

Incumbent county commissioners to run for reelection

Thompson, Kujala and Wev announce plans

By ERICK BENGEL
The Astorian

Three Clatsop County commissioners whose terms expire after this year say they intend to run for reelection in May.

Commissioner Mark Kujala and Commissioner Pamela Wev have filed their candidate forms. Commissioner Lianne Thompson said she plans to file hers later this month.

Kujala, who serves as the chairman of the Board

of Commissioners, was elected in 2018 to represent District 1, which encompasses Warrenton, Hammond and a southwest swath of Astoria. He is the director of the Columbia Memorial Hospital Foundation.

Thompson, the board's longest-serving member, was elected in 2014 to represent District 5, which covers South County, including Cannon Beach, Arch Cape, Hamlet, Elsie, Jewell and a section of Seaside.

Wev, a land use planner and economic development consultant, was elected in 2018 to represent District 3, which covers central Astoria and Miles Crossing, Jeffers Garden, Fort Clatsop, Lewis and Clark, Olney,

Youngs River, Green Mountain and parts of Walluski.

Kujala said he chose to run again because he feels the commission has unfinished business that he would like to see through to completion.

Two high-profile projects underway in Warrenton are the North Coast Business Park, a proposed industrial development near U.S. Highway 101, and the new Clatsop County Jail, scheduled for completion in the second half of 2022.

Kujala and Thompson said the lack of child care options in the county remains an issue they would like to address. Kujala sits on a county task force looking at the issue.

The county also suffers from a housing scarcity that impacts all income levels.

Wev is the commission's representative on the board of the Northwest Oregon Housing Authority, which manages properties for people with low- and moderate- incomes in Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties. Wev has supported the establishment of a housing project, consisting of more than 40 apartments, being developed in Warrenton's Chelsea Gardens neighborhood.

In addition, the commission is overhauling the county's comprehensive plan, a document that will help shape the future of the

county's unincorporated areas and how the county grows.

The three commissioners' experience on the board predates the coronavirus pandemic, a crisis that at times has displaced other priorities.

Kujala said that, "as a commission, I think, we work well together." He said the board, under his leadership, has worked with municipalities, nonprofits and other organizations in the county in a collaborative fashion.

"That was one of my goals," he said, "and I think that's happened."

Thompson said the relationships she has developed over her nearly eight

years in local government — including through her work with the Association of Oregon Counties and the Columbia-Pacific Economic Development District — makes her an asset.

Her message to voters: "Thank you for honoring me with your trust. I've worked hard for you, and I hope I've worked well. Let's carry on and do more good together."

In a release announcing her run, Wev's campaign said, "These are uniquely difficult times for Clatsop County. With (Wev's) reelection, we will benefit from her vast experience and leadership to help navigate us through these troubled waters."

Cannon Beach to borrow to finance tourist attraction honoring tribal history

By NICOLE BALES
The Astorian

CANNON BEACH — The city intends to secure a loan to redevelop the former elementary school into a tourist destination honoring local tribal history.

The City Council authorized the city to borrow \$4.6 million for the project, which is expected to cost \$5.5 million. Lodging taxes will be used to pay the loan.

To prevent overborrowing, City Manager Bruce St. Denis said the city will split the borrowing into two issuances. The second one could be made as part of the financing for a new City Hall and police station.

The city-owned property on Beaver Street — formerly Cannon Beach Elementary School — is about 1.6 acres. St. Denis said the goal is to create a destination that honors the Clatsop-Ne-



Lydia Ely/The Astorian

Cannon Beach hopes to redevelop a former elementary school.

halem Confederated Tribes, since the site was home to the tribes' ancestors.

"In a lot of ways, we're trying to emulate what the tribe did there for a long time, which is bringing people together," he said.

The city issued a request for proposals from design

firms late last year. The City Council expects to select a firm by March.

There are two buildings on the property that need to be renovated. One is a 7,500-square-foot gym and the other is a 5,000-square-foot one-story building with four classrooms and office

space.

The buildings have not been used for several years, according to the city, and have had limited maintenance for more than a decade.

The city envisions creating meeting places, a garden and spaces that showcase tribal agriculture practices. The Cannon Beach Food Pantry will remain. The city also hopes to have walking trails, interpretive signs, displays and planted areas.

When the property is not being used for visitors, St. Denis said the space could be used for community events.

The city manager said the design firm will be expected to meet with stakeholders and understand the goals before starting the design process. The City Council and the public will have the opportunity to engage throughout the process.

Meanwhile, St. Denis

expects to issue a request for proposals from architectural firms to build a new City Hall and police station.

He said the city will likely be ready to borrow funds for the project next January. When the city makes that issuance, St. Denis said it will include whatever amount is needed to complete the project at the former elementary school.

Funding for the rebuild will likely come from the prepared food tax approved by voters in November. The 5% tax is estimated to raise about \$1.7 million a year and will be split between the city and the Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District.

After years of back-and-forth, city councilors agreed last year to rebuild the City Hall and police station at the existing location on E. Gower Street. The new building could cost more than \$16 million, and will also function as an emer-

gency operations center.

The new facility will be set back slightly and built over the parking lot, which sits higher. St. Denis said the additional height should protect the building from some tsunamis.

While the site is in the tsunami inundation zone for a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake, St. Denis said the new building is not necessarily being built to withstand that disaster.

City leaders had considered the city's South Wind property as a possible location because it is outside of the inundation zone, but the 55-acre vacant lot has proved tricky and expensive to develop.

"We're likely to see smaller earthquakes that can do a lot of damage here, but not be Cascadia," St. Denis said. "So we want to make sure we can respond as best we can if that kind of event occurs."

PUBLIC SAFETY LOG

From Page 2A

7:47 p.m., downed tree, South Lincoln, Seaside.

9:16 p.m., removal of victim from stalled elevator, Avenue A, Seaside.

9:50 p.m., sprinkler system activation due to malfunction, Broadway, Seaside.

Jan 3

12:59 p.m., alarm system activation, no fire, Neacoxie.

1:15 p.m., unauthorized burning, First Street.

9:29 p.m., emergency medical service, Lake Front, Warrenton.

Jan. 4

1:26 a.m., emergency medical service, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

1:47 a.m., emergency medical service, Creekside.

Jan. 5

5:43 a.m., emergency medical service, Fifer Heights.

Jan. 6

8:27 a.m., downed tree, Dellmoor, Warrenton.

11 a.m., severe weather or natural disaster standby, Pacific Way.

1:44 p.m., flood assessment, South Main, Warrenton.

9:30 p.m., smoke detector activation due to malfunction, Briarwood.

11:30 p.m., medical assist, EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

Jan 7

6:30 p.m., accident, potential accident, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

Jan. 8

7:05 a.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, North Marion.

Jan 9

3:59 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Westlake Acres, Warrenton.

10:18 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101.

10:54 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101.

Jan. 10

12:06 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Spruce, Seaside.

4:38 p.m., building fire, North Holladay, Seaside.

Jan. 11

8:19 a.m., building fire, 12th

Avenue, Seaside.

6:31 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, North Marion.

Jan. 13

1:53 p.m., smoke detector activation due to malfunction, North Marion.

Jan. 14

11 a.m., false alarm or false call, Park Lane.

1:18 p.m., building fire, U.S. Highway 26, Hamlet.

Jan. 15

8:23 a.m., severe weather or natural disaster standby, Pacific Way.

10:55 a.m., hazardous condition, Pacific Way and Cottage.

12:35 p.m., building fire, U.S. Highway 101, Hehalem.

Jan. 16

9:31 a.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Gearhart Greens.

Jan. 17

5:39 a.m., motor vehicle accident with no injuries, Lewis and Clark.

Jan. 18

9:34 a.m., rescue, EMS incident, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

Jan. 19

4:59 p.m., building fire, West Tanana, Cannon Beach.

5:46 p.m., building fire, South Roosevelt, Seaside.

6:23 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, South Downing, Seaside.

7:32 p.m., motor vehicle accident with injuries, U.S. Highway 101 and milepost 15.5, Warrenton.

11:35 p.m., outside equipment fire, North Marion.

Jan. 20

8:34 a.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Hawkins, Warrenton.

2:49 p.m., authorized controlled burning, Surf Pines, Warrenton.

7:28 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101 Warrenton.

Jan. 22

2:41 a.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Lewis, Warrenton.

10:35 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

Jan. 23

7:06 p.m., medical assist,

assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

Jan. 24

12:44 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Del Ray Beach, Warrenton.

10:10 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Lewis and Clark, Seaside.

10:17 p.m., building fire, South Roosevelt, Seaside.

10:50 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Highway 101.

Jan. 25

1:26 p.m., detector activation, no fire, South Ocean.

6:21 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Seabreeze, Surf Pines.

Jan. 26

2:36 p.m., chimney or flue fire, confined to chimney or flue, Railroad.

Jan. 27

8:50 a.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

5:39 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Cullaby Lake, Warrenton.

6:15 p.m., hazardous condition, U.S. Highway 101.

7:05 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, North Marion.

Jan. 28

6:42 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, Lewis and Clark.

10:33 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

Jan. 29

12:34 p.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

6:37 p.m., motor vehicle/pedestrian accident, U.S. Highway 101.

Jan. 30

4:55 a.m., medical assist, assist EMS crew Dellmoor loop, Warrenton.

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Recent data suggests COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness wanes over time. If it's been more than five months since your last vaccination (or two months since you received the J&J shot), we recommend getting a booster shot. Boosters are free and available at many local pharmacies, as well as the County Public Health Department.

Please help us reduce disease transmission and severity of disease by getting a booster as soon as you can!



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