



**MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 2, 2022**

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

Call to Order:

Chairman Rohne called the Regular Session to order at 4:00 PM.

Roll Call:

Commissioners Present: Dirk Rohne; Robert Stevens; Frank Spence; Jim Campbell; and Scott McClaine.

Staff Present: Executive Director Will Isom; Deputy Director Matt McGrath; Accounting and Business Services Manager Melanie Howard; and Executive Assistant / Administrative Coordinator Stacy Bandy.

Port Counsel: Eileen Eakins was not present at this session.

Also Attending: Executive Director of CREST Denise Lofman; Finance Committee member David Oser; Cindy Yingst of the *Columbia Press*; and Ethan Myers of *The Astorian*

Pledge of Allegiance

Commission Reports:

Commissioner McClaine reported on the following:

- The Clatsop County Fair starts today. McClaine encourages all to attend the fair and see the future possibilities for the Port.

Commissioner Spence reported on the following:

- Encourages Commissioners to sign up for the Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) annual board member training.

Commissioner Rohne reported on the following:

- Attended a Clatsop Economic Development Resources (CEDR) meeting. The county-wide bio-digester location has been narrowed down to two possible sites. The group also discussed daycare possibilities for large employers.

Commissioner Stevens reported on the following:

- Met with Commissioner Campbell and a member of the Budget Committee to brainstorm alternate cargos and handling procedures for the piers. There will be further conversations with the Executive Director and staff.

Commissioner Campbell had nothing to report.

Changes/Additions to the Agenda:

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

Public Comment for items on the agenda:

There were no requests for public comment.

Consent Calendar:

The Consent Calendar consisted of the following:

- Meeting Minutes – 05/18/2022 Budget Committee, 06/14/2022 Budget Adoption Hearing and Workshop Session, and 06/15/2022 Finance Committee Meeting
- Financials – Estimated June 2022
- Event Calendar – August 2022

Commissioner Campbell moved to approve the consent calendar as presented. Commissioner Spence seconded. The motion carried unanimously 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

Action Items:

8a. Finance Committee Re: Vacant Lot

Executive Director Isom refers to the memo from the Finance Committee on page 23 of the packet. The memo has been updated from the previous memo to the Commission. The original memo outlined a 12-acre parcel across from Fred Meyer to be considered for lease or sale. Port staff have been made aware through the FAA that the property is not eligible for lease or sale. Isom recommends that the Commission direct Port staff to seek proposals for a commercial realtor, early on, to provide advice and devise a plan for tax lot #1200 and surrounding properties. The discussion continues amongst the Commission as to the parcel location and the possibilities and limitations.

Commissioner Campbell moved to authorize staff to move forward with the process to engage a commercial realtor. Commissioner McClaine seconded. The motion carried unanimously 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

8b. Reconsideration of Membership in C.R.E.S.T

Commissioner Spence explains that this action item is on the agenda at his request. Spence requests that the Port continue to be a member of the Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST) at the \$500 level. The Port has had a relationship with CREST since its inception in 1974.

- Executive Director of CREST, Denise Lofman, steps up to the podium and addresses the Commission. Lofman discusses the relationship between CREST and the Port. Lofman encourages the Port to remain a member of CREST. Lofman is aware that the CREST has not provided the support that it has to the Port in the past, since now the Port has staff to perform the functions that CREST had helped with previously. In the mid-2000s, CREST had a staff member working more than part-time for the Port. Lofman notes that all cities in the county and the county are members of CREST. Lofman asks the Commission if they have any questions.
- Commissioner Stevens asks if we will be able to receive CREST services if the Port is no longer a paying member. Lofman answers yes. Isom adds that the Port has an environmental specialist, Erin Hawkinson, who now does much of what was previously completed through outside contractors, including CREST.

Commissioner Spence moved to remain a member of CREST at the \$500 level. Commissioner McClaine seconded. The motion fails 1-4 amongst the Commissioners present.

Public Comment for items not on the agenda:

There were no requests for public comment.

Executive Director Comments:

- Executive Director Isom asks Cruise Ship Marketing Director, Bruce Conner, to speak to the Commission about the state of the cruise industry. Conner discusses the Seatrade cruise conference

held annually in Miami. Conner attends the event each year to solicit cruise agencies to visit Astoria on their way to and from Alaska. Seatrade has not met the past two years due to the pandemic. Many cruise industry executives changed career paths during the pandemic, and there are a lot of new faces. Conner is re-introducing Astoria to itinerary planners. This year was extremely important since there are so many new contacts for cruise agencies. The industry is back on track, and 100% of ships will be back in service by October of this year. Vaccination and testing requirements have been rolled back. Discussion included a cruise-led initiative to create a zero-emission green corridor. Conner continues that the Port is expecting 16 cruise ships this fall. The Clatsop Cruise Hosts (CCH) have faced transportation challenges for cruise passengers without the partnership with Sunset Empire transportation. The CCHs have been paying private bus companies, but at \$2,000 per coach, it is a financial risk. Conner predicts that next year will be a record-breaking year. Conner expects 32 cruise ships to visit the Port next year. Commissioner McClaine inquires if Conner is aware of a proposed survey for cruise passengers next year. Conner answers that the Chamber has surveyed cruise passengers before and the Executive Director of the Astoria -Warrenton Chamber of Commerce, David Reid, will have that information. Commissioner Campbell inquires if there are coaches available for excursions such as to Mt Saint Helens. Conner explains that coaches are limited, but does have some reserved for excursions. The Commissioners thank Conner for his presentation.

- Isom refers to the estimated June financials and would like to recognize that both the boatyard and marina had record-breaking years.
- Annual fieldwork is complete from audit firm Talbot, Korvola, & Warwick (TKW). Final audit site work will come in September.
- Last week, the Coast Guard completed their annual facility and facilities inspection.
- Isom and McGrath participated in the zoning kickoff meeting with the City of Astoria and consultants Walker Macy. The hope is to have something to present by the end of the calendar year.
- Tomorrow, Isom and McGrath will be meeting with the new Business Oregon Ports Programming Manager, Courtney Flathers, along with Regional Representative, Melanie Olson, as well as members of the finance department. The group will discuss the debt deferment with Business Oregon and how to begin re-introducing the debt payments. Following the meeting, the Business Oregon staff will tour Port facilities.
- Isom will be meeting with a development company to discuss opportunities at the East Mooring Basin and the Central Waterfront.
- There is a new Executive Director at the Port of Brookings Harbor.
- Commissioner Spence is concerned that the zoning amendments are not expected until the end of the calendar year. Spence would like to see a list of low-hanging fruit or projects that can be completed in relation to the Astoria Waterfront Master Plan (AWMP).

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- Workshop Session – August 16, 2022 at 4:00 PM
- Regular Session – September 6, 2022 at 4:00 PM

Adjourned:

Chairman Rohne adjourned the meeting at 4:52 PM.



Port of Astoria

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Dirk Rohne, Board Chairman
Board of Commissioners

Frank R. Spence, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

Respectfully submitted by:
Stacy Bandy
Executive Assistant – Administrative Coordinator

September 6, 2022
Date Approved by Commission