

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Thursday, August 6, 2026.

The Port Townsend City Council has unanimously approved a transition plan following City Manager John Mauro's announcement of his impending departure for Bainbridge Island. The plan creates the city's first deputy city manager position for Public Works Director Steve King, pending council approval of a salary schedule and job description.

King, who holds a master's degree in civil engineering from Washington State University, was hired by the city to direct the public works department in 2020, after spending 18 years in public works and economic development roles for the city of Wenatchee.

According to the *Leader*, under the approved transition plan, King will serve as interim city manager and Deputy Public Works Director David Dinkuhn will serve in King's former role while the city searches for Mauro's permanent replacement. In 4 to 6 months, once a new city manager is in place, King will transition into the deputy city manager role and will oversee the hiring process for the new Director of Public Works.

Results from Tuesday's election are in. The *Peninsula Daily News* reports that incumbent Democrat Emily Randall won 60.24 percent of the vote and will be running for re-election to Congress in November against Republican Teresa Fox, who received 25.12 percent of the vote.

The Jefferson County parks levy passed, and Democrat Adam Bernbaum will be running against Republican Eric Pratt for the district's State Representative Position 1 seat in November.

In the race to replace retiring state rep Steve Tharinger in the Position 2 seat, Independent Marcia Kelbon and Democrat Kaylee Kuehn were the top two vote-getters, with Democrat Patrick DePoe sitting in a close third place.

Democrat Anji Scalf and Republican Stephen Nieman will be in the final race for the District 3 seat on the Board of the Jefferson County Commissioners, and both Brinnon and Quilcene voters supported their fire levies.

Efforts to transfer the Dungeness Spit and Protection Island wildlife refuges into trust for the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe are continuing to meet with resistance. This week, the Jefferson County Commissioners again delayed their decision to send a letter in support of or against the proposed Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe Land Transfer Act of 2026.

The commissioners shared the current draft of a letter they had intended to send in support of the transfer. While acknowledging the collaboration and respect the county and the tribe have together, and recognizing the historical and cultural connections the tribe maintains with the lands and waters that would be impacted by the act, the draft letter mentioned concerns about the land losing protections provided as part of the oversight by U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

The draft letter also stated that “One central piece of input we’ve gotten from residents of Jefferson County is a desire for more public engagement about this proposal. There are folks who still live in Jefferson County who were part of getting Protection Island, located within Jefferson County, designated as a national wildlife refuge originally in 1982 with passage of Public Law 97-383 by the U.S. Congress.”

But people who spoke during the public comment period at the Commissioners meeting urged the commissioners to speak out more strongly against the transfer and in support of the continuation of the co-management agreement the tribe currently has with Fish and Wildlife, stating their concern that if the land goes into trust, the tribe might not only remove public access to the land and but also the public might lose a voice in the management of the two properties.

After taking comments from the public on the current draft of the letter they had intended to send, the commissioners concluded they needed more information before deciding how they wished to respond to the proposed legislation.

And finally, the City Parks team are working with a contractor at Chetzemoka Park to remove the Caretaker House and the Golden Age Club. Please be aware of designated restricted areas and keep children and pets away from equipment for safety around these sites. To learn more about the projects, visit <https://cityofpt.us/parksrec/page/chetzemoka-park-projects>.

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, and have a great weekend.