

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker, with your local news and commentary for Thursday, February 12, 2026.

While results will not be certified until February 20, unofficial returns show wide margins of support for the Port Townsend School District's construction and renovation bond, for both levy lid lifts for East Jefferson Fire Rescue, and for the two-year replacement levy for the Brinnon School District.

According to the *Peninsula Daily News*, of the 13 school bonds statewide on Tuesday's special election ballot, only seven were on track to pass, and Port Townsend's bond showed the widest margin of support. If certified, that bond will fund construction improvements and additions to the Port Townsend High School campus and renovation of the Gael Stuart building to serve as the new OCEAN K-12 school. Planned upgrades include redesigning the high school campus to create single, controlled entry points and reduce unsecured access; seismic retrofits or replacements to meet modern safety standards; upgrades to aging HVAC systems, insulation and windows; and improvements to meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. The measure would also move district offices.

East Jefferson Fire Rescue posted a grateful response to the support of its levy lifts, stating that they will help fund ongoing training as well as equipment maintenance and replacement in order to maintain current service levels; would foster further development and training of volunteers; expand and enhance fire prevention programming, including expansion of public education, CPR training, smoke alarm installations, fire extinguisher training, and home wildfire assessments; and enable EJFR to continue to meet the ongoing medical and social needs throughout the district.

The *Daily News* reports good news this week for Centrum as well: After a year of uncertainty at Fort Worden, Centrum has signed a 35-year lease agreement with the Washington State Parks Commission. Rob Birman, who has served as Centrum's Executive Director for 14 years, will be transitioning to a new role to focus on capital fundraising and capital projects director for the organization. He will remain in his current position until a nationwide search to fill the Executive Director role is complete. That search is expected to take up to eight months.

Along with a 35-year lease – which includes the responsibilities of managing stewardship and programming for 14 campus buildings – Centrum will have the option for a second 35-year lease when the first concludes. Current and near-term maintenance projects include improvements to Wheeler Theater, McCurdy Pavilion, and a two-year, \$4 million renovation of Building 205. Centrum also will oversee use of the spaces for third-party groups and use the spaces for its own workshops and performances.

Another feature of the agreement between Centrum and State Parks is that Centrum will raise capital for the renovation of several buildings and will receive credit for those renovations against future rent payments. Long-term improvements made to the buildings could go toward 80% of rent, Birman said.

YMCA of Jefferson County has announced that due to an unfortunate incident involving broken glass in the Mountain View Pool, the pool has been closed until further notice. All pool activities have been cancelled, including swim lessons, swim club, special Olympics, Lap Swimming, Water Aerobics, Water Walking, and the

Free Swim. Prior to the resumption of these activities, the whole pool has to be drained, carefully vacuumed to remove all the glass, and then refilled.

In federal news, the Washington State *Standard* reports that Congress has until Friday at midnight to pass a stopgap spending bill or reach bipartisan agreement on the Department of Homeland Security's full-year funding bill. House Democrats are arguing for constraints on the federal immigration enforcement activities of ICE and the Customs and Border Protection, following the killing of two U.S. citizens by immigration agents in Minneapolis. But if a compromise is not reached, a shutdown looms that will affect not only DHS, but also FEMA, the Coast Guard, the Secret Service, and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

And finally, just a reminder that this coming Monday, February 16, is Presidents Day, so Port Townsend City Hall and the Public Library will be closed for the day.

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.