

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, June 16, 2026.

The City of Bainbridge Island has announced that Port Townsend City Manager John Mauro is one of two finalists for the position of Bainbridge City Manager. The other contender for the role is Jeff Niten, who is City Manager of Mountlake Terrace. Both men have been invited to attend a public meet-and-greet tomorrow, June 17 from 5:30 to 7pm at Bainbridge City Hall.

Mauro, who was hired by Port Townsend in 2019, recently accepted a 3% performance-based raise from Port Townsend City Council, boosting his base salary to \$251,640, a number that's risen 61% over the seven years he's held the Port Townsend role. Port Townsend Councilmember Neil Nelson defended Council's decision, stating that it would be "very difficult to replace John, extremely difficult."

Prior to his time in Port Townsend, Mauro served as Chief Sustainability Officer for Auckland Council in New Zealand, and before his time in New Zealand he was a Policy Analyst in the Seattle Mayor's Office. He holds a BA in Environmental Studies and Conservation Biology from Middlebury College.

Wildfire season is definitely upon us: Deputy State Fire Marshal Amy Thornton has already sent notice that state fire assistance has been mobilized in support of local firefighters working to contain the Highway 730 Fire located in Walla Walla County, near Wallula; the OIE Fire located in Benton County, near Benton City; and the Snake River Fire located in Whitman County, near Clarkston.

Should wildfires threaten us here in Jefferson County, you may wish to take steps to reduce your home's vulnerability to fire. East Jefferson Fire Rescue reminds us that you can sign up for free home wildfire assessments and get specific recommendations to reduce the risk of wildfires becoming structure fires. A trained EJFR member will walk around the exterior of your home with you and provide specific guidelines and recommendations to protect your home, including reducing combustible materials, preventing ember entry and ignition, reducing ladder fuels, and ongoing vegetation management. To sign up for your free wildfire assessment, visit <https://www.ejfr.org/uncategorized/home-wildfire-assessments>.

Good news for summer travelers: starting today, the ferry between Port Townsend and Coupeville will be on a two-boat schedule, daily through October 12.

Now that summer boating season has begun, Jefferson County Public Health would like to remind you that if not properly handled, boating can expose you to carbon monoxide poisoning. A colorless and odorless gas, carbon monoxide can be produced by engines, gas generators, cooking ranges, space heaters, and water heaters. Exhaust gas can accumulate in enclosed places, or be inhaled from another vessel's exhaust, back drafting from your own boat, at slow speeds, while idling, or stopped – even if your engine is no longer running.

Carbon monoxide (CO) enters your bloodstream through the lungs, blocking the oxygen your body needs. Prolonged exposure to low concentrations or very quick exposure to high concentrations can kill you.

Early symptoms of CO poisoning include irritated eyes, headache, nausea, weakness, and dizziness. They are often confused with seasickness or intoxication, so those affected may not receive the medical attention they need. CO poisoning or toxicity is a life-threatening emergency that requires immediate action. If poisoning is suspected, get the victim fresh air, administer oxygen if available, call for medical assistance, and shut off all potential sources of CO if possible.

The Washington Department of Health has found high levels of the biotoxin that causes Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning in shellfish samples from multiple locations in our area. They have therefore closed all of Hood Canal, Port Ludlow, and Mats Mats Bay for the recreational harvest of all species of molluscan shellfish including clams, oysters, mussels and scallops. Jefferson County Public Health has posted danger signs at public access points in the area. Crab and shrimp are not included in the closure.

And finally, it's graduation season, the perfect time to party in the sunshine, but Jeffco PUD reports that when balloons fly loose, drift up towards the telephone poles and tangle in the power lines, they pose a serious safety and fire risk. So please: hang on to those balloons!

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.