

Daily Pilot

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Photos by Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

CATHERINE KOWERTZ, left, and Dom Jones speak to the Huntington Beach City Council during interviews Friday for the vacant City Council seat.

Interviews get started to replace Tito Ortiz in H.B.

Council members will make an appointment to replace former Mayor Pro Tem Ortiz, who was elected in November and resigned on June 1.

BY MATT SZABO

Huntington Beach residents of all walks of life showed up to the City Council chambers throughout the day Friday.

Some used their full five-minute time allotment, while a few did not have a statement prepared. But all were candidates to interview for the open City Council spot that was vacated when Mayor Pro Tem Tito Ortiz resigned on June 1.

Just 51 of the scheduled 70 candidates showed up for their interviews, which left large time gaps throughout the day. Dozens more applicants are set to be heard Saturday, starting at 8:30 a.m. Those interested are able to view in person or watch online.

At least a couple of the candidates who spoke Friday were past City Council members seeking to return. Jill Hardy, who served 16 years on the council before she termed out for the second time last November, including two years as mayor, put her name back into the ring to be Ortiz's replacement.

Hardy, a math teacher at Marina High School, spoke to the council on Friday after-



MAYOR KIM CARR listens to a candidate for Huntington Beach's vacant City Council seat.

noon.

"I'm seeking appointment to the City Council because I want to continue to represent the people of Huntington Beach," Hardy said. "Our city needs leaders who can make

tough, fair and balanced decisions that both preserve our past and build our future. I plan to live in this city for the rest of my life, and I

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Trial set for November in Blaze Bernstein case

Samuel Lincoln Woodward was arrested in 2018 on suspicion of murdering his former high school classmate.

BY LILLY NGUYEN

The trial for a Newport Beach

man who stands accused of murdering his former high school classmate Blaze Bernstein is tentatively set for November following a trial setting conference held Friday.

Orange County Superior Court Judge Kimberly Menninger set the date for the jury trial of Samuel Lincoln Woodward, now 23,

to begin for November after Woodward's attorney requested a delay of the proceedings to January due to other trial conflicts.

The trial was initially scheduled to begin in late June, but was delayed as deputy public defender Alison Worthington was assigned to another case verging on a jury trial, according to re-

cent court filings by prosecutors that opposed the delay.

"We were very clear before that we wanted this case to go to trial and that it was going to be four years [since the murder] in January and that's an unreasonable delay," Orange County Dist. Atty.

See **Trial**, page A2

Reality star charged in O.C. with rape

'Marrying Millions' multimillionaire developer Bill Hutchinson is accused of sexually assaulting two girls.

BY RICHARD WINTON

Bill Hutchinson, a prominent Dallas-area developer who stars in the reality TV show "Marrying Millions," has been charged in Orange County with rape and sexual assault involving two teenage girls, the district attorney said Friday.

Hutchinson, 63, was charged with one count of rape of an unconscious person and five misdemeanors counts of nonconsensual touching, Orange County Dist. Atty. Todd Spitzer said.

An arrest warrant has been issued for the multimillionaire developer, who owns a home in the Emerald Bay community of Laguna Beach, court records show.

Prosecutors say Hutchinson sexually assaulted two 16-year-old girls while they were vacationing with him in April in California.

He raped one of them on April 1 and sexually assaulted the other four times during that trip, the district attorney said.

He then returned to the property a second time with one of the girls and committed a sexual battery on her, according to court documents.

Attorney John Manly, who represents one of the girls, said that she was 16 when she was assaulted but that she met Hutchinson when she was 15 through one of his daughters.

The Orange County charges come on the heels of Hutchinson's arrest Wednesday in Texas on suspicion of sexual assault involving a 17-year-old.

According to an affidavit in that

See **Charged**, page A2

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Raul Roa | Staff Photographer

FIELD SET FOR UNIQUE GOVERNOR'S CUP PAGE A4

AROUND TOWN: REBUILT NEWPORT BEACH CRAB COOKER TO OFFICIALLY OPEN MONDAY PAGE A2

Sur La Mer marking Independent Retailer Month

BY SUSAN HOFFMAN

In spite of the pandemic lockdown, Stacy Pomeroy took a leap of faith with her two-year-old Balboa Island home decor-gift business, Sur La Mer Coastal Goods.

"We had been in a small space on Marine Avenue for two years when COVID hit," Pomeroy said. "It was either go big or go home and move to a larger space across the street twice the size."

Pomeroy, a Newport Beach resident for 14 years, had been a stay-at-home mom prior to jumping into her retail business.

"It was self-preservation," she said. "I have one son and when he went off to college, I knew I'd go crazy without him."

With a background in hospitality — having grown up in her family's Ohio restaurant business — and a love of shopping for gifts,

Pomeroy was drawn to retail.

"A lot of what I buy are the things I would want or would give as gifts," she explained. "If I like it, hopefully other people would like as well."

In April 2020 she set up the new store and boosted its online presence through social networking platforms including Instagram and Facebook to attract area residents.

"The locals were so supportive of us and began calling, wanting to buy things," Pomeroy said. "Between the phone and online orders, they either picked up [merchandise] at the curb or alley or we delivered."

The temporary COVID-19 restrictions signage at Sur La Mer was taken down as the California economy reopened in June, a welcome harbinger of better times ahead.



Susan Hoffman

"The island response has really been overwhelming, so incredibly supportive beyond what I ever imagined," Pomeroy said. "Even repeat visitors [to town] are also

loyal."

Pomeroy is also proud that Sur La Mer Coastal Goods was awarded one of the 2021 top 50 retailers from industry organization,

Home Accents Today.

According to John Pope, public information manager for the city

See **Retailer**, page A5



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104 VIA ANTIBES #2



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Sold

428 Acacia Ave
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Represented Buyer



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412 Via Lido Soud
Lido Isle

List Price: \$4,800,000
Represented Seller



In Escrow

506 Via Lido Nord
Lido Isle

List Price: \$8,995,000
Representing Seller



Sold

228 Via Mentone
Lido Isle

List Price: \$3,195,000
Represented Buyer



Sold

608 Begonia Ave
Corona del Mar

List Price: \$2,245,000
Represented Seller



Sold

2425 Windward Ln
Newport Beach

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