

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Lily Haight with local news for January 19, 2022.

Jefferson County Public Health reported 107 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday. This includes all cases that were reported over the 3-day weekend. This brings our total case count, since the beginning of the pandemic, up to 2,123. There are currently 238 active cases in isolation and three Jefferson County residents are hospitalized. Our case rate has once again doubled – it's now at 1,460 per 100,000.

Jefferson County Public Health will be hosting two COVID-19 vaccine clinics this Saturday, January 22. The first will take place from 9-11am at Blue Heron Middle School, and the second will take place from 1:30-3:30pm at the Brinnon Community Center. The Pfizer vaccine will be available for ages 5 and older, the Moderna vaccine and Johnson & Johnson vaccine will be available for ages 18 and older. At these clinics, you can get your first, second, or booster dose. Walk-ins are welcome, but you can make an appointment online. Go to the Jefferson County Public Health website for more information (<https://www.jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/202/Public-Health>).

The county's search for a new county administrator is back on. After a round of interviews and finding a finalist for the position who later turned down the offer, the county commissioners will be rebooting their search for a new administrator this week. Using the executive search firm The Prothman Company, the county has boosted the salary range for the position and put focus on using social media in posting the job. The commissioners are also focusing on finding candidates that have experience in the government sector, but also the private and non-profit sector. And, they'll be focusing on candidates with ethnic and racial diversity. The entire hiring process is expected to take 5-6 months.

A special election is coming up on February 8. Port Townsend voters will see two propositions on their ballot – both for the Port Townsend School District.

- Proposition 1 is a resolution that, if approved, would authorize an excess tax levy of about \$3 million each year for three years starting in 2023 to pay for the expenses of educational programs and school support.
- Proposition 2 is a resolution that, if approved, would authorize an additional tax levy of about \$2 million each year for three years to support the construction, modernization and remodeling of school facilities.
- Voters in Quilcene will see one resolution on their ballot, which if approved, would authorize the school district to issue general obligation bonds of \$12.3 million to pay for the construction of a new grade school building to replace the existing grade school building, a new career and technical education building, and to pay for athletic facilities and field improvements.
- Voters in Brinnon will see a resolution on their ballots asking voters to decide whether or not excess taxes of about \$327,000 should be levied in 2023 and 2024 to provide funding for educational programs and District operations.

The last day to register to vote and still be able to vote in this special election is by January 31.

In other election news, a few local elected positions are going to be up for election this November. Commissioner Greg Brotherton's seat will be up for election, and he has already announced that he plans to run for re-election. He'll be facing Republican opponent Marcia Kelbon, who registered as a candidate in the race on November 15, according to the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission. On Kelbon's candidacy

website, she states that she believes the county is currently advancing what she calls a “troubling socialist agenda” by “spending money on handouts to the few rather than hand ups, and giving short shrift to key functions such as infrastructure, roads and law enforcement.” Brotherton, meanwhile, has spent a large amount of time in the past two years working with local agencies on housing solutions for the homeless population in Jefferson County. As a board member at OlyCAP, he helped finalize the plans for 43 units of affordable housing in Port Townsend, and since then has worked with his fellow county commissioners to buy land for a new “Housing Hub” which will be a location for a new homeless shelter, and a camping area for people to park their trailers and campers.

In addition to a county commissioner seat being up for election, Prosecutor James Kennedy, Sheriff Joe Nole, and District Court Judge Mindy Walker, all of whom were elected in 2018, will have to announce whether they plan to run again for their positions this year. But there is still some time for potential opponents to put together a campaign – after all, candidate filing week is not until May 16.

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.