

This is Casey Dolan with your local news and commentary for Wednesday, January 17, 2024 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

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An effort in Washington State to exclude former President Donald Trump from the upcoming state ballots has been defeated in a Kitsap Court. Many news outlets are reporting that eight challengers went before Kitsap County Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Bassett yesterday to fight against the inclusion of Donald Trump on the presidential primary and general election ballots in Washington. Judge Bassett took about 10 minutes to decline a hearing of the latest challenge to former President Donald Trump's eligibility for the state's 2024 ballot, believing Kitsap was not the appropriate venue. He said that the issue should be heard in Thurston County, home of the state capital city of Olympia, where the eight Kitsap challengers also filed their identical January 10 challenge to Trump's eligibility. Bassett said, "Considering that the litigants are seeking a statewide application, I do not believe that Kitsap County is an appropriate venue for this today." In a legal filing, the eight Kitsap County voters argue that former President Trump should be disqualified due to his actions on January 6, 2021. They claim that he 'engaged in an insurrection' and 'attempted to overthrow the election of Joe Biden through violence.' Several states are currently undertaking similar efforts. This initiative is based on Section 3 of the 14th Amendment of the Constitution, which specifically disqualifies government officials who have been involved in acts of insurrection or rebellion from holding office.

The Republican response was predictably scathing. According to an email from Jim Walsh, the chair of the Washington State Republican Party, the hearing is described as a "pathetic show." Walsh wrote, "Eccentric readings of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution by angry weirdos have nothing to do with the upcoming presidential election." Frankey Ithaka, one of the eight challengers, told Bassett in a packed courtroom, "Our intention is for (the challenge) to be statewide, so that's why we also filed in Thurston because we didn't know if Kitsap had jurisdiction to have that motion." The hearing in Olympia is scheduled for tomorrow at 8:30am in Thurston County Superior Court.

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The *Peninsula Daily News* reports that City of Port Townsend officials are looking at raising rates for sewer and stormwater in the coming months as the city looks toward the next 20 years of sewer infrastructure. The city intends to conduct public outreach about proposed rate hikes and fees that could help pay for upgrading and expanding the city's sewer systems.

Public Works Director Steve King said during a workshop meeting of the city council on January 8 that "Most of our pipe network is beyond its design life. We can't say this is the exact amount of pipe that needs attention right now, but what we can do is invest incrementally each year. Right off the bat, we are looking at an investment level of \$20 million over the next five years." In August, consultants hired by the city projected up to \$140 million worth of expenses in the next two decades as the city looks to replace more than 75 miles of piping and upgrades and expands its wastewater treatment facility. Any new rates are scheduled to go into effect April 1.

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The *PT Leader* reports that Dr. Tigran Arakelyan, artistic director of the Port Townsend Symphony, was recently named among the Top 30 Professionals of the Year by Musical America Worldwide, the oldest classical music magazine in America. He had already been named among the 40 Under 40 for Washington state by *425 Business* magazine earlier in 2023. The Armenian-American conductor, podcaster, and radio host has

held conducting positions with the California Philharmonic and Los Angeles Youth Orchestra, in addition to his Walt Disney Concert Hall conducting debut in 2019.

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At about 8pm January 13, a large trailer carrying fuel overturned near Milo Curry Road and South Discovery Road. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office and East Jefferson Fire and Rescue were dispatched and reported that the driver attempted to turn around on the dead end of Milo Curry Road. There were no injuries nor any dangers to the environment, despite some local residents reporting a smell of fuel. The Larry Scott trail head near this location had been closed, but has now been reopened.

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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](mailto:news@kptz.org). I'm Casey Dolan and I thank you for listening.