

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant with news and commentary for Tuesday, November 12, 2024.

It is one week since Election Day. Jefferson County boasted the highest voter turnout in the state, with 87.18% participation. Statewide, the turnout was 78.4%. Jefferson County Elections Coordinator Quinn Grewell called the election "super smooth". She said running the election was a ton of fun because people were excited about voting. The office was able to interact with voters and community members who were voting for the first time.

There was a lot of early voting, which led to accurate early reporting of the outcome. Grewell said there were no surprises, glitches, or vote challenges. To keep things in perspective, in the hand recount in the recent Lands Commissioner primary vote, the recount results were the same as the previous count.

Donald Trump's election reflects that a majority of Americans support his presidency. However, there are certain parts of the country – like the West Coast – that are preparing responses should Trump keep some of his campaign promises, among them deportation, trans rights, women's health, and Medicare cuts.

Washington state has some protection in the form of our newly elected governor, Bob Ferguson, who has positioned himself as an effective Trump antagonist. Our local officials are getting involved and have strong responses to Trump's second term.

Jefferson County District 3 Commissioner Greg Brotherton said we won't really know until the new administration takes over, but he is preparing for any negative new Federal legislation that would affect the county. He said he is mostly concerned about funds – whether monies the county already receives from the Feds will dry up. Specifically, the county received a \$35 million Recompete Grant earmarked for workforce development. Brotherton hopes this will continue. He said it's possible these programs will be on the chopping block, as the Republicans could control all branches of government.

Port Townsend Mayor David Faber hope to ensure that the city can be a sanctuary for people that Trump is targeting: trans people and illegal immigrants. This can't be done overnight, as there is barely enough housing for the locals and a wave of new residents would stress the system. As a result, the construction of affordable housing becomes the biggest issue. Faber said that Trump's not going to do any of the things that would make it helpful for building affordable housing. Trump's idea is to kick out illegal immigrants and that would ease the housing crisis. Faber supports proactive efforts to make sure that our local police force won't be deputized to enforce immigration orders.

Jefferson Healthcare Board Chair Jill Buhler Reinstra said the hospital is calculating what effect Trump's promise to cut Medicare and Medicaid will have. She said that patients rely heavily on these programs so any cuts would be devastating. The solution comes from proactive legislation to protect these programs, putting forth the message that we are not going to survive if you cut us too badly.

Even as a Trump presidency looms, there is the notion that he won't do much to affect the local community any time soon, said housing activist Bill Wise, "The first thing is acceptance. And a piece that is always with me is

gratitude for where I am and the community where I live. I think the best thing we can do is listen and not blame somebody for what happened.” This is a continuing story, so stay tuned.

KPTZ broadcasts local news at noon and 5pm Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us through at news@kptz.org. I’m Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.