

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. I'm Jim Burke, with your local news and commentary for Friday, November 10, 2023.

Derek Kilmer, who represents the 6th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, announced that he will not seek re-election in 2024. The Port Angeles native, elected to Congress in 2012, released the following statement: "Over most of the past decade, each time I boarded the plane to DC, I would email my kids, Sophie and Aven, to explain to them why I was leaving – and what I'd be working on while we were apart. When they were little, those letters were elementary. 'This week, I'll be working for more jobs in our region' or 'I'll be fighting this week against things that might make it harder for you to have clean air or good health care.' My letters always ended with 'Be good. I love you.' Later, the letters became more complicated (covering Russia's invasion of Ukraine, immigration reform, and the intricacies of the congressional appropriations process).

"But a common thread in each of these letters was this – I tried to communicate to them that every day, in every way, I was trying to make things better for their generation – and for their country...It's been an extraordinary honor to do this work – not just on behalf of my kids but also on behalf of the nearly 800,000 other folks who reside in Washington's Sixth Congressional District.

"I am proud of my work leading the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress (aka 'The Fix Congress Committee'). That group of Democrats and Republicans were, to use the words of former Secretary John Gardner, 'loving critics' of Congress. We passed over 200 proposed reforms to make Congress work better, and I'm proud that more than a quarter have already been fully implemented....

"It's been an honor representing my hometown of Port Angeles – and the entire Olympic Peninsula. My upbringing – seeing the challenges facing our region – motivated my service. It's why the core mission of my office has been to create more opportunities for more people in more places...I intend to continue working on these issues through the completion of my term – and beyond...The work I've gotten to do every day was part of a contract signed by the people of the district I represent. I'll forever be grateful for that honor.

"As nourishing as this job has been, it has come with profound costs to my family. Every theatrical performance and musical recital I missed. Every family dinner that I wasn't there for. The distance I felt from my family for months after the events of January 6th. I am conscious that I didn't always deliver in the way I wanted; and I hope they will forgive me for that. And I hope they know that I was really trying to do my best to make the world better for them. No matter how the next chapter is written, I'll keep telling my kids 'Be good. I love you.'"

The City of Port Townsend issued a press release saying that the Discovery Road Bikeway, Roadway, and Sidewalk Project is entering its most visible phase of construction. The construction is between the Rainier Street roundabout and Salish Coast Elementary School, about three quarters of a mile. Work started on October 30 and is progressing on schedule. To safely complete work on the south side of Discovery Road, the eastbound lane will be closed between 14th Street and McClellan Street from November 15 to March 21, 2024. Planning for the Discovery Road Project started in 2018 and is funded by grants from many different state and federal agencies, including: The Transportation Improvement Board (TIB), Washington State's Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program, and the Regional Surface Transportation Program (STP). The City went through a rigorous grant application process and can only use the awarded funding for the Discovery Road Project.

The work between Rainier Street and McClellan will include repaving the road and constructing sidewalks on both sides of the street. And a two-way bikeway will connect the bike lanes on Rainier Street with the bike lanes in front of Salish Coast Elementary. The project includes new streetlights and enhanced crossing for pedestrians as well. Other features of the project – street lighting, water and sewer upgrades, stormwater management – there will be drainage swales and other low-impact development strategies to manage stormwater, and enhancements to the wetland on the northside of Discovery Road (across from Howard and Eddy Streets).

During the construction, students and employees will have normal access to Salish Coast Elementary, and school buses will continue to pick up and drop off students at the usual locations. Anyone using the single lane along Discovery Road is asked to plan for 20-minute delays, but longer delays are possible during high-traffic times of day. The City asks that all motorists drive slowly near the work zone and in the surrounding area as a courtesy to the school, the neighborhood, and for safety.

The City of Port Townsend encourages us to keep up to date about the Discovery Road Project. If you would like to be added to the email list, please sign up at <https://cityofpt.us/newsletter/subscriptions>.

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. This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening.