

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with local news and commentary for Thursday, May 23, 2024.

Julie Jaman, the Port Townsend woman who was banned from the Mountain View pool in 2022, has spoken out for the first time since the lawyers representing her demanded \$350,000 and reinstatement of her pool privileges back in March. According to the *Port Townsend Leader*, the 82-year-old Jaman told a reporter she wants her pool privileges reinstated because not being able to swim has had a negative effect on her overall health. But she added that the issue is bigger than that: "I think the core of this whole thing for me is women and girls' rights to safety and privacy."

The suit stems from a July 26, 2022 incident where Jaman confronted a transgender employee in the women's locker room at the City Pool. Pool leadership alleged that Jaman's verbiage and behavior, not only at that incident, but also at prior incidents, violated the YMCA's code of conduct and warranted a lifetime ban, but attorneys allege the ban violates Jaman's First and 14th Amendment rights. Jaman's lawyers are apparently hoping to file suit against the City of Port Townsend and Olympic Peninsula YMCA by the end of this month.

The ongoing conflict over the management of the Tri-Area Food Bank appears to have escalated again, according to the *Port Townsend Leader*. Claims and counter-claims continue as former volunteers voice concerns about food safety while current association leadership has accused previous food bank managers of theft. Former food bank volunteer Penny Condoll contacted the *Leader* on May 14 about a surprise inspection of the food bank by the county public health department. Apparently, the inspection uncovered serious issues with food storage, including rat infestation, improper refrigeration, and moldy fruit. Condoll added that she and Laird have been writing letters on behalf of numerous volunteers, imploring the Board to recognize health, safety, personnel, and volunteer management issues and to take corrective action, but they have received little to no response. Condoll and Laird also recently met with Rep. Steve Tharinger to share their concerns and ask for help.

The health department inspection and subsequent allegations are the most recent incidents in a string of events that began April 9, when Tri-Area Food Bank managers John and Sue Laird were ousted from their positions and their personal computers were seized. John Laird, who said he was given the choice of resigning or being sued, notes that as of May 19, their computers had not been returned.

Jeffco Food Bank Association executive director Patricia Hennessey claims the Lairds were not threatened with legal action and added that the health department inspection was not a surprise. According to Hennessey, the food bank had been working on the rat problem for months and have been working to completely seal the foundation of the building to rat proof it. Adding that none of the contaminated food had been stored near, or come into contact with, food slated for food bank patrons, Hennessey claimed disgruntled ex-volunteers and managers are engaging in a destructive smear campaign that only makes it harder for the agency to take care of those in need. She also said, "The reason we're doing an audit is because we have evidence that some of our previous food bank managers were stealing money from the organization."

Port Townsend's Public Works department has begun a new project this week to improve Lawrence Street from Tyler to Harrison and to modify Tyler Street from Lawrence to Jefferson. The changes are designed to calm

traffic and improve walking, biking, and ADA mobility. Tyler will be paved this summer and a future project will repave Lawrence.

And finally, just a reminder: construction has begun this week on that new roundabout at the intersection of State Route 19 and US 104. Left turns will no longer be permitted at that intersection: all vehicles heading south will be detoured to Center Road.

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.