This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Thursday, October 29, 2026.

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Port Townsend officials have filed a motion requesting a stay of the August Growth Management Hearings Board Ruling with regard to the city's comprehensive plan, citing the ruling has caused "substantial permitting uncertainty and is delaying housing and other public interest projects."

The *Leader* reports that affected projects include Carter Commons, an 11-unit affordable housing development proposed by Habitat for Humanity, and the Haines Street Cottages, an eight-unit affordable housing development owned by Olympic Community Action Programs. In addition, applications for Public Works Board financial assistance in support of the Monroe Lift Station and the Holcomb Sewer Replacement project, totaling $2.35 million, may be revoked due to the city's Growth Management Act noncompliance.

The hearing, which is scheduled for November 6, will address whether the ruling should be suspended while the appeal proceeds, but not the outcome of the underlying legal challenge.

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Joseph Wilson, general manager of the Jefferson County PUD, was placed on administrative leave on October 6, and his resignation has been officially accepted by the PUD's board of commissioners this week after three executive sessions. The *Leader* reports that PUD Information Technology and Broadband Services Director Curtis Fryer is acting as general manager until further notice.

Wilson, who assumed the post in August of 2025 after a 9-month search process, previously served as deputy manager of power delivery at Tacoma Public Utilities and had over 30 years of utility experience. Details surrounding his leave of absence and subsequent departure remain unknown to the public.

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After a year of serving as a canvas for the artists of Port Townsend, the Memorial Field fence will be taken down in November. Some of the artworks on the fence portray elements of local history, while others have offered humor, family history, and stories of survival; it's offered expression to a variety of cultural aspects of this community.

Unfortunately, though various people have expressed interest in retaining or purchasing some sections of the fence, parts of the fence have tested positive for lead, according to the *Peninsula Daily News*, so the county is obligated to dispose of it safely. It is not known whether the replacement fence will accommodate artistic expression.

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The state Department of Natural Resources is teaming up with Global Diving and Salvage Inc. to break up and remove an 83-foot World War II-era U.S. Coast Guard vessel that sank near Port Hadlock in 2023. According to the *Peninsula Daily News*, the removal is part of the DNR's Derelict Vessel Removal Program and is funded through a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

When it sank in 2023, the event created an oil sheen on the surface of the water and now the vessel – which has tested positive for asbestos – poses a risk both to the environment and to other boaters who may want to anchor

in the area. After any remaining fuel onboard is suctioned out and the engines are removed, the ship will be taken apart with a metal claw. Divers bring up whatever remains.

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An indoor flooding incident at Port Townsend's Silverwater Cafe forced a two-day closure last week. According to the *Leader*, restaurant owners suspect sabotage, as roughly half a roll of toilet paper had been stuffed into a still running toilet while the restaurant was closed for the weekend. Contractors overseeing the repairs report the damage will include undoing roughly 15 months of basement space renovations while they sanitize and dry out everything.

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Congratulations to voters who have already turned in their ballots: Jefferson County has announced that it leads the state in ballots returned, with 44% already submitted.

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And finally, there will be a Trunk or Treat at the Chimacum School this afternoon from 4 to 6pm and three other Trunk or Treats on Saturday from 4 to 6pm: one in Port Ludlow at the Village Way parking lot, one at 20 Brinnon Lane in Brinnon, and one at Worthington Park in Quilcene.

East Jefferson Fire Rescue encourages everyone to keep Halloween safe by keeping children and decorations away from open flames and other heat sources, keeping exits clear of decorations, and using battery operated lights and glowsticks in your pumpkins.

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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 safe Halloween weekend.