

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Lily Haight with local news for July 15, 2020.

The city council continued its discussion of the Port Townsend Golf Course at a meeting on July 13. For the past 33 years, the golf course, located on Blaine Street, has been managed through lease agreements with the city. The most recent lease, with Gabriel Tonan Golf Shops, expires on December 31, 2020.

On Monday, Parks and Recreation Director Alex Wisniewski presented several options for opening the city's request for proposals to the city council, including broadening the request to allow private-public partnership ideas and alternate business proposals. A citywide survey on the use of public spaces conducted in the Fall of 2019 showed roughly 75% of respondents said they never use the golf course. In 2018, revenue from the golf course was \$250,000, significantly lower than the average for 9-hole golf courses nationwide, which is \$500,000.

City council members discussed the request for proposals for nearly two hours on Monday, debating expanding the use of the golf course beyond golfing. Wisniewski said that during the time the golf course was closed because of COVID-19, it was still used, just not by golfers. Instead, families used the space for walking or lounging in the grass. "There's not a huge segment of our community that tends to play golf, but everybody loves the open space that the golf course provides," he said. He added that there is frustration in the community from those who are non-golfers, and love the open space, but don't get the opportunity to enjoy it.

The city could draft the request to ask for mixed-recreation proposals, Wisniewski said, which would open the space up to both golfers and non-golfers, but retain it as an open public space. But by the end of the meeting, the city council requested Wisniewski draft a request that specifically asks for golf-related proposals, with some flexibility to course reconfiguration. The council plans to continue entertaining alternate ideas for the golf course from the community, while reviewing proposals.

City manager John Mauro said he hopes there can be a robust public process in conjunction with the request for proposals process. But the clock is ticking, since the lease expires at the end of the year. The city plans to publish the request for proposals in August and review proposals in October.

Two people aboard a Cessna 185 walked away with no injuries after their aircraft flipped upside down while landing at Jefferson County International Airport on July 13th.

According to East Jefferson Fire Rescue, the crash occurred around 1:30pm Monday. The pilot and his 6-year-old daughter, who were coming into town for lunch, were able to exit the plane themselves. According to Port director Eron Berg, the pilot said the plane caught a thermal uplift and crosswind while landing, which dropped the left wing and pushed the right wing upward. When the left wing hit the runway, the plane nosed over.

The Port immediately closed the runway, while Sheriff's deputies alerted the FAA and sent photographs to the National Traffic Safety Board, which will be investigating the crash.

Around 6pm, a recovery team removed the plane and the runway was reopened at 6pm on Monday. This comes less than a month after the airport's runway was resurfaced, but Berg said the crash was caused by external conditions and had nothing to do with the new runway which is in good condition.

Construction on the Kilisut Harbor bridge between Indian Island and Marrowstone Island is nearing completion. Traffic has switched over from temporary lanes onto the new 444-foot-long concrete bridge. Cars will still be restricted to a single lane. As construction crews begin final work on the bridge, roadway and channel below, drivers should expect a short wait at a temporary traffic light.

The project is a partnership between the Washington State Department of Transportation and the North Olympic Salmon Coalition. The land between Indian and Marrowstone Islands was once composed of tidal channels and salt marsh, which allowed juvenile salmon to migrate north from Oak Bay into the shallow waters of Kilisut Harbor. The causeway built in 1958 between Kilisut Harbor and Oak Bay choked the flow of water and sediment, eventually creating an artificial beach berm, according to the North Olympic Salmon Coalition.

The goal of the restoration project is to build a bridge that will help restore the natural processes and conditions of the 27 acres of marine intertidal habitat. The project will benefit species like salmon, shorebirds, waterfowl, shellfish and eelgrass. Construction is set to be complete in the fall of 2020.

And that's it for today's local news. KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. I'm Lily Haight. Thanks for listening.