

This is Casey Dolan with your local news and commentary for Wednesday, October 25, 2023 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

The Board of Jefferson County Commissioners voted unanimously Monday to update the county's building code. Changes will go into effect once the state adopts its updated code from 2021. However, 2024 is when the council will yet again update its code, and there's a possibility the 2021 code updates might be skipped entirely. Phil Cecere, Jefferson County fire marshal and building inspector, was quoted in the *Peninsula Daily News* as saying, "I got a little insider information that the State Building Code Council is going into a special session to engage in emergency rule-making to adopt the significant changes of the 2021 fire code, just the fire code, and implement them into the 2018 code in preparation for potentially skipping the '21 code."

The state building code states what requirements buildings must have in order to be permitted, and counties are allowed to make certain exemptions to accommodate local needs. Commissioners first heard public feedback on the proposed changes earlier this month and had requested additional clarification on exemptions for agricultural buildings and minor construction. On Monday, commissioners approved amendments that clarified what kinds of agricultural construction do not require a building permit – such as water systems not connected to a septic system – and the financial threshold for what's considered minor construction – currently \$1,500 as set by the state building code. Minor construction exemptions do not include projects where there is a life and safety component such as a connection to natural gas. According to the *Peninsula Daily News*, the meeting documents said that the updated building codes outlined by the state are likely to increase the upfront cost of construction.

The following story contains material that some listeners may find disturbing. Listeners are cautioned.

According to the *Peninsula Daily News*, Phoenix David Cote, 21, of Port Angeles will stand trial for four days beginning January 8 on one count of second-degree child rape and three other child sex offense charges. Cote was arraigned last Friday and pleaded not guilty. He was released after posting a \$15,000 bond. He was required to have no contact or communication with a female younger than 16 unless he was biologically related and to remain at least 1,000 feet away from his victim. The most serious charge of child rape is a Class A felony, punishable by up to life imprisonment and/or a \$50,000 fine.

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission has officially launched a redesigned and improved parks.wa.gov website. The refresh comes after many years of feedback from parks visitors that they struggled to find information on the website, especially when using a mobile device. Nearly 400 current and potential Washington State Parks visitors provided feedback on the design of the new parks.wa.gov website. New features include an increased ability to search for parks based on their location, features, and amenities; access information using assistive technology such as screen readers, screen magnification, speech recognition software, or keyboard and trackball mice; and to more easily get to the reservation system.

For the past week, conflicting weather prediction models have made our future uncertain, but it seems that the Global Forecast System predicted correctly this time and a polar lobe moving south over the relatively warm

waters of the Pacific picked up steam, moving inland to create unseasonably cold conditions. Be prepared over the next few days for some frigid nights in the 30s, and snow in both the Cascades and the Olympics.

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.