

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Lily Haight with local news for February 16, 2022.

Jefferson County Public Health reported 16 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday. This brings our total case count, since the beginning of the pandemic, up to 2,890. There are currently 113 active cases in isolation and four Jefferson County residents are hospitalized. As always, you can find the most up to date case information at the Jefferson County Public Health website (<https://www.jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/1466/Case-Information>) or the Jefferson County Government Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/jeffcowagov/>).

Jefferson Healthcare announced yesterday that after a two-year hiatus, the Rhody Run will return this year, on May 22. In a press release, Jefferson Healthcare spokesperson Amy Yaley wrote that this year's Rhody Run will be a reimagined race, with a new 5-kilometer and 10-kilometer course for runners that will begin and end at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. In previous years, the race had started and ended at Fort Worden. Registration for the race is now open, at <http://rhodyrun.com/>. All the proceeds from the race will benefit local non-profit mental health resources in Jefferson County, as well as East Jefferson Rivals high school athletics. Race day volunteers are still needed – if you're interested you can reach out to ptrhodyrun@gmail.com. That's the same email you can reach out to if you're a food truck or vendor and you want to participate in the event festivities. The announcement of the Rhody Run might leave you wondering whether the Rhody Festival and all of its events will take place at the normal time this year, as it was canceled the last two years. Last August, a slightly smaller Rhody Parade and Cake Picnic took place downtown, but it may have left locals missing the good old days when the Rhody Festival took place while the namesake Rhodies were actually in bloom – in late May. Right now, the Rhody Festival Association has not said one way or the other – but a call for volunteers for the 2022 season might leave one to believe that festival planning is in the works, although it might be threatened by a lack of people to make it happen. On February 2, the Rhody Association posted on their website (<http://www.rhodyfestival.org/>) and Facebook account (<https://www.facebook.com/rhodyfestival/>) that their organization is in dire need of more volunteers, and that without some new life and ideas, the festival might not be able to take place. If you want to sign up to volunteer, visit rhodyfestival.org and fill out their volunteer application (<https://forms.gle/iUWsPL3Svyi9zAFd9>).

City manager John Mauro announced on Monday two new hires who will be starting to work for the city in the coming months.

Connie Anderson will be joining as Director of Finance and Technology, starting March 16. Anderson will be filling the role vacated by Nora Mitchell, who is retiring at the end of February. The Director of Finance and Technology is responsible for a range of functions at the city, including budgeting and financial reporting, forecasting and financial analysis, municipal audits, and IT security. Anderson, who currently works as the Deputy Administrative Services Director for the City of Sequim, will bring her experience to help take on leading the city's Financial Sustainability project which will kick off this year.

The city has also hired Carrie Hite, who will be joining the city staff as the first ever Director of Parks and Recreation Strategy. Hite will start April 1. She will be responsible for leading a three-year public and stakeholder engagement process around the future of our city's parks and recreation department. This project will include working with the public to decide the future of the city golf course, the Mountain View Campus, including the aging pool facility, and the associated funding needs for these projects. Hite is currently the

Director of Parks and Recreation for the city of Redmond. Previously, she worked as the director of parks for Edmonds, and the director of community services for Kirkland.

The city is still searching for a new director of planning and community development, after the resignation of Lance Bailey at the end of last year.

At 7:30 this morning, city workers were diverting traffic past the county courthouse from the Cass and Washington intersection where they are installing tiny permanent roundabouts to replace the temporaries put in place last year to slow motor traffic on Washington. A survey of effectiveness last Fall revealed that average speed was reduced by less than 5 mph, but the decision was made to replace the demonstration fixtures with permanent ones in 3 places along Washington, after the neighbors on Washington street raised the money for the installation.

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.