

This is KPTZ FM 91.9 in Port Townsend WA. I'm Charlie Berman, bringing you news from the Jefferson County *Beacon* for Wednesday, May 8, 2024.

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Port Townsend City Council member Aislinn Palmer announced her resignation at Monday night's council meeting, which will take effect on May 31. In her resignation letter, Palmer said that her life is much different than when she was elected, at which point she planned to be on the council for a long time. After her divorce last year, she tried to find a path forward that allowed her to finish her term and be part of key initiatives, including the comprehensive plan update. She's concluded that her future is not in Port Townsend and it would be better to leave now and let someone else finish her term. As she wrote on Facebook, she's very excited to have her life in one place, with her love, in a bigger city with more opportunity. She plans to move to Seattle's Magnolia neighborhood at the end of the month.

Palmer was first elected in 2021, with the term expiring in 2025. According to city code, the council will appoint someone to serve out the rest of the term. They are required to publish news of the vacancy and solicit applications, then conduct public interviews. The remaining six members of the council will then select the preferred candidate. If the council is unable to come to a decision, then it will then be up to the Board of County Commissioners to select the replacement. Port Townsend Mayor David Faber told the *Beacon* that Palmer was extremely smart, capable, and courageous. He said that Palmer is a strong voice for what is morally right in government, something that is lacking in some public officials. In an email, Faber said that City Manager John Mauro will present a briefing about the replacement process at the next scheduled City Council business meeting on Monday, May 20. So if you want to serve on the council this is your chance.

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There is another potential opening on the city council. Ben Thomas, who was elected along with Palmer in 2021, filed to run for the Jefferson County District 1 Commissioner seat. Kate Dean, currently in that office, announced in March that she did not plan to seek a third term. Local entrepreneur Heather Dudley-Nollette announced her candidacy in April, and for a while it appeared that she'd be unopposed. Both Thomas and Dudley-Nollette are Democrats, as the Jefferson County Republican Party has pretty much given up fielding a candidate in deep blue Port Townsend. The last declared Republican candidate for District 1 was in 2012, when former city council member Geoff Masci unsuccessfully sought the position. Thomas said that part of his decision was based upon the spirit of democracy, so Dudley-Nollette would have some competition. He deliberated the right path forward for himself, his family, and the county and now feels it is important for him to actually win. The process to replace Thomas will begin after Election Day, but only if he wins the race for county commissioner.

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Also in this week's *Beacon*, Kathie Meyer reports that world-renowned artist James Turrell will bring his work with light and space to Port Townsend as part of the projected Camas Meditation Hall. The work will be an exclusive to Port Townsend, a piece that will be part of Turrell's series of enclosed spaces that frame the sky. It is intended to be a source of peace and comfort. This new meditation hall will break ground this summer.

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Additionally, we have two new columnists. Food expert Emily Henry dives into the world of nonalcoholic cocktails, while advice columnist Amber Autumn Leaves Huntsman provides thoughtful, grounded responses to reader questions. To view this week's issue go to <https://www.jeffcobeacon.com/>.

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I'm speaking to you from KPTZ's new station, located in Building 305 at Fort Worden State Park. While we will always be open to the public during business hours, this week we are encouraging people to come on down and take a look around.

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KPTZ broadcasts local news at noon and 5 pm Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday, partnering on Wednesday to bring you stories from the Jefferson County *Beacon*. You can submit ideas to the *Beacon* through [info@jeffcobeacon.com](mailto:info@jeffcobeacon.com). This is Charlie Bermant. Thanks for listening.