

## **KXXO COMMUNITY ISSUES & PUBLIC AFFAIRS QUARTERLY REPORT**

Third Quarter 2023

### **CLIMATE CHANGE**

--With an unusually dry spring, our wildfire season began early this year. Warm temperatures combined with tinder dry vegetation; local firefighting agencies had a very busy summer. Fire control efforts were aided this year by an increase in the number of aircraft available from the State Department of Natural Resources. The fleet is based in Olympia, and that proximity quickly stopped the spread of many fires.

--The City of Olympia, the Port of Olympia, and Thurston County all accelerating plans on how to deal with sea level rise in the not-too-distant future. For the past few years extreme high tides have flooded downtown streets, and solutions to prevent more serious flooding are being sought by local government officials.

--The State Department of Transportation began preliminary plans for a major retrofit to Interstate 5 through the Nisqually Delta. The main north-south route would be subject to flooding unless portions of the roadway are elevated.

### **CRIME**

--It was a summer for car thefts and youth violence. Car thefts were at record levels. As was the case around the country, KIA and Hyundai models were the prime targets. Many were taken in armed car jackings, several by as young as 12 years old. Some of the stolen vehicles were later used as battering rams to smash through storefronts to steal merchandise.

--A 12-year-old girl arrested on arson charges in early June for a blaze at an abandoned mushroom farm.

--Shootings and gun violence continued thru the summer. During the first four days of the new school year, two students were arrested for bringing loaded weapons onto a local high school campus.

### **HOMELESSNESS**

--Huge homeless encampments along the major freeways leading in and out of town were removed by late summer. The sites had been the scene of countless fires, and crimes of violence. Money from the State of Washington helped local officials finally open a former motel site as a transitional housing facility.

--Local officials also opened a third "tiny homes" village to help people get off the streets.

### **LIBRARIES**

--The Timberland Regional Library System, which operates libraries in a five-county area around the South Sound, took a firm stand on the issue of a book rating system. The executive director, Cheryl Heywood said such a policy could lead to censorship and book banning. Heywood told the community the library system defends the principle of intellectual freedom based on the first amendment of the constitution.

Community Issues quarterly report prepared by: Ty Flint, News Director KXXO 96.1 FM