

Hello, world! Thanks for tuning in to 91.9 FM KPTZ. I'm Simon Jaynes, I'm Sid James, with the local news for Port Townsend on this Thursday, July 14, 2022.

Another totally decent day on the way – sunny, breezy with a high of 65. There is no rain in the 10-day forecast for Port Townsend. There is a high-pressure system over the coastal waters and low pressure inland, which is keeping temperatures moderate through the weekend, as well as maintaining a chance of scattered showers elsewhere on the Olympic Peninsula.

Quite a full moon last night. 100 percent illuminated as it rose in the east, and tonight should be another spectacular moon viewing evening. Did you guys catch the moon last night? Why not? “Because there’s a house blocking our way.” This full moon has brought some major tide fluctuations. At 11 am this morning there was low tide of minus 3.72 ft. Two ferry runs from Port Townsend – the 8am and 9:30am – were cancelled for low tides, as well as two runs from Coupeville. Ferry service should be back on normal schedule at this point.

The Port of Port Townsend is completing final administrative steps to begin phase 1 of construction on the new breakwaters at Point Hudson. In May of 2022 the port publicly solicited a call for bids for the project. They received 3 sealed bids by the deadline of June 23 and from those 3, Port Staff has selected Orion Marine Constructors of Tacoma Washington. Orion’s bid for the project was \$10.66 Million. At yesterday’s Port Commissioner meeting the only question to be answered was whether to approve the contract immediately, or to wait until formal authorization had been received from the US Department of Commerce for the funding that will provide over half the project’s budget.

In an informational memo to the commissioners, Matt Klontz, the Port’s Capital Projects Director wrote, “It is important to note that the Port is still awaiting formal authorization to award this project from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). EDA is providing 50% of the overall project funding. Consequently, award of the project by the Port in advance of formal authorization is in the “at risk” category. In the unlikely event that EDA failed to authorize the award, the Port would be responsible for all contract costs. Port staff have closely coordinated with EDA and gauge the likelihood of EDA declining to authorize the project is extremely low. In order to maintain the very tight project schedule, including materials procurement, Port staff have concluded that it is in the best interest of the Port to proceed with the award “at risk”.

Klontz’s Memo continued with a “Motion to award the contract in the amount of \$10,662,321 to Orion Marine Constructors. Additionally, a motion to authorize the Port Director to enter to into a contract with Orion Marine and to execute any necessary change orders above the awarded amount up to amount budgeted for this project.” (Which the Port Engineer has earmarked at \$14.3 Million.) The commission completed authorization to award the bid and to execute the contract during its regular business during yesterday’s meeting. In doing so, moving this time sensitive project along its hopeful trajectory to begin demolition in September just after the Wooden Boat Festival and to have the Marina reopening in March of 2023. KPTZ will continue providing updates on this story as the project moves forward.

Yesterday the U.S House of Representatives Passed the “Honoring our PACT Act”, a piece of legislation designed to provide access to benefits and health care for toxic-exposed veterans through the VA. US Representative Derek Kilmer, who voted for the legislation representing Washington’s 6th District, issued a statement yesterday spelling out some of the issues this Act seeks to address. According to Kilmer, “From

Bremerton to Ocean Shores, Tacoma to Port Angeles, I've spoken with veterans in our region who are now dealing with severe health consequences after toxic exposure during their service. The Honoring our PACT Act will take a number of steps to support veterans, including:

- Providing priority health care for over 3.5 million toxic-exposed veterans.
- Providing extension of combat eligibility for health care from 5 to 10 years with a one-year open enrollment period for those veterans who missed their window.
- Conceding exposure to airborne hazards and burn pits based on locations & dates of service
- Establishing a presumption of service connection for 23 respiratory illnesses and cancers.

During his State of the Union address, President Biden said that he would be ready to sign comprehensive toxic exposure legislation into law if it came across his desk. Today, the House of Representatives has come one step closer to that goal.”

That's it for today's local news. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Simon Jaynes, I'm Sid James, thanks for listening and have a great day.