aesthetic, and this is right

up their alley," Bodner said. "They've done lots of park and rec kind of projects."

The consultant will be working from a 20-week timeline, from the project "kick-off call" to the final report.

Bodner anticipates the group will work with the board, staff and community to deliver proposals about highest and best use for the facility.

"It could mean a new building, it could be rehabbing the existing building, it could be retaining the footprint as it is," Bodner said. "It could be changing the footprint. We don't know. The idea is to let these experts help us determine highest and best use of the facility."

Board members Bodner, Hinton, Su Coddington, Erika Hamer Marshall and Katharine Parker unanimously voted to approve accepting the Sports Facilities Advisory proposal.

360 Garage Sales

Huge Garage Sale
May 21st & 22nd
9:00am-4pm
Lots of great items, household items, clothing, and much more.
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The Astoria High School Key Club is hosting a rummage sale to help fundraise for the Thirst Project, an international non-profit that helps provide people in need with clean drinking water. Wearing masks and social distancing are required. The sale will be hosted at Astoria High School. Clothes, Furniture, Household Items, Toys 1001 W. Marine Drive Astoria. May 22, 2021 May 22, 2021 9:00-3:00

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Seaside

Friends of Hamlet Volunteer Fire Department Garage Sale
Thursday, Friday, Saturday
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(\$17 - \$20 plus benefits)
Peace First Lutheran Church in Astoria is seeking a full-time Parish Assistant to manage church office and assist the Pastor. More information at: peacefirstlutheran.com

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L & J Quality Painting, LLC is looking for structure painters. Wage \$14-\$30 an hour DOE. Previous experience preferred but willing to train. Must be comfortable working on ladders & scaffolding. Seaside, OR. (503)277-9517
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