



## Gearhart moves closer to new firehouse site

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

An ideal elevation, a more convenient location and cost savings of up to \$4 million are selling points for a new firehouse and police station at Highlands Lane in Gearhart.

Officials hope to bring a portion of a 36-acre lot on Highlands Lane owned by Cottages at Gearhart LLC into the city's urban growth boundary.

The City Council approved up to \$80,000 from the building reserve fund for due diligence in planning, architecture and geotechnical engineering services at the site. This will provide residents, the Planning Commission and City Council with information to decide whether to move forward with a bond vote in November.

"I would like nothing more than to be on the ballot in November," Mayor Paulina Cockrum said.

After six or seven years

of research and preparation to move the fire station to higher ground, "it feels like it's in alignment" this year, the mayor said.

If approved, the city will save an estimated \$3 million to \$3.5 million on what would have been required for purchase of land on North Marion, City Attorney Peter Watts said, and the project would be significantly simplified without potential eminent domain issues associated with the High Point location.

In March, costs at High Point were estimated at \$13.5 million, including construction and land acquisition.

Zoned within Clatsop County, after a potential urban growth boundary exchange, Cottages at Gearhart developers would benefit from increased housing density under city zoning code.

The Cottages at Gearhart purchased the prop-

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## Park district, education group close in on rec center lease

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District moved closer to a deal with the Northwest Regional Education Service District to lease a portion of Sunset Recreation Center.

The service district is in the process of selling their 29,000-square-foot Clatsop Service Center in Astoria. They hope to lease a 7,600-square-foot space in the Sunset Recreation Center. The service district brings additional school resources to students and school districts in Clatsop, Tillamook, Washington and Columbia counties.

The proposed two-year lease at Sunset Recreation Center includes an annual rental amount payable in quarterly installments. It also includes a small percentage increase each year of 1.5% to the agreed upon amount set, said Skyler Archibald, the park district's executive director. The cost includes reimbursement for utilities based on the square footage

of the building.

The service district requested leasing three classrooms along the southwest corner of the building, computer lab adjacent to the library, administrative office space and counseling rooms, Archibald said. The square footage is around 7,600 square feet, with additional square footage for consideration in the larger men's and women's bathrooms.

"They are comfortable with the computer lab being potentially shared space that the park district could have access to as well, especially for evening meetings," Archibald said at last Tuesday's park district board meeting. "They will probably outfit one of the classrooms or maybe two of the classrooms with working areas for their staff. And then one of the classrooms will probably be like a workroom break room with coffee machine and that kind of thing."

The service district would have their own custodial or cleaning

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R.J. Marx

Public Works Director Dale McDowell alongside a boat discarded alongside the river at Cartwright Park.

## In Seaside, trash creates headache for public works

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

A moth-eaten, moisture-drenched couch and loveseat. Wooden pallet boards with nails. A refrigerator door. A sinking boat.

"In the last year, the city of Seaside had some real issues with our residents actually leaving furniture, appliances and anything else in town," Public Works Director Dale McDow-

ell said. "Where we could be doing improvements in the parks, we're taking care of somebody's trash."

McDowell has a rogue's gallery of photos. "That's at the beach," he said, showing a picture of overflowing garbage bags in a pile of sand. "Someone was done for the day visiting the beach and they just brought their garbage. They dumped it by one of the restrooms, their chairs included."

A discarded couch

and loveseat had signs marked "free" in Cartwright Park underneath the picnic shelter.

"We have to haul them to the dump," McDowell said. "Unfortunately, all those charges get charged to the parks."

Another photo showed a boat filled with fishing floats, the seat upholstery ripped, hull damaged, engine in disrepair.

"This one gentleman got the boat off of Craigslist, and the boat, naturally, was free," McDow-

ell said. "He tried to launch it at Quatat Park — it immediately sank. Our crews got called in after hours to pick this thing up. We still have it to this day because he doesn't have any money to get it out of so-called impound and do anything with it."

Right now, the boat is parked behind the public works building. "This has to get cut up and then put into a container and

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## Seaside grads dream big at ceremony

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal



Wesley Corliss

Tatum La Plante on the way to get her diploma at the end of the Turnaround.

Adapt and change. Don't be afraid to follow a path. Dream big, and be kind.

That was the advice of teacher Jeff Corliss to the Seaside High School Class of 2021 last Thursday evening. Corliss addressed students, families and a YouTube audience from the Seaside Civic and Convention Center parking lot in downtown Seaside.

"Be open to new ideas, new experiences, and new ways of doing things," Corliss said. "This pandemic has definitely given you a leg up on that. And you've shown that you can adapt and change."

A Broadway Street closure launched a day to conclude the school year, com-

ing after a year of masks, distance learning and a new high school building — not to mention classes, sports and extracurriculars.

Graduates gathered at the high school at 4 p.m., and one hour later their motorcade headed down Broadway to the Turnaround to receive their diplomas. Each car competed with the next for the most creative way to celebrate their graduates, decorated with flags, pom-poms and balloons.

Members of the school board greeted each student and delivered their diplomas accompanied by the sounds of horns and cheers. Tassels blew in the wind as students held onto their signature red graduation hats, taking selfies and photos of besties at

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## Seaside Museum celebrates reopening

By R.J. MARX  
Seaside Signal

A new look and new exhibits marked the reopening of the Seaside Museum & Historical Society and Butterfield Cottage.

Closed for a year as a result of the pandemic, the board of directors kept working, preparing new exhibits and upgrades at the center and neighboring cottage, board president and City Councilor Steve Wright said

at a reopening ceremony and ribbon-cutting last Thursday presented by the Seaside Chamber of Commerce.

"I read a phrase about a year ago that I felt really described our status and that was we were in 'an arrested state of decay,'" Wright said. "We had good things. And they were nice a number of years ago. People did great jobs. And we just kind of stayed stagnant for a while. So last fall we got started and we figured, OK, a good way to start is to start tearing stuff out. And that's what we did."

Grant money and donations brought a new electrical

system, lighting, blinds, fresh drywall and an open look to the lobby and colorful new displays, premiering with the Oregon Historical Society's traveling version of their permanent exhibition on modern state history, "Oregon Voices." On entering, visitors are greeted by three-sided pop-up kiosks that explore some of the important people, events and ideas that have shaped the state from the end of World War II to the present.

An exhibit curated by board member Rachael Wol-

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R.J. Marx

Ribbon-cutting at the Seaside Museum presented by the Seaside Chamber of Commerce. The museum and neighboring cottage reopened after a year of renovations during the pandemic closure.

