

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant with news and commentary for Tuesday, March 4, 2025.

A game of public service musical chairs is in process at the Jefferson County Courthouse, with the retirement of the county administrator and a commissioner seeking to take his place. County Administrator Mark McCauley announced his intention to leave the post that he has held for three years this Spring. District 3 Commissioner Greg Brotherton, in the middle of his second term, announced his intention to apply for the position. Normally, all three commissioners would discuss the applications and select a winning candidate. Brotherton recused himself for the administrator process, while he will no longer be a commissioner if he is selected as administrator. So both decisions will be made by his colleagues, Heather Dudley Nollette and Heidi Eisenhour.

The two will need to agree on the new hires, which represents a majority of the commissioners. If Brotherton, a Democrat, is selected, his party will make three recommendations from which Dudley Nollette and Eisenhour will choose. Similarly, the two will select the prevailing candidate for administrator. Brotherton's successor would serve in the position until the 2026 General Election, when his term will expire. Whether he is selected as administrator or not, Brotherton is leaning against running for a third term at that time. Brotherton said he's been considering this career change for some time, and is seeking a masters degree in public administration from Evergreen College. He told KPTZ that his strength and interest gravitates more toward administration and implementation of policies than their creation. If selected he will get a significant salary bump; commissioners earn \$116,000 a year while the range for the administrator is \$146,000 to \$174,000. The position is open until filled, according to county Human Resources analyst Kristen Bennett. She expects several applications and Brotherton is not a shoo-in, as he acknowledges.

Few things anger the public more than having a free service taken away in favor of a paid solution. Add to that, many people just hate change. The city's new parking pilot program, scheduled to begin in May, has drawn the ire of almost everybody. And when it begins, the limits will be enforced according to Port Townsend Police Chief Thomas Olson. Parking in downtown Port Townsend wasn't completely unfettered, as prime downtown spaces had a posted limit. This limit was too often ignored and unenforced, causing scofflaw parkers to ignore the limit, gambling successfully they would not get a \$20 ticket.

Olson told KPTZ that parking enforcement has been a low priority during his tenure, which began in 2021. It was not enforced due to staffing and the inability to enforce equitably. It is not the responsibility of the commissioned officers to enforce timed parking; their charter is to focus on reducing crime and answering calls for service. This won't change during the pilot program. According to city spokesperson Shelly Leavens, parking fees as proposed by the Parking Pilot Study would pay for a Parking Enforcement Officer during the busy summer months.

In a related story, the requirement to have a Discover Pass for all of Fort Worden is now in effect. Park manager Brian Hagerman told KPTZ that he recognizes that people have enjoyed free parking in the campus portion for a decade and will bristle at paying. So his focus leans more toward education and enforcement for the next month or so, leaving windshield flyers on the offending cars rather than writing tickets. After that time rangers may issue \$99 tickets for anyone not displaying a pass. In the meantime, several Fort Worden partners are making allowances for their staff and clients. Peninsula College issues students a window card for their enrolled semester. Madrona MindBody is offering their clients a promotion for the next few weeks; those who commit to

a certain amount of classes will receive a pass discount up to \$15. Centrum will accommodate guests with day use passes. KPTZ signs out passes for the day.

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts local news Tuesday through Thursday at noon and 5pm. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.