

This is KPTZ FM 91.9 in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Nhatt Nichols, bringing you news and commentary from the Jefferson County *Beacon* for Wednesday, April 22, 2026.

As County Commissioner Heather Dudley-Nollette puts it, there are advantages to getting 20 less inches of rainfall per year than our neighbors in Seattle do. But one of the disadvantages is Jefferson County has become more prone to wildfire, and as a result, the county is taking action to lessen some of the risk by banning fireworks.

In the April 20 Board of County Commissioners meeting, they tasked county staff with updating wording in the code that would ban the sale and use of fireworks in Jefferson County, starting next year. Though they primarily are concerned with fire safety, public comments and an informal survey brought up other reasons to consider a ban, including concerns for those with post-traumatic stress disorder, and for animals who have to be sedated during the explosions. While county staff is writing a new code for the county commissioners to vote on, Dudley-Nollette stressed that there is still time for public opinion to be heard and taken into consideration.

(1:49) "It's really important to me to address the concerns that we also hear about personal liberty. That is meaningful to me, and it's not something that I take lightly to make decisions that limit someone's personal liberties."

Though the ability to light off your own fireworks may disappear, the county is planning on making an easier pathway for permitting public displays. They are also planning on working with law enforcement to lower the fines for first-time violators. Currently, there is a \$1,000 fine for lighting off fireworks during a burn ban. The county commissioners plan to make the new code into a graduated fee structure, starting at \$250. Dudley-Nollette says that this is to make it easier to enforce, and that a first-time fine of \$1,000 was too severe. The public has several weeks to provide input on this decision. Once approved, the new law will not be implemented until 2027.

Now onto a local success story, as reported by Rachael Nutting. Bayside Housing turns ten this week, and since opening its doors on April 16, 2016, the Jefferson County nonprofit has provided more than 500,000 nights of safe shelter, served over 80,000 hot meals and helped 420 individuals access housing and supportive services. Today, 60% of participants move on to safe, stable homes of their own. The organization has grown from a single vision into a comprehensive network of care.

Bayside's model is built on a continuum of care, operating six distinct properties that meet individuals at different stages of their journey. The organization manages the Jefferson County Emergency Shelter located in the basement of the American Legion building in Port Townsend, which serves as the county's only overnight homeless shelter. Bayside took over operations from OlyCap in July 2024, and under their leadership, the shelter provides up to 38 people each night with safety, hot meals and connections to case management.

From the emergency shelter, individuals can step into transitional supportive housing. Bayside operates two tiny home "healing villages" designed as sober living communities. Peter's Place in Port Hadlock, built in 2020 on the grounds of the Community United Methodist Church, features 12 shelters where participants receive intensive case management and self-governance support.

Pat's Place in Port Townsend, which opened in 2022, expands this model with eight single units and two double units, plus a dedicated 320-square-foot kitchen commons that serves as a community gathering space for meal preparation and dining.

In 2022, Bayside made a significant leap into permanent housing with the purchase of the Hadlock Motel, renamed Woodley Place in honor of the former owners. This property features 16 studio apartments and one four-bedroom unit, increasing Bayside's housing capacity by 30%. Unlike transitional sites, where stays are time-limited, Woodley Place operates as permanent supportive housing.

The organization also acquired the historic Starrett House Bed & Breakfast in uptown Port Townsend in August 2023. They plan to convert part of it to be workforce housing, primarily for employed women. They also plan to maintain the property's historic integrity, operating as a B&B and offering high tea gatherings.

Across all sites, Bayside pairs housing with trauma-informed case management, assisting residents with employment applications, medical appointments, and navigating social services. This comprehensive approach, from emergency shelter to permanent apartments, creates a complete ecosystem that moves neighbors from crisis to lasting stability.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and 5 Tuesday through Thursday, partnering on Wednesday to bring you stories from jeffcobeacon.com. You can submit ideas to the *Beacon* through info@jeffcobeacon.com. This is editor Nhatt Nichols. Thanks for listening.