

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. I'm Jim Burke with local news and commentary for Tuesday, July 23, 2024.

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East Jefferson Fire Rescue has updated the fire danger level in Jefferson County to VERY HIGH. When the fire danger is VERY HIGH, fires will start easily from most causes. The fires will spread rapidly and have a quick increase in intensity, right after ignition. Small fires can quickly become large fires and exhibit extreme fire intensity, such as long-distance spotting and fire whirls. These fires can be difficult to control and will often become much larger and longer-lasting fires. No outdoor burning or discharge of firearms. Only gas or propane-fueled appliances.

Prohibited: No recreational wood fires; no wood or charcoal cooking; no open flame devices such as tiki torches, liquid fuel candles, or lanterns; no gas or propane-fired weed burners; no discharge of fireworks of any type.

And this is more background on this increase of alert status from the *Peninsula Daily News*: Jefferson County Fire Marshal Phil Cecere escalated the county fire danger level from high to very high, following fire levels established by the state Department of Natural Resources. The escalation follows months of drought, as well as a risk of lightning strikes this week. In his Monday presentation to the Board of County Commissioners, Cecere's presentation detailed reasons for increasing the fire danger level, including dry atmosphere and some risk of lightning.

An additional layer of complexity compounds the situation as adjacent fire agencies may not be able to help Jefferson County as they otherwise might. That depends on their incident engagement levels. The same goes for Jefferson County, which may be limited in its capacity to extend its support to vulnerable adjacent counties. East Jefferson Fire Rescue Chief Bret Black said, and is quoted in the article, saying, "I'm looking at pages of major incidents in our region, where we all have resources, including us, committed to supporting these other agencies. Our back end, if you will, is pretty stressed right now, because we are already committed to helping our neighbors to the south and to the north. It's a brittle system that depends on receiving help from adjacent agencies." For updates on danger risk levels, go to <https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/1690/Fire-Danger-Risk-Levels>

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The City of Port Townsend and SCJ Alliance are hosting a three-day interactive studio with City Council, City staff, and the community to begin fleshing out the details of the 20-year comprehensive plan. This event will shape the City's long-term goals, including how policies are drafted for the plan. Public events will continue to build on these goals. All are invited from July 22 (yesterday) to the 24<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) at the Cotton Building at 607 Water Street in Port Townsend for an opportunity to co-create the future of the city.

Community members of all ages are welcome to participate in these drop-in workshops. Times for the studio were selected to ensure broad participation over the three days. The full schedule is below and on the City's Comprehensive Planning website: <https://www.pt2045planning.org/>.

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And, because we live in a world, where social media gives insight into the daily lives of so many of us, and as the President, due to his Covid diagnosis, decided over the weekend to end his campaign for a second term by using social media instead of a nationally televised TV address, as Lyndon John did in 1968, I am going to

share something our mayor, David Faber posted on Facebook last night, which is potentially embarrassing – not for the Mayor, but for the people of Port Townsend. Keep in mind, our mayor has a sense of humor. I now quote his Facebook post:

“Things I learned today:

- (1) Port Townsend has never needed to change, so why should it change now?
  - (2) We don't have an affordable housing crisis.
  - (3) If young people can't afford to live in Port Townsend, they should live somewhere else.
  - (4) Young people are entitled and just want to play video games instead of working.
  - (5) We should do affordable housing, just not here.
  - (6) My parents were bad because they didn't give me a house, and anyone who isn't given a house by their parents has bad parents.
  - (7) People who have more than two children are irresponsible and don't deserve any community support.
- I'm sure I also learned other things, but those were particularly interesting things to learn today.”

I encourage all listeners to get down to the vision 2045 workshops today or tomorrow to add your voices for how you would like to see change for the better in our community in the next 20 years.

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KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can reach out to us at [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening.