

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Lily Haight with local news for October 13, 2021.

Jefferson County Public Health reported two new cases of COVID-19 yesterday. This brings our total case count, since the beginning of the pandemic, up to 1,054. One case that was reported earlier was ruled out today, and so the department has subtracted one from our total case count. There are currently 24 active cases in isolation, and our two-week case rate is 225 per 100,000. Director of Emergency Management Willie Bence said Monday the Pfizer booster clinic at Chimacum on Saturday was a success, with 635 people receiving their booster shot. Next Saturday, the clinic at Blue Heron Middle School is scheduled to handle 600 people, but Bence said there is a waiting list of 150 who may also be able to get vaccinated that day. Appointments are still available for the booster shot clinic in Quilcene on October 23. Sign up for these appointments through the PublicHealth website (<https://jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=793>) or the call center: 360- 344-9791. These appointments are for the Pfizer booster vaccine only. Information on the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson boosters will be coming in the next week.

At a workshop meeting on Monday night, the Port Townsend City Council discussed plans to use federal funding allocated from the American Rescue Plan Act. Port Townsend received \$2.7 million in federal funding as a result of the act. The funds must be used before December 31, 2024 and there are certain requirements for how the city uses the funding. There are four categories of eligible uses: 1) responding to the economic impacts of COVID-19; 2) providing premium pay for essential work during the pandemic; 3) paying for government services related to the health emergency; or 4) making investments in water, sewer or broadband infrastructure.

According to city manager John Mauro, the city will spend half of the allocated funds in the coming year, and tuck away the other half for 2023 and 2024, in case the pandemic continues to rage on and affect city funding. The city plans to spend \$1,382,900 in the coming year, and divide that money into four different categories. \$220,700 will go towards supporting staff engagement and recruiting new hires to the city. Part of this will be working with the newly hired Director of People and Performance, Pamela Martinez, to do strategic department reviews. \$135,000 will go towards financial sustainability projects for the city, including some projects that have been waiting a long time for funding, such as updating the library's windows and bathrooms, and working on renovations for the historic Pink House. \$472,200 will go towards updating technology in city departments and working on facility maintenance for the city. This includes purchasing new police vehicles for the police department. Mauro said that purchasing new vehicles for the police will be a morale booster for the police department and "keep the police team happy." He did not mention whether this funding could be used instead for alternative methods of policing, such as building a better mental health care infrastructure in our community. Finally, \$555,000 will go towards the many Parks & Rec projects that have been put off for several years, such as the conversation around the PT golf course, updates to the swimming pool facility, and the Mountain View campus. This could include hiring a temporary Parks & Rec director to drive the conversation on how to improve our city facilities for families and community members. This will add up to about half the funding the city is allocated from the federal government. Mauro said he hopes these projects will be worked into the 2022 budget, so that all of these projects can get underway in the near future. The city has just begun their 2022 budgeting process, and will continue to work on the budget in the coming months.

In celebration of Urban and Community Forestry Month, the city's parks, recreation and tree advisory board will be giving away free native trees and shrubs on October 17th from noon to 3 p.m. at the Mountain View Commons parking lot. You can adopt a red alder, Douglas hawthorn, cascara, mock orange, evergreen

huckleberry, garry oak, tall mahonia, or red-flowering currant to plant in your garden. Planting native trees and shrubs helps our local birds, bees, and other pollinators survive and thrive.

And that's it for today's local news. KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. I'm Lily Haight. Thanks for listening.