



GEARHART SEEKS REGIONAL PICKLEBALL SOLUTION

City needs more courts, enthusiast says

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Pickleball enthusiast Wally Hamer approached Gearhart City Council last Wednesday, with a letter seeking more courts for an increasing demand.

“We are hoping to add two more courts to the Gearhart facility so we would have a total of four courts,” Hamer said after the meeting.

Pickleball, similar to tennis, is an 11-point game and described as a cross between ping-pong and tennis, first came before the council when Hamer approached the City Council in May with proposed alterations to Gearhart’s two existing tennis courts in order to create space for pickleball without disruption to tennis players.

In 2019, the city converted one of the city’s two full-time tennis courts into part-time pickleball courts using rolling nets and striping.

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R.J. Marx
Gearhart pickleball players took advantage of a break in the winter weather on Saturday.



Wally and Ginny Hamer at the Beaches and Breakers Pickleball Tournament at the Sunset Recreation Center.

Seaside delays homeless ordinance

Patterned on rules adopted in Coos Bay

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Seaside is not Coos Bay. And while Coos Bay, a city of 16,000 on the southern coast, has implemented a camping ordinance designed to address homelessness, Seaside is finding that a lack of camping sites or parking could make adoption of a similar ordinance, at least for now, untenable.

The ordinance, presented at Seaside’s December meeting, recognizes the federal court ruling, *Martin v. Boise*, as well as newly adopted Oregon laws that make it legal to camp overnight on publicly owned property. The ordinance makes it legal to park or camp — including under tents, tarps, sleeping bags and temporary huts — on most publicly owned property within the city limits between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m.

Seamus McVey, an advocate for the homeless, said Seaside’s proposed ordinance flies in the face of the Boise decision.

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Commission sidesteps vacation rental moratorium

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

A planning commissioner’s effort to show support for a vacation rental moratorium in Seaside failed to gain support.

Kathy Kleczek, the vice chairwoman of the Planning Commission, moved that the commission make a formal recommendation to the City Council to declare a moratorium on new conditional use permits for vacation rentals.

“It is basically putting the ball in their court,” she said at the January commission meeting. “Since we can’t actually create a moratorium — that’s the City Council’s job — I wanted to officially say, ‘Here you go. We want you to do this.’”

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Seaside planner Cupples to step down

A Seaside employee since 1998

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

After 23 years with the city of Seaside, Planning Director Kevin Cupples announced his retirement early this month.

After welcoming a new planning commissioner, Brandon Kraft, Cupples said his last day will be Feb. 15. “I’m going to remain here in Seaside, but I’ve got some

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Softball field upgrades driven by federal agreement

First phase toward achieving equality

By KATHERINE LACAZE
For Seaside Signal

The Seaside School District launched the first phase of a project to upgrade softball facilities in response to an agreement with the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights.

The school district has until the end of June 2023 to build the facility and provide more equity between girls and boys athletics.

It’s been an ongoing issue since before she arrived in the school district, Susan Penrod, the school superintendent, said. “We’re excited to complete this project, with, of course, our top priority being to provide a wonderful softball complex for our athletes, in addition to meeting our deadlines with the Office of Civil Rights,” she said.

The first phase, which was approved during the December



R.J. Marx
A hole is underneath third base on the softball field at Broadway Field.

school board meeting, involves working with Brian Hardebeck, a senior project manager at DAY CPM, to coordinate and complete the project. Hardebeck was part of the team that worked on construction of the new school

campus, so the school district is extending his contract for the softball complex, Penrod said. ZCS Engineering & Architecture will assist with the design.

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Volunteers form PAC to support new firehouse

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Gearhart volunteer firefighters hope to have a voice in the May election on a \$13 million bond for a new firehouse off Highlands Lane.

Josh Lair, speaking on behalf of the Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department Association, said at last Wednesday’s City Council meeting that the volunteers are forming a political action committee to help push the measure to approval.

Firefighters see the need as an urgent one. The cinder-block firehouse on Pacific Way, built in 1958, is considered outdated and vulnerable to earthquakes and tsunamis.

City staff say the firehouse is not practical to retrofit and it makes no fiscal sense to spend up to \$10 million on a facility subject to inundation. An August cost estimate put the price of a new Highlands station at just over \$13 million.

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