



Staff survey is 'wake-up call' for schools

By **KATHERINE LACAZE**
For the Seaside Signal

In a survey completed last fall, Seaside teachers expressed concerns about district communications, central office setbacks and inadequate training opportunities — all of which are exacerbated by shortcomings and stresses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chad Clouse, the president of the Seaside Education Association, presented results of a survey conducted in late October to the Seaside School District board of directors during a work session Jan. 18.

Clouse didn't share percentages or statistics for responses at the meeting but gave a summary of the results to highlight the main issues. Survey results were not made available to the public.

The survey isn't done on an annual basis, but Clouse said they

believed it was an important tool to use at this time to "get the feel of how our teachers are doing."

Results

The survey revealed there have been occasional issues in regard to teachers and staff members receiving salaries and benefits on time or in the right amounts. Clouse noted this could be due to turnover in the central office.

When staff are not getting

money properly or contractual benefits, it causes stress and often amplifies other challenges and concerns, Clouse said. "Employees start to feel worried, scared about things," he said.

Superintendent Susan Penrod agreed that was a problem and one they were working to solve.

"That is absolutely unacceptable for us that these things have been happening," she said. "We don't want to mess with people's

money."

Another issue for teachers, according to the survey, is poor communication from and with district staff. Some communications aren't responded to in a timely manner, or at all.

With many new teachers coming onboard in 2020 and 2021, there also has been a lack of sufficient training, according to survey

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Short-term rental moratorium off the table

By **R.J. MARX**
Seaside Signal

After learning more about the number of new vacation rentals over the past several years, the City Council has stepped back from a moratorium.

The City Council and Planning Commission indicated after a workshop in November that the city would discuss potential action to curb the growth of short-term rentals, including a one-year moratorium on permits.

Vacation rentals bring in more than \$1 million in annual lodging taxes to the city, but can drive up housing costs and availability for residents.

While the city has hundreds of vacation rentals, Jeff Flory, the city's compliance officer, said in a memo that the net increase in new vacation rentals since 2015 is 13.

"We came out of our workshop in November with the idea of the communication that we were getting from our constituents that VRDs were out of control," City Councilor David Posalski said at a meeting last Monday. "It was growing like a wildfire. It was taking over everywhere."

The city's density restrictions — 40% in the areas west of Holladay Drive and 50% in oceanfront areas that are not zoned resort residential — have started to limit vacation rental permit applications.

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Sunset Recreation Center marks anniversary of purchase

By **R.J. MARX**
Seaside Signal

The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District meeting in late January represented the one-year anniversary of the district's purchase of the former Broadway Middle School.

Since that time, the school has hosted athletic events, child care and rented portions of the space.

"There's been a lot of learning, there've been some tough moments," Skyler Archibald, the park district's executive director, said. But, he added, the building is "doing awesome."

"I'm really happy with it," Archibald told the district's board of directors. "Every time I walk through, there's a really positive energy there. If you've been there especially at night when there's two or three basketball teams using it, PBL tournaments have used it, pickleball is loving it. We've done a lot of cleaning and maintenance. It's been great."

The park district purchased the building from the Seaside School District for \$2.15 million.

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Clamming day



R.J. Marx

With low tides Saturday, visitors flocked to Seaside beaches for clamming.

City attorney says Seaside must provide options for homeless

By **R.J. MARX**
Seaside Signal

The city needs not only to define where people can't camp, but where they can.

Before Seaside can put into law its camping ordinance, alternatives for people without shelter must be in place, City Attorney Dan Van Thiel said in late January.

The City Council regrouped after an earlier meeting in which they considered a no-camping ordinance developed in Coos Bay.

"I don't think this city should deal with the existing ordinance any further," Van Thiel said. "I don't think it's one that is suitable for this community. If it proceeds further and is in fact unconstitutional, I can almost assure you that there will be legal groups that will focus on this and will immediately start making noise and rattling their sword and initiating litigation. And those are powerful forces."

Seaside's proposed ordinance laid out areas where campers could not sleep or park overnight, but unlike the Coos Bay ordinance, failed to offer options where they could.

The ordinance, as written, says where camping is prohibited, but not where it can exist, Van Thiel said.

"When I look at that I don't know where you could go," he said. "I imagine a lot of these people would not know, even if they were given a copy of the



City Attorney Dan Van Thiel, left, provides analysis of court decisions regarding homelessness, with Tom Horning, Randy Frank, Jay Barber, Steve Wright, Tita Montero and David Posalski.

Without no-camping ordinance, RV encampment can stay

By **R.J. MARX**
Seaside Signal

Without an ordinance providing options for overnight camping, encampments like the 30-vehicle lot on Necanicum Drive and 10th Avenue will remain in place.

"I do think that you probably could restrict using that property, but you'd have to have an alternative," City Manager Mark Winstanley said.

At a City Council workshop in late January, councilors sought rules for health and safety. How any property selected for encampments and parking would be managed would also be a concern, City Attorney Dan Van Thiel said.

"There has to be a sanction or provision in the ordinance that sanctions or allows the court to do something with those people, if they have violated the ordinance," Van Thiel said.

Nearby residents continue to protest the encampment, which formed last year when the city enforced no parking rules on Necanicum. The number of cars and trailers parked on the property has grown from a handful to its current level.

"What I've noticed is, they got that inch, and they're just going to keep going," resident Dylan Riekkola said. "You can cater to it, or you can just put a stop to it at some point. There's more people moving in. It's getting to where if there

was a fire, I don't think people would get out of there."

Neighborhood resident Karl Schorr said the city will never adequately meet the needs of those seeking refuge in Seaside.

"What is stopping you from every person that gets thrown out of Montana — there are a lot of Montana people here by the way — from coming to Seaside?" Schorr asked. "Absolutely nothing you're going to try to do is going to adequately meet their needs. And it is a futile effort to even try. You don't have the land. You don't have the budget. This needs to be pushed at the state (level) and we need to repeal the laws that

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