



Seaside vacancies hit library, city hall

Recruitment profile for city manager adopted

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

The city manager hiring process has officially begun.

The City Council unanimously adopted Jensen Strategies' city manager recruitment candidate profile and hiring process last Monday night, launching what could be a nationwide search.

"We're starting. We're under way," Mayor Jay Barber said.

Mark Winstanley, named city manager in 2001, will retire in June.

In adopting the city manager recruitment profile, the city committed to seeking a candidate with strong communication skills, strong working relationships and public safety knowledge, Jensen Strategies' associate Amelia Wallace said.

A bachelor's degree, experience and history of communication engagement are key candidate traits. Knowledge of emergency preparedness, public infrastructure, a tourism economy and housing issues are also considered essential.

They should have experience fostering an environment that maintains and enhances the council's ability to collaborate, set goals and navigate challenges, according to the profile.

With its adoption, Jensen will

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Former Gearhart school may become housing

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

The owner of the former Gearhart Elementary School wants to rezone the property and build up to 24 residential units.

While environmental consultants will not finish monitoring the 13 groundwater test pits until the end of April preliminary reports from the consultants about the septic carrying capacity on-site led the owners to seek city approval to rezone the entire 8.5-acre site to residential medium density, or R-2. "Information drives conclusions, and new information can change initial plans," Bob Morey of Scofi Gearhart LLC said.

Scofi's initial thought was that the septic capacity of the property might only accommodate a few residential units, Morey said. Consultants inspected 11 test pits in late summer 2021.

"The result of the inspection was that we needed to test ground levels over the winter of 2021-2022," he said. "By rezoning to the R-2 zone, the developer will retain the conditional use option to allow the main building to be used as a community meeting building."

The original school building was constructed in 1948 and added on to in 1968.

The Moreys purchased the 8.5-acre property in 2020. The school is zoned public/semi-public, with outright uses as government

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R.J. Marx

Unity

A message of solidarity in Gearhart for Ukraine as the country remains under invasion by Russia.

Overcoming impediments to match renters, homeowners

By KATHERINE LACAZE
Seaside Signal

Providence Seaside Hospital is partnering with the nonprofit Home Share Oregon to locally implement a program that could help alleviate the housing crisis in the region.

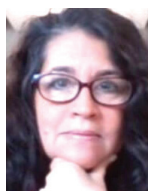
"We saw this as a great opportunity to take this concept and this service and expand it into the community," Chief Mission Officer Cherilyn Frei said.

Home Share Oregon brings the classic community tradition of home-sharing into the modern age utilizing technology to match renters to homeowners, and vice versa, based on compatibility.

Tess Fields, Home Share Oregon's executive director, launched the program two years ago as part of a larger nonprofit organization. It experienced rapid success and expansion, leading Fields to establish her own separate nonprofit entity in mid-2021.

Individuals and families can use Home Share Oregon's digital app to create a profile — whether they're looking to rent a room or have one to offer. Powered by Silvernest technology, the program helps facilitate background checks, legitimate rental agreements and access to mediation services, which all make the home-sharing process more secure and comfortable for both homeowners and renters.

The organization also has staff on the ground who can offer support to individuals who are ready to start their home-sharing journey but need assistance, Fields said.



Tess Fields

Housing challenges in Oregon

In Oregon, there are 1.5 million owner-occupied homes with a spare bedroom available, according to a press release from Providence. Simultaneously, homeowners throughout the state are spending more than 30 percent of their income on their mortgage payment, and one in three are what would be considered "mortgage burdened," according to Fields. This has contributed to an affordable housing crisis throughout the entire state of Oregon that extends to the North Coast.

Frei believes there is "a huge deficit in our area," for both workforce housing and general housing among community members.

Fields became familiar with Providence through the organization's work in Yamhill and Lincoln counties, and she saw an opportunity to expand awareness and representation in this region.

The Coast offers a unique opportunity because there is a significant amount of underutilized housing inventory, Fields said. While people are at the risk of being displaced, it's not because of a lack of available space.

However, many people can't afford to rent an entire home or apartment on their own at the current rates, but they can pay \$500 to \$800 to share a home with someone else.

Currently, Fields said, the biggest impediment to home-sharing "is that it's not the social norm." Her organization is working to shift perspectives and educate peo-

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R.J. Marx

Members of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce at the entrance to the Sunset Recreation Center.

A look ahead for Sunset Recreation Center

District strategic plan nears completion

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

As the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District prepares to finalize its strategic plan, executive director Skyler Archibald and marketing and special events manager Melissa Ousley led local business leaders on a tour of the facility.

The former Broadway Middle School is now in use, leasing office space to the Northwest Regional Education Service District, running day care programs and hosting regional basketball and sporting events. Thirty-four children are enrolled in after-school programs. Four of the building's six classrooms are in use.

"This building represents a lot of potential for us to increase the health impacts to our community, provide child care space, which is desperately needed, but also give adults, children, families, people of all ages an opportunity to have more space to move and meet together," Archibald said. "And that's really important for the health of our community."

The park district purchased

the building from the Seaside School District for \$2.15 million.

According to the strategic plan prepared by Sports Facilities Companies and Scott Edwards Architecture, Revenue forecasts, based on existing programs and new programs, show steady increases as sports tournaments, education, arts and fitness programs increase. Building rentals and vending also add to the financial revenue forecast.

While most spaces are usable for their intended purposes immediately, two short-term improvements for maximizing the use of the facility: repurposing the library for a membership-based fitness area and repurposing the cafeteria for higher-end special events.

More than \$125,000 funds from grants and donations will be used to improve security, gym and performance spaces and an indoor walking track.

The added space comes at an increased need for child care facilities. With Little Sprouts closing in June and Miss Tami's closing at the end of March, there is a real need for child care

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R.J. Marx

Katie McCloud of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce shares details of the Women in Business program.

Chamber's McCloud brings businesswomen together

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Katie McCloud of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce wants to bring businesswomen together. McCloud has posted interviews with prominent business women on the chamber of commerce website, and looks forward to bringing businesses together on an ongoing basis.

"It started as a last-minute idea — not really a solid idea," she said at the chamber March 9 morning meeting, held at Burly and the Bean Coffee Roasters on South Roosevelt Drive.

McCloud, the chamber's marketing and communications manager, started the "Women in Business" project, a multipart effort of the chamber and local businesses.

She started by approaching Ruth Swenson of the Hilltop Inn and Suites. "I said, 'Can you be my guinea pig?'" McCloud said. "She said, 'Of course I can.'"

"Careers though are what

you're committed to, and you should love what you do as a career," Swenson wrote in her response, posted on the chamber's Facebook and Instagram pages. "I think that would be one of the best pieces of advice I've got."

Swenson, Beach Books' owner Karen Emmerling, author and Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District manager of marketing and special events Melissa Ousley are among those who responded to the five questions posed by McCloud on the chamber's Facebook page.

The first question respondents are asked is how they got into the business they are in.

"The second question is, 'What would you tell your younger self?'" McCloud said.

Other questions provide an opportunity to give professional advice, what would you tell your past self if you could, and what advice would you give future business leaders.

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