

This is Casey Dolan with your local news and commentary for Wednesday, May 24, 2023 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

Last Thursday, U.S. Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell announced that crabbers and salmon fishers in Washington State and Alaska will receive more than \$220 million in federal disaster relief funds for the canceled crabbing and fishing season. The aid covers Bristol Bay king crab harvests suspended for two years and the snow crab harvest that will be canceled for the first time in 2023. Among the other fishery disasters that are covered are 2019 Washington Columbia River, Willapa Bay, Puget Sound Salmon Fisheries, and the 2020 Washington Ocean Salmon Fisheries. Cancellations of the 2022/2023 Bering Sea snow crab, the 2022/2023 Bristol Bay red king crab, and the 2021/2022 Bristol Bay Red King Crab harvests have caused an estimated \$288 million in economic losses for fisheries. Cancellations of the 2020 Washington Ocean Salmon Fisheries, which impacted non-Tribal ocean catch quotas for Chinook and Coho salmon, resulted in revenue losses of 50% based on preliminary data.

An episode of public affairs network TVW's "Inside Olympia" coming up this Thursday night at 7pm focuses on local news, its impact on Washington state, and the threats local news outlets are faced with. The hour-long segment hosted by Austin Jenkins, a reporter for Northwest News Network, and is about the findings of "The Decline of Local News and Its Impact on Democracy," a two-year study by the League of Women Voters of Washington. Since 2008, Washington state has lost 20 of its weekly newspapers and three dailies. It has lost 67 percent (!) of its newsroom staff. The League study determined newspaper closures and reductions in coverage and staffing throughout Washington have resulted in the same negative impacts seen nationally since the crisis began in about 2008. Those impacts include reduced voter participation, fewer candidates for local public office, challenges to public health campaigns, increased political partisanship, less community involvement, and increased costs in government. The study features commentary from more than 50 individuals, including professors, researchers, elected officials, journalists, publishers, civic leaders, and public health officers. As a result of the study, the 2,400-member League has developed a public policy position calling for the support of conditions under which credible local journalism can thrive and survive.

The City of Port Townsend has announced the appointment of Matt Logue as the new Building Official in a City press release. Logue possesses a 30-year background in the construction industry and experience as the City's Building Inspector. In his new job as Building Official, he will oversee the day-to-day operations related to building permits administration, building inspection, and other related activities. His responsibilities include managing, coordinating, and supervising the Building Division's permit, plan review, and inspection activities. Matt Logue enthused over his appointment and said, "I am honored to serve as the Building Official for the City of Port Townsend. I am committed to fostering a collaborative environment, providing exceptional service, and ensuring the highest standards of construction safety for our community. I share the community's pride in the City's rich history, stunning art and architecture that's a true haven for builders, dreamers, and those who push the boundaries of creativity."

The City of Port Townsend is choosing an alternative to press releases and meetings in order to communicate its intentions. It has launched the first of five short videos showcasing their Financial Sustainability Project and meant to inform and inspire public awareness and engagement on a host of interrelated decisions facing the

community over the coming years about our collective future. The videos can be seen on the City's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CityofPT/>) and on the City website (<https://cityofpt.us/engagept/page/videos>). The first video out this week is an introduction to the project. A video on streets will launch next week, followed by a parks video the following week, a housing video after that, and finishing with a video on core services and what's next.

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. I'm Casey Dolan and I thank you for listening.