

**MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 20, 2024**

**PORT OF ASTORIA
WORKSHOP SESSION
PIER ONE BUILDING
#10 PIER 1, SUITE 209
ASTORIA, OR 97103**

Call to Order:

Chairman Stevens called the Workshop Session to order at 4:00 pm.

Roll Call:

Commissioners Present: Robert Stevens; Frank Spence; Jim Campbell; Tim Hill; and Dirk Rohne.

Staff Present: Executive Director Will Isom; Deputy Director Matt McGrath; and Executive Assistant/Administrative Coordinator Stacy Bandy.

Port Counsel: Eileen Eakins was not present.

Also Attending: Clatsop County Manager Don Bohn; Georgia Pacific Public Affairs Manager Kristi Ward; Business Oregon Regional Representative Melanie Olson; Maul Foster Alongi Principal Planner Seth Otto; and Rebecca Norden-Bright of *The Astorian*.

Pledge of Allegiance

Changes/Additions to the Agenda:

Action item 7b. AVH Consulting, LLC – Professional Services Contract was removed from the agenda. Action item 7b. PNWA Mission to D.C. was added to the agenda.

Commissioner Rohne moved to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Spence seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

Public Comment:

No public comment was received.

Advisory:

6a. Boatyard Master Plan Update

Seth Otto, Garrick Kalamata, and Garrett Augustyn of consulting firm Maul Foster Alongi (MFA) present an update on the Boatyard Master Plan project. Principal Planner Seth Otto shares a PowerPoint presentation highlighting preliminary concepts for the boatyard redevelopment project. For the complete presentation, please see meeting audio.

Presentation highlights include:

- In 2023, the Port completed a feasibility study with BST Associates, which demonstrated the need to improve and expand services, infrastructure, and the footprint at the Boatyard.
- The primary aspirations for the boatyard are to increase lift capacity, build a boat storage maintenance facility, build a facility to host workspace, storage, and offices, and increase marketing for services and new investments.

- The master plan project began last fall with an evaluation of existing conditions and early community engagement. Existing conditions were used as a baseline to convene a stakeholder advisory committee and discuss concepts for redevelopment of the Boatyard.
- Stakeholder engagement focused primarily on meeting and talking with key stakeholders identified by Port staff, including commercial fishermen, boatyard users, operators, and commercial yacht brokers in the area who have a vested interest in the boatyard.
- In November 2023, the Port hosted a vision charrette with stakeholders. The design workshop was a highly productive interactive exercise that produced three different concepts.
- MFA staff met with Port staff and Boatyard stakeholders earlier today to share preliminary concept designs and solicit feedback.
- The next step in the process is to select a preferred alternative concept to refine into the final master plan.
- Astoria continues to be a major destination for the Portland metro region.
- Project information is available on the Port's website.

Discussion highlights include:

- Commissioner Spence proposed using the CM/GC contracting method for the Boatyard development project. Now that the framework is nearly complete, Spence urges staff and the Commission to move forward as quickly as possible.
- Commissioner Hill inquires if there is grant funding for the Boatyard development. Isom answers that Port staff are evaluating options, including private industry and various funding mechanisms, whether that be through more traditional financing or through grants.
- Commissioner Rohne notes that the state-funded feasibility study for the Boatyard proves the case that there is an economic argument to warrant economic investment in the development of the Boatyard.
- Commissioner Spence refers to page 12 of the packet and notes the negative feedback from advisory group members regarding shifts in Port leadership, goals, and vision as an impediment to cohesive progress for Boatyard development and on page 13, under the Constraints heading, inconsistency of Port Commission direction is listed. Spence respectfully disagrees with the statements and comments that throughout his tenure on the board the Port Commission has voted unanimously relating to Boatyard development. Rohne comments that he doubts the comments are a recent observation but more of a historical perspective.

The Commission thank Seth Otto and the MFA staff for their presentation.

Action Items:

7a. Georgia Pacific SIP Application

Executive Director Isom refers to the Strategic Investment Program (SIP) Application on page 31 of the packet and introduces Clatsop County Manager Don Bohn, Business Oregon Regional Representative Melanie Olson, and Georgia Pacific Public Affairs Manager Kristi Ward. Bohn explains that the SIP program was created to incentivize businesses to make major capital investments. Georgia Pacific is anticipating making a large investment at the Wauna Mill to replace machinery. Olson provides historical information about the SIP. Georgia Pacific will need to invest at least \$40 million dollars to receive the tax benefit. The program is designed for businesses to pay taxes on the first \$40 million of their investment, then taxes are exempt on any new buildings or equipment.

Discussion highlights include:

- Olson notes that, unlike the Enterprise Zone program, there is no hiring requirement; the Wauna mill employs roughly 750 employees, and the SIP will help retain such a large employer in the County.
- Bohn notes that there is a Community Service Fee component; 25% of the tax savings will be distributed to the taxing jurisdictions based on their proportion of the total permanent levy. Additionally, there is a 5% Community Impact Fee that will be distributed to rural first responders. Bohn adds that there is a lot of uncertainty with the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), and it is important for the County to retain family wage jobs.
- Once the Port approves the agreement, the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing on it.
- Isom declares a conflict of interest as his wife is employed by Georgia Pacific. Isom did not provide a recommendation on the agreement.
- Ward thanks Clatsop County, Business Oregon, and Columbia Economic Development Resources (CEDR) for their efforts. They're sending a message that they want GP to invest in our community and Georgia Pacific is very appreciative. The paper machine that will be replaced has reached its end of life, and the replacement machine will improve the working environment for mill staff.

Commissioner Spence moved to approve the Georgia Pacific SIP Application. Commissioner Rohne seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

7b. Pacific Northwest Waterways Association – Mission to D.C.

Executive Director Isom explains that this will be his second year attending the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA) annual conference. The group meets with delegates from both the House and the Senate from Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. It's a great way to maintain positive relationships with representatives.

Commissioner Rohne moved to approve the 2024 PNWA Mission to D.C. trip for Port staff. Commissioner Spence seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

Commission Comments:

Commissioner Campbell commented on the following:

- The Airport hosted a physician last Friday for physical examinations for pilots; nineteen pilots received exams.
- The Astoria Aviation ground school is currently in progress.

Commissioner Rohne commented on the following:

- Dave Densmore of the Fisher Poets is in the audience tonight. The Fisher Poets gathering begins this weekend. It has grown to be a huge event for the community. Six or seven locations host events and fishermen travel from the East Coast and internationally to attend. Rohne will be attending and encourages others to as well.

Commissioner Spence did not have any comments.

Commissioner Hill did not have any comments.

Commissioner Stevens commented on the following:

- The Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) Annual Conference was held last week in Seaside. Attended the Port breakout Caucus with Finance and HR Director Melanie Howard.
- There is consensus to cancel the March 5th meeting as Isom will be attending the PNWA Mission to D.C.

- The Finance Committee met last week with most Commissioners in attendance. Only the Commissioner Treasurer is a member of the committee, but the discussions are enlightening for all.

Executive Director Comments:

- Met with the Director of the Department of Environmental Quality, Leah Feldon, as well as Nate Stice from the Governor’s Regional Solutions team. Isom thanks McGrath for his robust presentation regarding the Rehabilitation of Pier 2 and the Area of Concern 4 projects.
- Met the Director of Columbia Pacific Economic Development District, Colin Cooper, earlier today. Cooper will be sending a letter of support for the Port’s Connect Oregon grant application.
- Will present an East Mooring Basin recommendation at the March 19th Commission meeting.

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- Workshop Session – March 19, 2024 at 4:00 PM

Adjourned:

Chairman Stevens adjourned the meeting at 4:52 PM.

APPROVED:



Robert Stevens, Board Chairman
Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



Tim Hill, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

Respectfully submitted by:
Stacy Bandy
Executive Assistant / Administrative Coordinator

April 2, 2024
Date Approved by Commission