

Good afternoon and thanks for tuning in to 91.9 KPTZ FM. Happy Cinco de Mayo everyone. I'm Simon Jaynes in Port Townsend, Washington bringing you the local news for this 5th of May, 2022.

Jefferson Co Public Health reported 18 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday, bringing our total case count since the beginning of the pandemic to 3,526. There are currently 108 cases in active isolation and 1 person is hospitalized.

Jefferson Healthcare is planning to host virtual meetings to share the new hospital expansion project. Five scheduled virtual sessions will provide opportunities for the public to learn about planned building improvements and service expansion priorities for meeting the health needs of the community. Anyone may attend one of the five sessions. The first opportunity will be on Monday, May 9 at 1:30pm and the second session will be Thursday, May 12 at 1:30pm.

Each session will begin with a brief presentation about building improvements and service expansion. The remainder of each meeting is reserved for community questions and feedback. The meeting link and phone call-in information can be found on the Jefferson Healthcare website at <http://jeffersonhealthcare.org/event/expansion/>. Each meeting will be recorded and posted to their website for those unable to attend. Additionally, in-person presentations are planned for June and are dependent on community COVID-19 prevalence.

The City's Housing Fund Board will hold a special meeting tomorrow, May 6 at 2:30pm. The Housing Fund Board is part of the interlocal cooperation agreement adopted by the city and county in November of 2021. This was an effort to support affordable housing and homeless housing projects. During tomorrow's meeting, there will be discussion and potential action regarding the Bayside Housing request for Initiative-1590 funds, discussion and potential action regarding the same request from the Habitat for Humanity Critical Home Repair program, and an overall recommendation for use of 1590 funds. House Bill 1590 was enacted by the Washington State Legislature in 2020. It authorizes cities and counties to impose a sales and use tax up to one-tenth of 1% for affordable housing. At least 60% of the revenue generated by the one-tenth of 1% tax must be used for: constructing affordable housing and providing housing-related services; constructing mental and behavioral health facilities; or funding the operation of new units where housing-related programs are provided. The Housing Fund Board Meeting is open to the public via Zoom, and that link can be found through a search of the City of Port Townsend webpage or in the transcript to this broadcast (<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/91098454388>). Citizens can also submit public comments remotely, and board members will have an opportunity to read and consider these before the meeting. You can email your comments by using this dedicated email address: housingfund@co.jefferson.wa.us.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) has completed the annual water quality evaluation of the state's commercial shellfish growing areas. Unfortunately, high fecal bacteria levels will lead to harvest restrictions in four of Washington's 115 shellfish growing areas. An additional 19 areas currently meet water quality standards but are threatened with classification downgrades. State health officials are working with county partners, shellfish growers, and tribal governments to implement the required classification changes and to fix pollution problems.

The areas that do not meet the standards and are currently restricted are: Annas Bay (Mason County), Vaughn Bay (Pierce County), Port Susan (Snohomish County), and Henderson Inlet (Thurston County). Additionally, there are 4 areas in the local region on the watch list, threatened with a downgrade. These are: Dungeness and Makah Bay in Clallam County, Quilcene Bay in Jefferson County, and Miller Bay in Kitsap County.

According to Scott Berbells, manager of the Shellfish Growing Area, “Our state’s collaborative approach toward water quality improvement has led to the successful reopening of many shellfish harvesting areas. Clean water is the result of everyone doing their part.” People can help by maintaining their septic systems, picking up pet waste, using pump out stations for boats and recreational vehicles, and managing animal waste from large and small farms.

This week, May 2 through May 6, is National Teacher Appreciation week. So, if you have a student in our school district here there is still time to reach out to his or her teacher, send a note or a small gift with your child, or get in on one of the local efforts to bring a little joy to the teachers and staff in the area. Any parents of kindergarteners for the 2022-23 school year: mark your calendars for Kindergarten Family Night May 12 at 6:00pm.

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 Friday. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I’m Simon Jaynes, thanks for listening and have a great day.