

MINUTES  
**DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL**  
**HELD AT THE EVENT CENTER IN GOLD BEACH OR**  
**MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2009 @ 6:30 P.M.**  
**WORK SHOP – SEA LION PATROL**

CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mayor James Wernicke	X	_____
Council Position #1 VACANT	_____	_____
Council Position #2 Larry Brennan	X	_____
Council Position #3 Peter Peterson	X	_____
Council Position #4 John Truesdell	_____	X
Council Position #5 David Alexander	X	_____
City Administrator Ellen Barnes	X	_____

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5 @ 6:30

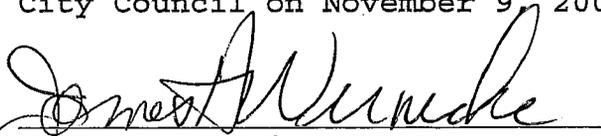
SEAL LION PATROL ISSUES:

The Council met with the Port, Promo Committee, Chamber and other agencies to discuss the funding needed to continue the Sea Lion Patrol. A Committee was formed to see if they can come up with some ideas for funding.

Attached as "Exhibit A" is the article that was printed in the Curry Coastal Pilot regarding this workshop.

ADJOURNED at 8:30 P.M.

Passed by the Gold Beach City Council on November 9, 2009.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 James H. Wernicke, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ellen Barnes, City Administrator

The location of the hearing/meeting is accessible to the disabled. Advance notice is requested if special accommodations are needed. Call (541) 247-7029 so that appropriate assistance can be provided. The City of Gold Beach is an affirmative action EEOE and complies with section 504 of the rehab act of 1973. Complaints of Discrimination should be sent to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20250-9419

POST: CITY HALL: POST OFFICE: cityofgoldbeach.us  
 FAX: MEDIA

# Groups need cash to keep pesky sea lions at bay

Four years of successful harassment of mammals has benefited fishermen

**By Valliant Corley**  
*Pilot staff writer*

GOLD BEACH - After four years of successfully chasing salmon-eating sea lions from the Rogue River Bay and anglers' lines, the city of Gold Beach and other groups are trying to find more money to continue the efforts.

The Gold Beach City Council on Monday met with representatives of Curry Sportfishing Association, the Port of Gold Beach, the promotions committee and others to find a way to continue the sea lion harassment program.

"The sea lions got to be such a problem in the bay, people were leaving town and were not coming back," Mark Lottis, president of Curry Sportfishing Association, told the group at Gold Beach City Hall.

Lottis compared the sea lions to a "pack of wolves" that would snatch salmon from fishermen's lines before they could be pulled into the boat.

Following meetings with state and federal officials, the program to annoy and chase the sea lions from the bay was approved.

"It's the only program like it run on municipal government land in the world," Lottis said.

Before the beginning of the program, the bay was full of sea lions, which were stealing the fish and discouraging tourism, a lifeblood of the Gold Beach economy.

With approval from state and federal authorities, barricades were erected on docks with a \$20,000 grant from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to discourage the sea lions. A hazer was hired to go out on boats and drop noisemaking bombs and shoot shells into the water to harass the sea lions.

A dock carcass program was set up so that fish carcasses would not be dropped into the bay to attract sea lions.

"There is a certain degree of notoriety with this program," Lottis said. "To date we have not had any severe problem with it."

"Some people wanted to know what was going on when the seal bombs were going off and the shells were popping," he said.

He said the sea lions are harassed and chased from the bay, but none have been harmed.

"The only way we got approval to do this is support of a government agency. The Port said we'd take it on and allow it to operate. Without this permission to operate, we couldn't get off the earth," Lottis said.

"The first year, it was such a success people were coming over to the boar and handing us \$100, \$500," he said. "We do get nice participation from local fishers. We did get \$5,000 from National Marine Fisheries. They donated for dock work."

See Sea lions, Page 2A



# Sea lions: Program's grant money depleted

Continued from Page 1A

"The Port of Gold Beach is giving us half of launch fees—3,409 this year," he said.

But certain grant money has gone away and costs are up.

"ODFW funded for two years because it was a trial program. We did get two \$20,000 grants," Lottis said. "Now, they say it's working so the community has to get

behind it."

Thus far, the program is \$15,849 short of the \$39,100 budget this year, although the Gold Beach area economy has been greatly helped by the program, Lottis said.

"If the program lapses one year, what's the chance to resume it?" Gold Beach Mayor Jim Wernicke asked.

"Absolutely zero," Lottis said.

He said the only way it started was "the sun, moon and stars lined up perfectly."

"Is there any way licenses sold here could have a surcharge to fund this program?" Councilor Larry Brennan asked.

"Certainly not," Lottis said. "State funds all go to the general fund."

Someone asked about the city's promotion funds.

"Personally, I would like to see promotion used as a match," said Jan Younce of the promotion committee.

"There is some debate whether the promotion ordinance gives us enough latitude to make donations to the program."

Port Commission Chairman Milt Walker said businesses in Gold Beach have

prospered this year due to tourism brought in by the sea lion hazing.

"There businesses need to be donating. They've had a great season," Walker said.

Younce said hotels and other businesses donated prizes to the salmon derby, which partially paid for the sea lion program.

Some complained that people staying in motels were paying room tax, which can help the promotion fund. But they said many of the visiting fishermen were staying in RV parks for the summer and weren't paying their share for the hazing project.

Councilor David Alexander noted that if the city could find a way to tax the RV parks for the fund, that would not cover those in the number of RV parks located outside the city along the Rogue River.

He said there needs to be a regional approach toward funding the program.

Councilor Peter Peterson suggested forming a taxing district for a bed tax to include areas around Gold Beach.

Mayor Wernicke said

that the city's promotions ordinance, which uses the room tax for its funding, needs to be changed.

"Our local ordinance says the promotions committee can't do anything except advertising," Wernicke said.

He noted the council will have a special meeting soon to examine that ordinance.

"If we could get a space tax for RVs. ... It's different than a bed tax that we collect from motels. It would be nice to have a steady flow," he said.

Wernicke said he was confident the promotions ordinance would be changed.

"There are people here for three months, fishing every day. They may pay a launch fee. That's about it," said Walker, the port commissioner.

An ad hoc committee was quickly formed to look at ways to fund the sea lion hazing.

Walker said that the sea lions belong to the federal government.

"They have been protected since 1972," he said. "I think it's wrong for us to have to pay for this when they belong to the federal government."