

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Lily Haight with local news for December 30, 2020.

The number of COVID-19 cases in Jefferson County has increased to 219, after the Public Health department reported seven new cases so far this week. There are currently 41 test results still pending. Two of the most recent cases involve individuals from Port Townsend, while five are from the mid-county area.

We report the latest numbers here on KPTZ News during our regular broadcasts, but cases are increasing on a daily basis. For the latest numbers, including gender breakdown and cumulative percentages, visit the Jefferson County Public Health website (<https://jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/1466/Case-Information>) or the Jefferson County Government Facebook page.

The Port Townsend Police Department is currently investigating the death of a 23-year-old woman, who was found lying face down on the ground outside her trailer at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds yesterday morning. The cause of death is currently under investigation. Detective Jon Stuart is asking that anyone with information about the circumstances surrounding her death contact the Port Townsend Police Department at 360-344-9752.

The Port Townsend Creative District has put out a call for artists to develop a new infrastructure project. Back in May, the Washington State Arts Commission named the downtown and uptown historic districts in Port Townsend, as well as the historic campus of Fort Worden, as Washington State's newest creative district. As a designated creative district, our city will have access to more resources, grant opportunities, technical assistance, and networking for developing our artistic and creative community and preserving the historic nature of our town.

After receiving the designation, PT Main Street formed a Creative District subcommittee which has put out a call for artists or a team of artists to develop art elements for a new infrastructure project that will enhance the visibility of the Creative District. The project, according to a press release from the PT Main Street organization, will include design and fabrication of five Art Markers, as well as a design for small wayfinding signs that will help pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists find their way through the two ends of the Creative District, linking downtown, uptown, and Fort Worden together. The artists will be tasked with creating five large-scale art markers as well as one design for up to 60 small wayfinding signs – with hopes that the signs will be enjoyable art pieces as well as directional in nature, but containing no text.

If you are a local artist, and interested in submitting your work to be considered, go to the PT Main Street website (<https://ptmainstreet.org/>) for more information and a link to the instructions for submissions.

The MV Suquamish was the first ferry to sail into the newly constructed ferry terminal in Mukilteo yesterday after making its 5:35pm passage from Clinton, on Whidbey Island. Service on the ferry that travels between Mukilteo and Clinton was temporarily suspended on December 29 as the final touches were placed on the new terminal and the dock was moved to the new terminal area.

This is the first new ferry dock to be constructed in Washington in the past 40 years, and the entire project cost around \$187 million. The Mukilteo ferry is the most used in the entire ferry system. In 2019, the Mukilteo route

carried more than 4 million passengers. The Edmonds-Kingston route also had around 4 million passengers. In comparison, the Port Townsend ferry had nearly 850,000 passengers in 2019.

While our local ferry might not carry as many regular passengers, it is still vital to Port Townsend's economy. This fall, after the state announced potential cuts to the Port Townsend ferry service, the Port of Port Townsend worked with a group of local leaders to hire a consultant to complete an economic impact study. The study showed that in 2019, the ferry accounted for a total impact of around \$57 million per year in local spending, as well as 695 jobs and \$30 million in annual labor income to the Port Townsend/Jefferson County economy.

And when service goes down on the Edmonds/Kingston route – as it did on Monday for several hours after a pile of logs fell off of a logging truck onto the ferry's loading dock – the Port Townsend ferry can be our only source of connection back to the mainland.

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.