

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

In the continuing saga of the Port Townsend pool, the *Peninsula Daily News* reports that an eight-person task force has been designated in searching for a new location for the pool in the county and Jefferson County commissioners have approved it. The members are Todd McGuire and Nancy Speser from District 1, Jim Scarantino and Celeste Schoenthaler from District 2, Adele Govert and Lynn Hovde from District 3, and Craig Henry and Mary Rothschild, chosen by the Jefferson Aquatics Coalition.

The task force is assigned to look at new options for a pool facility after many local residents objected to the size and scope of the previous plan which proposed building a \$37 million facility located at the Mountain View Commons, where the city's current pool is located. The task force will meet eight times before it presents findings to the Board of Jefferson County Commissioners, the Port Townsend City Council, and the Healthier Together steering committee. Most of the meetings will take place online and be open to the public.

As KPTZ had reported in January (and originally reported by the *Peninsula Daily News*), a Port Angeles woman stole a Clallam Transit bus and drove it practically to Shelton. Hailey R. Weatherbie, 35, was charged with one count of theft of a motor vehicle – a Class B felony and punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment and/or a \$20,000 fine, plus restitution and assessments. She returns to Clallam County Superior Court on May 17, but her defense attorney is working to get her into mental health court, according to the *Peninsula Daily News*.

Defense attorney Charlie Commeree told Superior Court Judge Simon Barnhart last Friday that he hoped the resolution of Weatherbie's case might encompass mental health court. He had filled out a mental health court form, but the coordinator has been on vacation the past two weeks. Commeree requested to strike the May 13 trial date and hoped that Weatherbie could enter mental health court on May 10. Judge Barnhart more than agreed and set a May 17 date for a resolution hearing to get a better sense of how the case will proceed.

Weatherbie was the only occupant on the bus when she was apprehended and, as noted in our January report, the GPS data indicated that Weatherbee drove safely and competently, and obeyed all speed limits.

**

Last week, former Forks resident, Jordan Joplin, 39, was sentenced for the 2017 murder of Ketchikan surgeon Dr. Eric Garcia as reported in *My Clallam County*. Joplin received 99 years in prison, the maximum sentence for murder charges in the state of Alaska. The sentencing comes ten months after a jury found him guilty of first-degree murder and first-degree theft in the death of a man who was his romantic partner for six years. An autopsy found the 58-year-old surgeon died in his home from a fatal dose of morphine, methadone, lorazepam, and diazepam. After Garcia's death, Joplin loaded three shipping containers with most of Garcia's belongings, including a watch collection, coins, jewelry and electronics and had them shipped to his new residence in King County. Detectives also discovered multiple transfers totaling over \$30,000 that had been made from Dr. Garcia's bank accounts to Joplin's accounts.

In line with the cavalcade of road repairs and closures, the Washington DOT (Department of Transportation) alerts us that preliminary work has begun at four locations along US 101 in Jefferson County. Crews will also soon start work at a fifth site on the highway east of State Route 113 near Wisen Creek Road in Clallam County. The project will remove a total of five barriers to fish passage under US 101 between mileposts 169 and 210. Culverts at each location will be replaced with structures that allow fish at all stages of life to access spawning and rearing habitat. Once complete, this project will open about 5.7 miles of potential habitat for salmon and other species.

Drivers should prepare for temporary single-lane roads at each location. Once the temporary road is in place, a temporary traffic signal at each end will alternate traffic one direction at a time. The temporary roads will remain in place through September. Crews expect to complete work at the four sites in Jefferson County by the end of 2024. The fifth location at milepost 209 in Clallam County will return to two lanes this fall. Crews will return to this area in 2025 to work through summer and complete this project.

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.