

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. I'm Jim Burke, with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, July 25, 2023.

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Last Thursday, we reported on the departure of Brian Kelly who was the managing editor of the Port Townsend and Jefferson County and Port Townsend *Leader*, who left the paper on Tuesday, July 18 at the end of the workday. Having spoken yesterday with Brian, we issue this correction now to establish that he chose to resign from the paper of his own volition with July 18 as his scheduled departure date. Certainly the reasons for his exit are between him and the management of the *PT Leader*. Here at KPTZ News we apologize for any confusion created by our news report. Be assured we always endeavor to be rigorous and thorough in our reporting. Also, the archived broadcast and transcript available on the website for July 20 have been revised to reflect this correction.

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Port Townsend City Council voted unanimously this week to form a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) with an aim to raise revenues specifically for use on local street projects in Port Townsend. The City of Port Townsend has struggled to keep up with local street projects and improvement needs, particularly in the past few decades in the face of declining state funding for such needs. Over 110 cities in Washington have formed TBDs. Mayor David Faber said, "We have heard consistently from our community that our streets are in terrible shape and getting worse. I agree. I'm grateful for a unanimous Council decision to form a Transportation Benefit District which can consider taking long-awaited action to not just to slow our decline or hold ground, but to make actual, tangible progress to fix our failing street system."

Now formed by City Council, the District (governed by Port Townsend City Council) is expected to meet on August 1 to consider revenue options, including sales tax and vehicle license fees (car tabs). The District can impose up to 0.1% sales tax or up to 0.3% sales tax with a public vote. The District can also consider a \$20 car tab fee for local vehicles or go to a public vote to consider up to \$100. A 0.3% increase in sales tax would generate approximately \$800,000 annually for local streets; a \$20 car tab fee would generate \$186,000 annually for local streets.

A Transportation Benefit District (TBD) has been discussed for many years as a potential funding source, including during the development of the Comprehensive Streets Program that started in 2021. The Comprehensive Streets Program looks holistically at the city's 80+ mile street system, competing priorities and needs, and opportunities and strategies for making progress on a system largely in a state of disrepair.

The Comprehensive Streets Program includes four main categories (or chapters): street operations, street improvements, street preservation, and street programming. The City Council Infrastructure and Development Committee has been discussing the Comprehensive Streets program and funding like the TBD. Those materials can be found at <https://cityofpt.us/engagept/page/comprehensive-streets-program>.

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Washington State Governor Jay Inslee has issued a proclamation declaring the week of July 21-27 to be statewide Paddle Safe Week. In partnership with the Washington State Parks Boating Program, Paddle Safe Week will lead a statewide effort to create a culture of safety around paddle sports. The campaign recognizes that Washington's diverse waterways require different skills, preparation, and safety equipment. In the last five years, paddlers have come to represent 55% of the statewide recreational boating fatalities. Growing popularity and lack of safety education have contributed to this shift.

Boating Program Manager Rob Sendak said, “Paddle Safe Week is a great opportunity to help reduce paddle sports-related fatalities by sharing resources and educating the community on how to recreate safely.”

Get Educated – Find classes through local clubs and outfitters, city and county parks and recreation departments, and online.

Always use a SUP Leash – Stay tethered to the paddleboard for extra flotation and a chance to stay alive in an accident. For stand-up paddlers, a leash is a necessity.

Carry Essential Gear – Carry the essentials for safety, emergency communications and comfort.

Check and Understand the Weather – Check the weather frequently before and during each trip, keeping an eye on current conditions and forecasts.

Protect Against Cold Water Shock – Avoid the biggest risk, which is not hypothermia but cold-water shock. Cold water shock occurs in the first stage of immersion (from an accidental fall overboard). Be prepared. Wear a life jacket.

File a Float Plan – Before heading out, study the intended route, and let someone know the plan.

Paddle with a Group – Go out with at least three people and stay close enough for visual or verbal contact.

Avoid Alcohol and Drugs – Stay alert and maintain situational awareness. These are key for safety on the water.

Learn how to self-rescue – Know how to get back in or on the craft. Paddlecraft are typically safe, but there’s a higher risk of going overboard and becoming an accidental swimmer.

Label your Paddlecraft – Use a sticker or some other means to provide contact information for privately owned paddlecraft. When empty paddlecraft are found adrift, it’s assumed someone is in danger. Calling the owner of a craft found adrift can help prevent unnecessary searches and free up resources.

Be Visible to Other Boaters – Paddle to be seen. Wear bright neon and contrasting colors, put highly reflective tape on paddles, use a flagpole and carry a bright light.

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KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you 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). This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening!