

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM. I'm Jim Burke, with local news and commentary for Tuesday, February 14, 2023.

Happy Valentine's Day! It's also a special election day in Jefferson County. There are two Levy Lid Lifts for East Jefferson Fire Rescue (EJFR) District 1. EJFR Fire Chief Bret Black was quoted in the *PT Leader* recently and said, "Our revenue cannot grow without a community-approved measure – without the vote of the community – more than 1%, so over the past 10 or 11, 12 years, we have not kept up with inflation." For more information about East Jefferson Fire Rescue, their strategic plan, and the Levy Lid Lift, go to <https://www.ejfr.org>.

We have an exclusive interview with EJFR Chief Black on *Attention Please!* our weekly newsmagazine which aired yesterday and is available at KPTZ.org as a podcast. The Brinnon Fire Department, Jefferson County Fire Protection District 4, is bringing its own set of tax propositions to the ballot for the special election today. There are 2 ballot drop boxes outside and one inside the Jefferson County Courthouse, at the Brinnon Community Center, Jefferson County Library, and at the Gateway Visitors Center, 93 Beaver Valley Road in Port Ludlow. As long as they are postmarked today, they can also be sent in by mail.

The Agenda and Meeting Materials for the Special Business Meeting of the Port of Port Townsend Commission on February 15 have been posted. The Port Commission has a meeting on Wednesday, February 15 – that's tomorrow – at 1pm. The action item before the Commission is Authorization to Purchase Short's Family Farm. The full meeting agenda is here on the transcript of this newscast (<https://portofpt.com/wp-content/uploads/2023-02-15-CommSpecialMtg-Agenda.pdf>) and the public is invited to attend either in person or online. The Port will be meeting in person at the Point Hudson Pavilion Building at 355 Hudson Street and also online.

The Port welcomes your comments! To send a public comment for the meeting, email the Port at publiccomments@portofpt.com by 11am tomorrow, February 15. You may also "raise your hand" during the live Public Comment portion of the agenda (either in person, or online). If you need more detailed instruction on how to attend this Zoom meeting or have any questions, please feel free to call Joanna at the Port Administration Office at 360-385-2323.

COVID-19 numbers were updated yesterday for Jefferson County. Jefferson County Public Health reports that 36 new cases were added in the past week, so there have been 6,856 cases of COVID-19 since the pandemic began. The case rate the week before last was 168 per hundred thousand, but now it has risen again to 237 per hundred thousand. The County estimates only 1 in 14 cases are currently being reported, so despite the case rate having fallen into the moderate category last time, it is now officially high again, and extremely high if we multiply: Over 3,300 cases per hundred thousand and about 360 new cases in the past week. Thankfully there is no one currently hospitalized and no new deaths have been reported, leaving the total number of those who have died at 34 due to COVID-19 in Jefferson County.

For all data, there is a link on the transcript for the Jefferson County Public Health Covid-19 Dashboard. That page is now being updated every week (<https://jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/1466/Case-Information>). It is still strongly recommended that we all wear a high-quality, well-fitting mask in public indoor settings. (Dr. Allison Berry's next health report to the BOCC will be on Tuesday, February 21. You can ask questions by sending them to contactus@kptz.org by noon this Friday, February 17.)

As reported yesterday in the *PT Leader*, a Coast Guard helicopter rescued two people from the Hood Canal Sunday night after the pair were unable to maneuver their rowboat due to strong winds and currents. Watchstanders at Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound in Seattle received a report at 6:18pm February 12 of two people aboard a rowboat in Hood Canal. The pair had reportedly been struggling to maneuver their vessel for more than two hours due to strong currents and 35- to 40-knot winds. A 45-foot Response Boat-Medium boat from Coast Guard Station Seattle was sent to the scene, and a Coast Guard MH-65 Dolphin helicopter was launched from Air Station Port Angeles. The aircrew arrived on scene at 7:45pm, deployed a rescue swimmer, and hoisted both people into the helicopter. The aircrew then transported both people to Bremerton National Airport where they met family members. The pair were in stable condition following the rescue, according to the Coast Guard.

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