

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Thursday, January 16, 2025.

In what has become the first casualty of the Public Development Authority's dissolution and its connection to Fort Worden State Park, Fort Worden Hospitality has announced it's ceasing its operations as of today, January 16. Coffee traffic was fairly typical yesterday morning at the Guardhouse, according to the Reveille baristas who've been serving there since a boiler failure closed the Fort Worden Commons. But as of noon, the beloved coffee house was shut down, and Fort Worden Hospitality is now no more. There will be no more booking of lodging reservations, events, or meetings; no more Reveille sandwich shop, no more Guardhouse, and no more jobs for the 47 people – 32 full time and 15 part time – who've worked there over the past few years. Executive Director Matt Gurney and Operations Director Natalie Maitland will stay in place for 60 days to close up shop, offering previously booked guests other options in town.

According to the Hospitality group's press release "Kitsap Bank's intervention in October 2024 to put the PDA in Receivership resulted in ambiguity of agreements and ongoing legal uncertainties." While Hospitality attempted to continue providing service during the uncertainty, its inability to market, promote, or sell future opportunities crippled its business prospects. As a result of the Fort's financial and legal challenges, PDA lost its lease and, without a contract to operate, Fort Worden Hospitality's concession agreement to provide services on campus was no longer valid, and they were forced to close.

Maitland told KPTZ that it will be up to the Park Service to reestablish a hospitality framework to handle lodging reservations and event planning, adding that guests with reservations from January 17, 2025 onward will be contacted directly by Hospitality. Because camping reservations are administered by State Parks, they will not be affected by Hospitality's closure.

The Port Townsend *Leader* reports that Jefferson Land Trust has been awarded a grant of \$197,500 from the Washington State Department of Commerce. The Land Trust, working with Olympic Housing Trust, will be using the money to fund planning, pre-design, and pre-development work on Chimacum Commons, an affordable housing project designed to accommodate farm and food system workers on a 16-acre property in Chimacum. Plans for the property involve the creation of several homes – with a mixture of homes for rent and for purchase – that will include approximately 30 bedrooms, and outbuildings for shared community use. The Land Trust will place a permanent conservation easement on the property that will limit development to a specific building envelope, which the trust touted as a means to protect the property's stretch of Chimacum Creek salmon stream habitat, as well as its farm soils.

East Jefferson Fire and Rescue (EJFR) has announced that volunteer EMT Chris Moore and Firefighter Sarah Chapman have been named volunteer and firefighter of the year. Moore, a certified EMT, joined EJFR two years ago after retiring and relocating to the area. He now volunteers eight to 10 hours a week, primarily responding to calls on Marrowstone Island from Station #5. Chapman started as a port Ludlow volunteer firefighter in training and was hired as a full-time firefighter in April of 2022.

And finally – around 2am last Friday, according to the Port Townsend *Leader*, local law enforcement teams received report of a prowler in the back parking lot of an apartment building in the 1200 block of Landes Street. When confronted, the suspect displayed a firearm, refused to drop his weapon, and barricaded himself in the vehicle he had just broken into. The Crisis Response Team, a specialized unit made up of members from the Jefferson and Clallam County sheriff's offices, as well as the Port Angeles and Sequim police departments, was activated and a negotiator was dispatched. The suspect, who eventually surrendered and was taken into custody at approximately 5:37am, had an outstanding felony warrant and the firearm in his possession had been stolen.

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at noon and 5pm. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Diane Walker; thank you for listening.