

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Lily Haight with local news for March 3, 2021.

The COVID-19 case count in Jefferson County is at 336, with just one new case reported yesterday. There are currently 5 active cases in isolation. With only seven new cases over the past two weeks, the COVID-19 case rate in Jefferson County has dropped from 28.21 per 100,000 to 18.81. For the most up to date numbers, visit the public health website (<https://jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/1466/Case-Information>) or the Jefferson County Facebook page.

Governor Jay Inslee announced yesterday that he plans to add preK-12 educators, school staff and licensed childcare workers to Washington's vaccination phase 1B-1. That means teachers and school staff will be able to schedule vaccine appointments with healthcare providers right away. To figure out if you are eligible for vaccination, use the state's Phase Finder tool (<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/VaccineInformation/PhaseFinderTool>). In a statement released last night, Inslee said he hoped that vaccination will give educators across the state more confidence to return to in-person learning. Inslee also said he is working to include those most at risk, including older adults and those facing the greatest equity gaps in the state's vaccination prioritization plan. He said he will soon announce when critical workers such as grocery workers, farmworkers, food processors, bus drivers, corrections workers, and others will be prioritized for vaccination.

The League of Women Voters hosted a Zoom meeting yesterday to share information about running for a seat on the Port Commission, since two of the three commission seats will be up for election this November. This meeting was the first in a series of info sessions on running for elected positions in Jefferson County.

Three of the seven city council seats are up for election in 2021. Mayor Michelle Sandoval – the longest-serving member of the council with 20 years under her belt – will not be running for re-election this year. Council members Ariel Speser and Pamela Adams also have terms coming to an end in 2021, and will have to decide in the coming months whether or not to run for re-election. For those interested in running for a seat on the city council, the League of Women Voters is hosting a virtual info session for potential future candidates on Friday, March 5 at 4pm.

There are also several school board seats that will be up for election this year. Three of the five Chimacum seats and two of the five Port Townsend positions are on the ballot as well as two positions on both the Brinnon and Quilcene school boards. The League of Women Voters will also be hosting a meeting about school board elections, on Friday, March 5 at 11am.

Visit the League of Women Voters website (<https://www.lwvwa.org/Jefferson>) for Zoom link information. The candidate filing period opens at 8:30am on May 17 and closes on May 21. Find more information about elections and how to file on the Jefferson County website (<https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/1268/For-Candidate-Filing>).

The Port Townsend Library reopened yesterday for the first time since the COVID-19 shutdown last year. But going to the library does not look the same as it did this time last year. The library is limiting visits to 15 minutes to "Grab and Go" – you can come in to quickly pick up your holds, browse the shelves, and check out

books using the self-check stations. The “Grab and Go” library access will be available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2 to 5pm and on Saturdays from 10am to 1pm.

There is a capacity limit of 10 people in the library at the time in order to meet physical distancing requirements. Masks that fully cover the nose and mouth are required for everyone over the age of 5. And anyone who has COVID-like symptoms will not be able to enter the library. Returned books, CDs, and other items must be placed into the book drop in order to go through a 24 hour quarantine period. The library will not reopen use of the Carnegie Reading Room, or access to in-library computers, meeting rooms, and study areas at this time. In-person programs and technology assistance is also unavailable, but the library offers online events and programs. Curbside pickup is still available Tuesday through Friday from 10am to 5pm and Saturdays from 10am to 1pm.

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.