

This is Casey Dolan with your local news for Wednesday, December 21, 2022 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

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In a Zoom meeting online notable for its cordial exchange of ideas, Stakeholder Meeting #4 for Envision Port Townsend Golf Course and Mountain View Commons met yesterday. The meeting was titled “Concept Planning” with the subtitle “Planning for the Future.” In contrast to what had been previously reported on KPTZ, this was not a final meeting. It was the second stage – designated as Program Development – in what is envisioned as a four-stage process, an explanation and exploration of potential options that would be presented to the public in an Open House on January 11, 2023 at 5pm in the Fort Worden Commons.

The meeting was chaired by Chris Jones, a principal landscape architect with Groundswell, the company contracted to direct the project, and Carrie Hite, the Director of Parks & Recreation Strategy. A succession of speakers explained several graphic boards that offered various possible strategies. Ultimately, the committee decided to highlight three:

1. Adapted golf courses, in which the very nature and usage of the golf course would be converted to a different use, including affordable housing, a park for public trails, sports fields, or returning it to native Americans for their choice;
2. Hybrid golf courses, in which both a golf course and open space for whatever usage could exist on the same property; and
3. Revitalized golf courses, in which the property would maintain its identity as golf course but undergo improvements.

It was also suggested by guest Cameron Jones, an organizer for the Jefferson County chapter of Black Lives Matter, that an envisioning board be added to encourage imaginative solutions. Hite spoke of ongoing outreach efforts and had met with numerous community groups, creating comment cards on the project and a survey that could get out to people who could not attend the Open Houses.

Following the January Open House, draft concepts will be presented to the City Council. In Spring, there will be a second Open House to further review draft concepts, receive more input from the community and report to the City Council. A further third Open House will present a more or less final plan in late spring, along with a cost breakdown and final delivery to the City Council for approval. Rebecca Melvin, a landscape architect with Groundswell said, “How it will serve future generations, that’s the objective of this project.”

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As detailed in a press release yesterday from the office of US Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray of Washington, the two Democratic Senators announced that \$300 million for disaster assistance for fishing families impacted by cancelled crab and salmon harvests will be included in the final version of the Fiscal Year 2023 Omnibus Appropriations Bill. In a bipartisan letter this past November, Cantwell and Murray joined Republican Senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan calling on Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo to declare a fishery disaster. This is a necessary requirement before the Department of Commerce can begin distributing disaster funding.

Last week, the Department of Commerce declared federal fishery disasters for several recent Washington state salmon harvests and Alaskan crab harvests. Hundreds of commercial and Tribal fishermen in Washington state could be eligible for the \$300 million in appropriated funds. After the Secretary of Commerce declares a federal fisheries disaster, and the Congress appropriates funding, impacted fishing families, associated businesses, and

others may apply to the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fishery Disaster Assistance program or the fish commission for financial relief.

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The *Peninsula Daily News* reports that the Board of Jefferson County Commissioners added approximately \$600,000 to the existing county budget in the fourth quarter. At Monday's meeting, commissioners unanimously approved an additional \$545,555 in one-time expenses and \$15,805 in ongoing expenses, bringing the County's total 2022 expenditure from the general fund to more than \$3.5 million. According to Jefferson County Finance Director Judy Shepherd, much of the County's expenses are in personnel. Commissioners said the increase in expenditures was warranted in attracting and retaining experienced staff. Commissioner Greg Brotherton said, "I agree that \$1 million in salary increases is just the strategy that we've been talking about all year." And Commissioner Kate Dean said, "The thing I'm most pleased with is that we've been able to bring salaries up...That is a big jump for us but a critical one in order to maintain our workforce."

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KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us at [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). I'm Casey Dolan and I thank you for listening.