

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. This is Jim Burke with local news and commentary for Thursday, August 8, 2024.

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A special health advisory: For the next two days, there will be upper-level smoke coming over from eastern Washington wildfires due to onshore winds. According to local weather people on KIRO TV news and elsewhere, the smoke will remain aloft, but conditions could change. You can start to see upper-level haze in today's "clear" skies already. So, prepare with a box fan and a furnace filter, N-95 masks and, if you have a central air system in your house or a room air filter, make sure they are working properly. Dr. Allison Berry will be on County Connections with co-hosts Commissioner Kate Dean and myself, Friday (tomorrow) at 12:30pm to discuss COVID and other public health concerns.

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On Monday, August 5, Port Townsend City Council appointed Port Townsend resident and Planning Commission member Neil Nelson to Council Position 2. There were four candidates interviewed for the position as part of an open, public process for appointing a new Councilmember. Nelson, who is a general contractor and business owner, will relinquish his seat on the Planning Commission in order to serve on the City Council.

The Council vacancy came about in May when Councilmember Aislinn Palmer submitted her resignation. Since she would be moving out of Port Townsend, state law prohibits Councilmembers from holding office if they reside outside of the city they represent (RCW 29A.04.151). On May 20, City Council determined the appointment process, posted the application, and interviews were conducted on July 23. Councilmember Nelson's swearing in will be held on Monday, August 12, at the City Council Workshop. Nelson will participate in the Council Workshop and serve the remainder of the Position 2 term through November 2025.

Two additional City Council seats will also be up for election in November 2025: Ben Thomas, Position 1 and Libby Wennstrom, Position 5. Nelson served on the Planning Commission for the past three years and wrote in his application for the Council appointment, "Serving on the Planning Commission has helped me become more involved in being of service to Port Townsend. It seems to me that being a member of the City Council is the next step forward. I have learned during my time on the Planning Commission that each issue is always far more involved and that all related viewpoints are very worthy of consideration. I pride myself on waiting until I have all the necessary facts before weighing in on any given subject."

More information about the process for filling the open City Council position can be found here: <https://cityofpt.us/citycouncil>.

The three other candidates who were interviewed to fill the vacant City Council seat were:

- Frederick Obee, who retired in April as Executive Director of the Washington Newspaper Publishers Association, previously worked as Marketing Director of Centrum, and was General Manager of the Port Townsend and Jefferson County *Leader*.
- Heidi Haney, manager and business owner of Topsy Gypsy, a mobile bartending service. And
- Theodore Howard, Theo, who is a Lawyer working with Clallam-Jefferson County Pro Bono Lawyers Housing Justice Project and is Board President of the Olympic Housing Trust. He is also a KPTZ DJ. You can listen to Theo on his show, *Vortex 4* Saturdays, from 4 to 6pm.

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From the *Peninsula Daily News*: Clallam County Sheriff's Office said that a deceased man was located on the beach about a quarter mile from the Dungeness Lighthouse. He has not been identified and was found about 10:48am Wednesday. Deputies responded and located him about 10 feet from the water line on shore as the tide was coming in, according to a press release. The man was described as white, between the ages of 20-30, weighing about 200 pounds with short light brown hair, wearing a black sweatshirt and black swim shorts, he had U.S. coins in his pocket, but no other identification was located. There were no visible injuries, scars, marks, tattoos, or other identifying marks visible. There are no recent reports of missing persons matching the man's description in Clallam County, the sheriff's office said. The Clallam County Coroner's Office responded to the scene and the investigation is ongoing.

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And it appears, because it is not yet official, that Adam Bernbaum and Matthew Roberson will face off in November for the 24th Legislative District's state House Position 1. The two candidates emerged from a field of five to represent Clallam, Jefferson, and part of Grays Harbor counties.

And in the State Senate race, Mike Chapman and Marcia Kelbon will face off in November for Legislative District 24.

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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 contact us at [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). I'm Jim Burke. Thanks for listening.