

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM. I'm Jim Burke, with local news and commentary for Friday, January 13, 2023.

As reported yesterday in the *PT Leader*, beginning March 1, the Port Townsend City Council's business meetings could start 30 minutes sooner. During Tuesday's business meeting, city council members unanimously approved the first of two readings of an ordinance switching business meeting start times from 6:30pm to 6pm. The council must OK the ordinance for a second time on Tuesday, January 17 in order for it to become official. Part of the need for a second reading comes from the city council desiring input from the public to ensure that the 6pm start works for both the public and the council. Councilmember Owen Rowe expressed interest in a second reading. Councilmember Aislinn Diamanti seconded that and said, "I think it would be good to try and get a little bit more input. We wanted feedback and there's not a lot of eyes on this particular meeting." Beyond the potential for better community engagement in meetings, the potential change would benefit city staff members who have to commute long distances home from city hall after council meetings. Currently, city council business meetings are still scheduled for 6:30pm.

As reported in the *PT Leader*, a new project by the Port of Port Townsend is erupting with life, despite being underwater. After removing the old rock from the north jetty as part of the ongoing replacement, those stones were repurposed. Roughly 1,500 tons of the cleanest and liveliest basalt rock were taken out and dropped down not far from the breakwater to create a rock nursery to house the aquatic life that had been previously living in the jetty. Eron Berg, executive director for the Port, said, "The primo rock was the rock that still had crustaceans, barnacles living on it, micro-algae. It was still alive." The idea for the new rock nursery originated from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Berg continued, "It came from WDFW as a way to provide some habitat and then we've just built on it." Though a host of wildlife has already moved into the nursery constructed from the north jetty, more neighbors will be moving in soon.

While rock from the south jetty will not be repurposed in the same way, its residents will receive help relocating. Berg explained, "We had a permit to demolish the south breakwater which would necessarily mean probably squishing whoever lives in it. We had to get a different permit that would allow us to pick the creatures up and move them to their new home, and we got that last week." Listeners of KPTZ News may recall that the reconstruction of the north jetty at Point Hudson Marina has been underway since last September, and looks to be ahead of schedule, but the contractor, Orion Marine Group, must finish work by March 1. The south jetty reconstruction will start this September, just days after the Wooden Boat Festival ends. Over the summer, a team of volunteer divers will do the heavy lifting of the sea creatures from their current abode in order to offer them what will hopefully be a long-term, sustainable future in the new nursery.

There are some divers who have already been out exploring the habitat. A video of a dive in November of last year, just two weeks after the structure was installed, shows a variety of species thriving amongst the rocks with plenty of perch, throngs of rockfish, scores of sea stars, and a slew of giant sea cucumbers sharing their new neighborhood like old friends. For those who want to explore deeper, the video of that dive can be found on the transcript of this newscast (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITZn2NnNv-w>) or on the *PT Leader* website.

A follow up to some of the news from last week:

- The sewer repairs on Water Street seem to be finished, but the Port Townsend Public Works is scoping out the rest of the sewer system from the inside to see where upgrades might be needed. As reported on the front page of the *PT Leader* this Wednesday, the City of Port Townsend will send a remote camera

through downtown sewer pipes in hopes of preventing a future calamitous break in a sewer main like the one that happened in late December near the ferry terminal. City officials expect the camera probe to be completed in the next week or so. The pipe that broke was installed near Water and Gaines Streets and was installed more than half a century ago.

- And, that utility pole that was leaning due to the sand cliff slide next to Water Street has been straightened and reinforced with two wire stays.
- At the Northwest Maritime center there was a backhoe moving large debris off the boat ramp there on Tuesday. There is a sign up at the boardwalk on the railing overlooking Port Townsend Bay, that reads: "PLEASE KEEP CLEAR. Boardwalk was impacted by storm debris. Please bear with us as we make needed repairs. THANK YOU." At the bottom of the sign is the Northwest Maritime Center Logo and their motto: "THE SEA IS THE MOST POWERFUL TEACHER WE KNOW."

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and five Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening!