

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. I'm Jim Burke, with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, November 14, 2023.

The windstorm we experienced Friday night into Saturday morning was particularly difficult for the owner of the 36-foot ketch *Touchstone*. She was grounded after slipping off her anchorage during that windstorm that blew across Port Townsend Bay. Many in the community watched from the Bayview restaurant and the shore near the ferry dock on Water Street on Saturday as *Touchstone* was righted and towed. After many hours of effort, many who commented on Facebook praised the good work of Salish Rescue of Port Townsend. The winds reached 66 miles per hour overnight Friday into Saturday morning. As of Sunday, Braith Miller, the owner of the *Touchstone*, expressed gratitude on Facebook for the assistance from the maritime community in Port Townsend. He said he was already patching holes in the still swamped boat.

The *Peninsula Daily News* reported that State Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz is dropping out of the race for governor to run for U.S. Rep. Derek Kilmer's 6th Congressional District seat following his announcement to not seek re-election in 2024. Jefferson County Commissioner Kate Dean of Port Townsend is considering a run for that seat, as is Republican state Sen. Drew MacEwen, of Union, Washington.

Washington's 6th Congressional District covers the entire Olympic Peninsula and includes all of Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, and Grays Harbor counties as well as part of Pierce County, including part of the city of Tacoma. With a population of roughly 773,000, the district has consistently voted Democrat for president and Congressional representatives for more than 20 years. Franz, a Democrat, in a statement issued Friday said, "The challenges we face extend beyond the borders of Washington, and so must our solutions. I am running for Congress to bring my vision for bold, transformative action to our nation's capital and keep fighting for families across our region." In an email, Franz said she'll focus on continuing Kilmer's record of economic development.

Franz said, "I'll be focused on lowering costs that are pushing working families out of the middle class....I'll also prioritize supporting our veterans and military families and ensuring they have affordable healthcare, childcare and housing. And of course, taking on the climate crisis that threatens all of us, but especially coastal communities." Franz's campaign also said she's been endorsed by several politicians already, including Kilmer and state Rep. Mike Chapman of Port Angeles.

Also considering a run for the seat is Republican state Sen. Drew MacEwen of Union. In a phone call, MacEwen said he was forming an exploratory committee and would start taking formal steps to run in the coming weeks. MacEwen has served as state Senator for the 35th Legislative District, which covers Mason County and parts of Kitsap and Thurston counties since 2013 and said he knows the district well.

MacEwen said of his priorities for Congress, "We've got to get some economic stability. Inflation is out of control. There's a massive tax burden coming from the top down." And he said of the partisanship in the House, "There comes a time when you've got to change an organization by injecting civility into it. I have a strong record of bipartisanship and I'll take that same bipartisanship and civility with me to Washington (DC)." MacEwen said ensuring funding for infrastructure and the local military are key, as is strengthening the employment sector and continuing to grow the use of the area's natural resources.

Dean, a Democrat, has also expressed interest running for Kilmer's seat, although she has yet to formally declare her candidacy. Dean said in an interview with the *Peninsula Daily News* that she would take some time

to seriously weigh the feasibility of running but that she's always been interested in the position and said she would prioritize federal dollars for housing, keeping infrastructure funding coming to the county, and ensuring reproductive rights. Dean said, "Most of the federal housing programs don't favor rural areas, so we don't compete very well for those dollars. I really believe our district should put forward somebody who's lived and worked here."

Despite the increased partisanship in the U.S. House of Representatives – I'm noticing a theme here – Dean said she still has faith in America's democracy and ability to function. Dean said, "We need people willing to engage. The worst thing is when politics gets so dysfunctional that people don't throw their hat into the ring." And in the *PT Leader* there was an interview with Commissioner Dean. She said of the open seat, "I've always wanted to be in Congress and I've always wanted this job. It's where a lot of important issues are playing out." It's already an uphill battle, as Hilary Franz received several immediate endorsements, including one from Representative Kilmer. Dean said, "I'm disappointed with the political process. It's really unfortunate that powerful people are putting their thumbs on the scale. I respect Hilary Franz, but there are a lot of good Democrats who would like a chance at this."

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can reach out to us at news@kptz.org. This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening.