

Rentals: Moratorium will be council decision

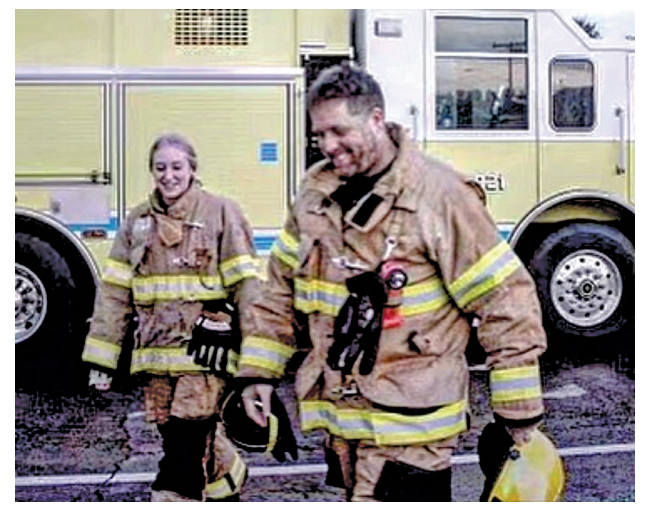
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Her motion went without a second. In late November, the Planning Commission and City Council met in a joint workshop on short-term rentals. Topics included a potential moratorium on conditional use permits for vacation rentals, designed to give the council time to study the impact of short-term rentals on affordable housing and city infrastructure. Concerns have been raised about planning ahead for the cost that would be incurred should the city

decide to place a moratorium on vacation rentals and study the effects of existing regulations or placing limits. "We as a Planning Commission appeared to be in agreement following the joint meeting that the current VRD (vacation rental dwelling) vs. long-term rental situation, or housing in general, bears looking into in-depth to make sure the best interests of the community are being served." Commissioners said it is the City Council's, not the Planning Commission's, responsibility to take the lead in shaping the ordinance.

Commissioner Seth Morrisey, who is also a former city councilor, said the decision to declare a moratorium should come from the council, not the commission. "They're more of the political body," he said. "I feel that it would be more appropriate if they actually initiated this, if that's what they want to do." Commissioner Jon Wickersham said he sought "a little bit more information about why we're making a recommendation and maybe a little more structure around that recommendation." After the meeting, Klec-

zek said she was disappointed by the Planning Commission's decision. "Not seconding a motion to me indicates an unwillingness to discuss an issue," she said. "I hope that the City Council does move forward with a moratorium of some form. My motion was not detailed intentionally, so that the council would be the body to determine the form a moratorium would take, depending on the time frame and direction their action would take — study stand-alone or in conjunction with the comprehensive plan review."



Gearhart Fire Department
Volunteers Amy Lair and her father, Josh Lair.

Firehouse: Firefighters seek voice in bond vote

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"With this bond we hope to keep Gearhart and its citizens on track to being highly resilient, healthy and happy," Lair said. The volume of calls for service since 2015 has increased 60%, with 660 calls for service in 2021. "If we continue on this path five years from now we are projected to have nearly 1,000 calls yearly," Lair said. "We need facilities to support that high demand." Hopes for a bond vote last November were delayed by a legal challenge that proved unsuccessful in court. City officials intend to put the bond measure on the May ballot, with public meetings throughout the coming months. In 2021, the fire department, which has 30 volunteers, had less than half the amount of volunteer hours compared to 2020, Fire Chief Josh Como said. "With everything being busier, the response load is falling on fewer and fewer

key members. We have a super strong, very dedicated core group that keeps responding. This is not just relevant in Gearhart but a countywide situation." Once the PAC is officially formed with the state, the name will be GearPAC2022, Lair said. The PAC will be overseen by Amy Lair, as president of the PAC, and Randy Bowers, as treasurer of the PAC. The PAC has been coordinated by all volunteers of the Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department, with 100% support. The loss of volunteers is a challenge for many fire departments. "It's a nationwide issue now," City Attorney Peter Watts said. "Recruitment and retention really have been negatively impacted in the last few decades. That's not something that anyone in Clatsop County is doing wrong — in fact Clatsop County is doing really well compared to a lot of other places that are having to go with a professional fire force instead of volunteers."

Homeless: Coos Bay ordinance falls short in Seaside

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"I want to address publicly the horror — I don't think that is overselling it — that I experienced in reading that," McVey said at Monday's City Council meeting. "I'm honestly a little ashamed that it was presented for a first reading without somebody having gone over this thing because there are parts of it that seem to be as though somebody read through the Martin v. Boise decision, took everything that it said you cannot do, and included it in this ordinance. It's shameful, frankly. The fact that you're penalizing acts that cannot be separated from homelessness, compounding daily, make it an undue burden. I'm not an attorney, but I'm pretty sure I could argue this one in court."



Homeless advocate Seamus McVey called the new city camping ordinance 'a horror.'

tance to homeless individuals back to where they have confirmed support and housing waiting. They enacted a vacant property registration ordinance, property watch program, a warming shelter policy, temporary shelter ordinance and most recently site preparation for an organized and supervised urban campground. The Coos Bay ordinance gives permission to private property owners and rentals with permission, provides RV camping on city streets for up to 72 hours and allows camping along U.S. Highway 101. Camping in all parks is illegal — campers may be in the parks during the day but cannot stay overnight.

Coos Bay assistant city manager and treasurer Nicole Rutherford said the city has seen fewer parked vehicles, including RVs, since enactment. "We have had to tow a few vehicles, but in comparison to the number of vehicles we had within our city originally,

the few tows are insignificant to the overall success."

Seaside ordinance 'premature'
Seaside Councilor Tom Horning said that without specific options for those affected, the ordinance was premature. "I would think that an ordinance such as this could be used to define properties that are where we don't want to see camping and be able to do something about it, but until we have the land or the facilities to serve as a refuge for people from inclement weather. I'm a little concerned about whether or how we should proceed," Horning said.

There are too many unknowns in the document right now, councilor Dana Phillips said. "I think we're going to be open for all sorts of criticism, and rightfully so." Councilor Steve Wright asked for further clarification on "time, manner and place" — key elements of the Boise decision — to

determine where campers or vehicles could shelter in Seaside. He proposed additional workshops to consider the impact of the camping ordinance. Wright was joined by Councilor Tita Montero in calling for additional workshops to consider the impact of the camping ordinance. "We need to look at the rest of our ordinances to see any changes made in this ordinance," she said. "What do they either negate or add to the rest of our ordinances? There's a lot more thought that goes into this." Council members Montero, Horning, Wright and Phillips, along with Randy Frank and Mayor Jay Barber, voted to schedule a workshop prior to the next council meeting. David Posalski was absent. "We've been reluctant since the Boise decision to do any really aggressive enforcement of camping in neighborhoods for fear that we would be sued and that we would be subject to lawsuits," Barber said. "It could be very painful for the city. I don't see how this ordinance relieves us in any way of that kind of liability."



R.J. Marx
Kevin Cupples, back row, right, with members of Seaside's Community Emergency Response Team at Broadway Park in October.

Cupples: Has worked for city since 1998

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other pressing things that need to be taken care of in my life," he said. Cupples grew up in Scappoose and graduated from Southern Oregon State University. He worked in planning for Coos County and then the City of Coos Bay before coming to Seaside in August 1998. The Planning Director serves as staff liaison to the Seaside Planning Commission. Department staff conduct research and prepare

reports and findings to support land use decisions. During his time as director, Cupples has overseen property development plans, emergency services and code enforcement. He leads a staff of three, code compliance officer Jeff Flory, emergency preparedness coordinator Anne McBride and administrative assistant Jordan Sprague. "Personally, I want to thank him for his long service and his contribution to our city, both in his official role with the city but also as a citi-

zen who lived here and raised his family here," Mayor Jay Barber said. "I wish him well in his next endeavor."

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If you were fully vaccinated with Pfizer or Moderna or had their booster within the last 6 months OR you received the initial J&J dose within the past 2 months:

- Testing is recommended at day 5.
- Wear a mask around others for 10 days. No quarantine needed.

If you were fully vaccinated with Pfizer or Moderna more than 6 months ago or have not had their booster within the last 6 months OR you received the initial J&J dose more than 2 months ago:

- Quarantine at home for 5 days.
- Testing is recommended at day 5.
- Continue to wear a mask for another 5 days.

Regardless of vaccination status, if you test positive:

- Isolate at home for 5 days. You must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before leaving your home.
- If symptoms are resolved or improving, continue to wear a mask for another 5 days.

(COVID-19 TESTING INFO)

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