

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker, with your local news and commentary for Thursday, January 22, 2026.

Jefferson County Solid Waste and the Jefferson County Commissioners have announced plans to move the Jefferson County Transfer Station currently located off Jacob Miller Road in Port Townsend. According to the *Port Townsend Leader*, almost all of the county's garbage, whether collected curbside or brought in by residents and businesses, is processed at the Jacob Miller site. Unfortunately, that site has become too small to accommodate the county's growing population, and there are limits to how much traffic and waste it can handle safely and efficiently.

So in 2022, Jefferson County began planning for a new transfer station to replace its existing facility. The Board of County Commissioners appointed a Solid Waste Facilities Task Force to work with public works staff and a consultant to develop a recommendation on a possible site, the functions the facility will offer, and how it might be financed. In November 2024, the task force selected a county-owned property at the intersection of State Routes 19 and 104 as the preferred option. Despite its distance from populated areas, that location scored highest among both the public works staff and the task force, as it would have no noise impacts on surrounding properties, has favorable soil types and depths, and includes 17 developable acres.

On January 26 at 6pm at the Tri-Area Community Center in Chimacum, the Board of County Commissioners and the Solid Waste Facility Task Force will hold a meeting to share with the community how the preferred site was chosen and to present the first draft of a conceptual design. Public comments will be accepted.

Despite near-normal levels of precipitation this winter, snowpack in the Olympic Mountains is measuring around 47% of the normal amount, according to federal snow survey data. Because temperatures in the area have been abnormally warm, what precipitation has fallen, even at higher elevations, has been rain, as opposed to snow. Because snowpack captures water that would typically run off during winter storms and releases it slowly into rivers as the snow melts, water managers often refer to this combination of near-normal precipitation and low snowpack as a snow drought, because water isn't stored for later in the year. Officials stress, however, that it is still early in the season. By late March or early April, snowpack conditions will give a better idea of how the rivers which feed our local water supply are most likely to flow.

In the most recent round of state and federal Housing Trust Fund awards, a Jefferson County adult family home is slated to receive \$600,000, according to the Washington State Department of Commerce. The project, spearheaded by Olympic Neighbors, received the funding for its Mason Street Adult Family Home – a six-unit complex slated for construction in Port Hadlock. Olympic Neighbors is a Jefferson County nonprofit that provides housing and support for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Olympic Neighbors residents currently live in a rented home in Port Townsend. But now, the newly awarded state grant has them one step closer to owning a permanent home.

The proposed home is actually phase one of the Mason Street project, an upcoming 136-unit housing development in Port Hadlock led by Habitat for Humanity. Early in the process, Olympic Neighbors partnered with Habitat, planning to build and own two adult family homes within the larger neighborhood. With phase one funded by the grant, Olympic Neighbors is moving forward toward phase two, a second family home that

would bring the total to 12 units once completed. Olympic Neighbors plan to meet with Habitat for Humanity next week to try to finalize timelines and discuss when construction can begin.

And finally, Washington State Parks has announced it will be offering overnight lodging at Fort Worden during the 2026 season. From April through October, visitors can choose to stay in several campus locations, including the Historic Officers Quarters, the Historic Non-Commissioned Officers Quarters, Alexander's Castle, Bliss Vista, and the Lofts. Reservations are open now and can be made on the State Parks website.

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.