

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. I'm Taylor Nations with local news and commentary for Tuesday, September 10, 2024.

Last Thursday, September 5, U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) convened a roundtable with leaders and providers at Jefferson Healthcare to discuss rural reproductive care, hospital cybersecurity, and the ongoing expansion project that involves construction of a new clinic and the addition of a new radiation cancer treatment therapy service.

During the roundtable, Senator Cantwell said that 200 people per year travel from Port Townsend to Sequim, Kitsap County, and across the Sound for radiation treatment. Participants also discussed the importance of providing full reproductive care in rural areas. Jefferson Healthcare offers a full range of OB-GYN services, including surgical abortion, labor and delivery services, and pediatrics, despite the relatively low number of births. According to hospital staff, about 79 babies were born at the hospital last year.

Dr. Molly Parker, Reproductive Health Lead Physician at Jefferson Healthcare said, "We've been trying to figure out how to tackle the challenges of doing OB (Obstetrics) in a small community. We're all really dedicated to keeping OB, but it is one of the service lines that often gets cut when a hospital is struggling, because it doesn't bring in the money, it has a really high-risk rate for malpractice lawsuits, (and) it's hard to maintain."

Following the roundtable, Senator Cantwell took a tour of the construction site that will be home to Jefferson Healthcare's new clinic, and viewed the future home of soon-to-be-installed radiation therapy treatment equipment.

Senator Cantwell recently helped Jefferson Healthcare secure two federal grants to expand its services:

- **\$2.5 million for a linear accelerator**, which will allow cancer patients in Jefferson County to access radiation therapy. Currently Jefferson Healthcare is only able to offer chemotherapy for cancer treatment, and patients who need radiation therapy are forced to travel significant distances for appointments. In a typical year, about 200 people are forced to travel long distances for each of the multiple visits that radiation treatment requires, while others have to forego radiation entirely because traveling that far and often is too hard.
- **\$2 million to build out a new clinic expanding treatment for seniors**, which will allow the hospital to provide new specialties like Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT), neurology, and pulmonology, and expand existing services like dermatology. Jefferson County has the largest share of seniors of any county in Washington state at 41.6%. It's also geographically isolated, requiring seniors seeking specialty services to drive more than an hour both ways.

The City's Parks, Recreation, and Community Services team has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the "portable" at the Mountain View Commons, located at 1919 Blaine Street. The portable was formerly occupied by local radio station KPTZ 91.9FM. The deadline for proposal submissions is September 27 at 3pm, and the City is seeking occupancy with the new tenant by November 1.

KPTZ started broadcasting from the Mountain View Commons on May 14, 2011 and occupied the building for almost 14 years. Now that KPTZ has officially vacated the 966-square foot portable, other community service organizations are encouraged to apply. The portable is part of a complex of buildings and outdoor recreation

areas owned by the Port Townsend School District. The land and buildings are managed through a long-term lease agreement with the City of Port Townsend.

Facilities and Parks Manager Michael Todd said, “This is a wonderful opportunity to join the other community-based organizations that make up the Mountain View Commons family. We have made some minor repairs to the portable to ready it for a new occupant, and are offering tours to interested applicants on September 18 at 1pm. We have great relationships with the Red Cross, Food Bank, YMCA, and Dove House, who all use space at Mountain View.”

Interested organizations are asked to review the requirements for proposals thoroughly, posted on the City’s website. Use agreements are three years in length with a rent of \$225.88 annually. The building has a separate metered utility connection resulting in charges of about \$5,000 annually, and other expenses are detailed in the RFP. You can find the RFP for Mountain View Commons at <https://cityofpt.us/parksrec/page/request-proposals-port-townsend-mountain-view-commons>.

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. This is Taylor Nations. Thank you for listening.