

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. I'm Diane Walker with local news and commentary for Thursday, March 28, 2024.

The *Peninsula Daily News* reports that Port Angeles High School had to evacuate its campus just after 3pm on Tuesday after receiving a bomb threat in a phone call. "This caller said that three bombs had been placed at the school and they would go off in 30 minutes," High School Principal Jeff Lunt wrote in an email to parents. Although the school day ends at 2:55pm, there were still a number of students on campus, Lunt said. "Per our procedures, we evacuated the school grounds of all students and staff as a precautionary measure," he added. Port Angeles police traced the call to Indiana and said it was likely generated by artificial intelligence through a "spoofed" number. The school campus was searched thoroughly, but nothing suspicious was found.

The City of Port Townsend posted on the Port Townsend Community Facebook page about yesterday's water outage. Though planned for the area around Discovery Road and 14th Street, the outage affected several businesses on West Sims Way, McPherson Street, and Eddy Street, as well as several additional streets in the area. The city claims door hangers were posted to notify affected businesses and residences, but locals claim they were never notified. Water pressure was apparently restored a little after noon.

According to a front-page article in this week's Port Townsend *Leader*, it'll be a while before the pool decision makes it to our ballot boxes. County commissioners have been collecting applications for folks to serve on the newly formed aquatic center task force, to be named the Healthier Together Task Force. The task force is charged with evaluating the various options under consideration for the new pool and will look at alternate locations and construction methods as well as reviewing the record to date.

Kate Dean, commissioner for Jefferson County District 1, explains that one purpose of the task force is to ensure sufficient feedback is solicited from Jefferson County Districts 2 and 3, so that representatives of all three county districts can potentially speak to alternate building locations and funding mechanisms. The task force will also include two at-large representatives from the JeffCo Aquatic Coalition who reside outside the city of Port Townsend. Dean believes it's likely that the task force members from each county district will be selected over the course of next week. The plan is to schedule two task force meetings per month, from April through June, at which time the task force is expected to make its final recommendation. Dean has acknowledged that public resistance was significant to the previously proposed building location and funding mechanism. And she pledged that the final report from the Department of Commerce would be posted online for public transparency. Commissioners will be seeking representation of geographic, economic, gender, age, racial, and ethnic diversity through their appointments to the task force.

The *Peninsula Daily News* reports that the homeless shelter in the basement of the American Legion Hall in Port Townsend is set to close at the end of April unless additional funding can be found to keep the program running. The shelter costs \$25,000 to \$30,000 a month to operate, which had previously been covered by grants, including pandemic relief funds, but those dollars are no longer available. Even if funding were provided, it's not clear that OlyCAP would be able to continue operating the shelter, as some staff members were let go when COVID dollars ran out. If the shelter is not able to continue into the coming months, the community will have to find a way to support the local homeless population. OlyCAP is working with shelter residents to find

alternative housing, but there's a lack of available spaces. If shelter space is not available, it may constrain law enforcement's ability to clear encampments on public property. County officials are meeting with local partners to find a solution and hopefully more information will be available next week.

Just a reminder: don't forget to submit your Public Health questions to Public Health Officer Dr. Allison Berry or Director of Emergency Management Willie Bence, by emailing ContactUs@KPTZ.org by tomorrow, Friday, at noon. Your questions should be answered at the BOCC meeting on April 1 at 9:45am here on KPTZ.

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 Diane Walker. Thank you for listening.