



**MEETING MINUTES**  
**MARCH 15, 2022**

**PORT OF ASTORIA**  
**WORKSHOP SESSION**

Meeting held via videoconference due to the COVID-19 pandemic

**Call to Order:**

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

**Roll Call:**

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

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

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

Special Guest: Calder Gillin and Mike Zilis with Walker Macy; Shane Jensen Grant Consultant

Also Attending: Bill Cook; Roger Rocka; David Oser; Tom Brownson; Brett Estes; David Harlan; Ethan Myers of *The Astorian*; and Cindy Yingst of the *Columbia Press*

**Commission Reports:**

Commissioner Rohne reported on the following:

- All Commissioners have received an email with updates regarding the county-wide biodigester feasibility study.

Commissioner McClaine reported on the following:

- Chris Connaway has written another Letter to the Editor regarding the Port that was published in *The Astorian*.

Commissioner Stevens reported on the following:

- Attended the City of Astoria's Uniontown business meeting. The group discussed items in the Astoria Waterfront Master Plan, such as wayfinding solutions for the waterfront.

Commissioner Campbell reported on the following:

- Suggests that the Commission discuss Resolution 2022-02 Amended Resolution to Raise Rates at the Airport. Chairman Spence advises that this topic be addressed at the next Commission meeting.

Commissioner Spence reported on the following:

- Asks Executive Director Isom to reach out to newly appointed Senator Rachel Armitage.
- The Port will welcome the first cruise ship since the pandemic began on April 5<sup>th</sup>. There are 18 cruise ships berthing at the Port this season.

**Advisory Items:****8a. Astoria Waterfront Master Plan Discussion – Walker Macy**

Executive Director Isom introduces Calder Gillian and Mike Zilas with Walker Macy to give a high-level summary of the Astoria Waterfront Master Plan (AWMP).

Zilis explains that the AWMP process began with interviewing stakeholders and holding public forums. Regular meetings were held with Port and City officials. There was an incredible amount of input received for the project. The master plan goals were then identified including strengthening Astoria's working waterfront, establishing a place for Astorians, contributing to the financial stability of the Port, City, and region, supporting living wage jobs, and establishing a framework that is both resilient and flexible. Core values were established including accessibility and adaptability, adding identity to the Port, positioning Pier 1 for industry, and providing public waterfront space. The plan suggests removing the Chinook building and the existing Riverwalk hotel structure.

Zilis walked through the various plans included in the framework which are marked for different uses. The plan calls for expanding Industry Street to connect Bay St and Basin St, as well as future improvement to Hamburg Ave for industrial traffic. Zilis suggests pursuing redevelopment of zoning in the area. Early wins for the project include removing the Chinook Building, improving wayfinding including added lights and signage, promoting the Port's identity, improving seasonal cruise facilities, and improving the East Basin. Zilis opens the floor for questions and comments from the Commission.

- Executive Director Isom adds that this meeting was not in the original plan, but Isom thought it would be beneficial to have another meeting to discuss these plans before final approval. This area of the Port is more visible to the public than other Port properties. It's important to identify and begin with early wins to inspire confidence within the community.
- Commissioner Rohne notes that it has been a pleasure working with the City of Astoria and thanks the consultants at Walker Macy for their work in developing the AWMP. The plan has outlined what the Port and City need to do to make this area a benefit for the region.
- Commissioner Campbell expresses concern over the size of the hotel. Campbell suggests expanding the planned hotel to two and a half times the number of rooms currently in the plan to bring in a qualified hotelier. Campbell would like to see a fine dining restaurant on the waterfront. Campbell also notes that outdoor areas along the waterfront, without protection from the elements, could be problematic.
- Commissioner McClaine refers to page 45 of the packet and notes that there are different names used for the AWMP. McClaine asks that the same name be used throughout the document for the sake of continuity. McClaine refers to page 56 of the packet and suggests that the plan includes actual numbers and not projected numbers in terms of the cruise industry. McClaine would like to see consistency in the viewing tower design with the existing viewing tower along the waterfront.
- Commissioner Stevens asks if safety and security have been addressed along the restricted pier area. Zilis responds that the idea is that the Pier 1 industrial area would be barricaded, and the area would not be accessible to the public.

The Commissioners each made comments to the AWMP. For full comments please see meeting audio. Commission comments and concerns were noted and will be included in the final draft. The final draft of the AWMP will be presented to the City of Astoria at their next meeting and at the next Port Commission meeting on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Spence thanks the City of Astoria and the consultants at Walker Macy for their work.



**Changes/Additions to the Agenda:**

Commissioner Spence adds advisory items 8b. Airport Industrial Park Update and 8c. Grant Status Update 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 – 1/18/2022 Workshop Session Minutes, 2/1/2022 Regular Session, and 2/15/2022 Workshop Session
- Financials – January 2022
- Event Calendar – March 2022

*Commissioner Campbell moved to approve the Consent Calendar. Commissioner McClaine seconded. The motion carried unanimously 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.*

**Action Items:****9a. Business Oregon Contract Approval – Airport Tide Gate Study**

Executive Director Isom introduces Grant Writer Shane Jensen to discuss the tide gate grant. Jensen begins that the Port was awarded a grant from Business Oregon's Tide Gates Program. The subject of the study is the Vera Slough tide gate. The goal is to lower the water table at the airport in order to protect infrastructure. The budget of the project is roughly \$100,000, which is 100% funded by Business Oregon. The project will do preliminary work to see what modifications are necessary to lower the water table. The project can begin once it is approved by the Commission.

- Commissioner Spence adds that the Port worked with the Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST) to modify the Vera Slough tide gate over 20 years ago. At the January CREST meeting the CREST Executive Director, Denise Löfman, offered to help to correct the situation, further explaining that the Port has 15 free hours with CREST. Commissioner Spence declares a possible conflict of interest, as he has been elected Chairman of CREST.
- Commissioner Campbell inquires if there is a plan to hire an engineer. Jensen explains that an engineer will be hired once the agreement is executed.
- Commissioner McClaine asks about the original purpose of the tide gate and inquires if the Port would still be liable to replace wetlands. Jensen explains this project will determine how much mitigation will be required to offset the wetlands. Commissioner Stevens also has concerns as to the feasibility of wetlands mitigation.

*Commissioner McClaine moved to approve the contract with Business Oregon for the tide gate feasibility study. Commissioner Stevens seconded. The motion carried unanimously 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.*

**9b. Request for Expenditure #0119 – Pier 2 Roof Repairs**

McGrath explains there are temporary repairs needed for the Pier 2 Bornstein building that are not budgeted. Pier 2 subsidence is causing separation at the peak of the building allowing for water intrusion and damage. The bid in the packet is from NW Roofing & Construction in the amount of \$30,440.92 to make temporary repairs to the building until the entire roof can be replaced.

- Commission Campbell asks where the unbudgeted funds will be pulled from. Isom explains that the Port is at 113% of budgeted operating revenue and 102% of budgeted operating expense; seven months into the fiscal year the Port is in a good position in terms of the budget to make this expenditure.

- Commissioner Stevens asks why there is a question mark in the accommodation field. Isom explains that capital expenditures are projected a year out and when the Port has unexpected expenditures decisions have to be made as to how to proceed. This fiscal year several capital projects have been put on hold.
- McClaine asks what the long-term plan is for the Bornstein building. McGrath explains that permanent repairs cannot be made to the building until the Pier 2 subsidence is repaired.

*Commissioner McClaine moved to approve the expenditure of \$30,440.92. Commissioner Campbell seconded. The motion carried unanimously 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.*

#### 9c. Airport Advisory Committee Appointment

Commissioner Campbell comments that Henry Idica is a very knowledgeable and intelligent individual with aviation knowledge. Henry Idica would represent Camp Rilea in the Airport Advisory Committee.

*Commissioner McClaine moved to approve the appointment of Henry Idica to the Airport Advisory Committee. Commissioner Stevens seconded. The motion carried unanimously 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.*

#### Advisory Items:

##### 8b. Update on Airport Industrial Park

- Deputy Director McGrath met with Clatsop County Commissioner, Pamela Wev, to tour the airport facilities and update her on the airside and landside projects. Wev asked the Port to resubmit the Port's proposal to the county for Industrial Revolving Funds.
- The Scoular project development is moving along well. The project is expected to be completed in July or August.
- Permitting is in place for the Airport Industrial Park. Federal Aviation Administration release to allow for non-aeronautical use is approved.

##### 8c. Update on Grant Status

- The Port is waiting for a response for the Connect Oregon grant application. This grant would fund a project to replace the East Basin Causeway.

#### Executive Director Comments:

- Meetings with ILWU for CBA negotiations are underway. Talks have been positive.
- After periods of public comment and review from the Department of Justice, the Port now has a completed consent judgment for AOC4. The document is ready for Commissioners Spence and Rohne to sign.
- Isom and McGrath made a presentation at a Clatsop County Commission meeting to request funds from Clatsop County's Industrial Revolving Funds. The Clatsop County Commission has directed their staff to work with Port staff to develop a final proposal.
- The Finance Committee will meet in person tomorrow at 12 pm at the 10 Pier 1 Building.
- Isom has been in talks with Business Oregon about the expiration of the debt deferrals. Payments will be coming due in April-May. There will be a phased approach to implement re-payment of the loans.
- Business Oregon is recruiting to replace Ports Manager, Stephanie Prybyl.
- Cruise Ship season is fast approaching. Susan Transue and Bruce Conner are working with CDC, the cruise lines, and the local health department to draft a Memorandum of Agreement for COVID-19 safety protocol. There has been difficulty securing busses for cruise ship excursions with the shortage of bus drivers at the Sunset Empire Transportation District. Bruce Conner has been exploring other transportation options.



- Finance and Human Resources Manager Jim Grey will be retiring on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Jim Grey's retirement is bittersweet as Grey has a lot of in-house knowledge of Port operations. The Port has posted for an Accounting Specialist position.
- Commissioners have all received an update from the county-wide biodigester feasibility study.
- The Port will be hosting a roundtable for Senator Wyden on April 13<sup>th</sup> with the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) at the 10 Pier 1 Building. This is not a meeting with the Port, but the Port is providing the facility for the event.
- Senator Merkley will be hosting a Clatsop County virtual town hall this Thursday.
- The Port is waiting for confirmation from Senator Armitage to schedule a visit.
- The Spring Port Newsletter is available. Isom thanks Melanie Howard and Stacy Bandy for their efforts in publishing and distributing the in-house newsletter.
- The Budget Committee is accepting applications for a vacant seat. Applications are available online.
- Suggests Commissioner Campbell meet with staff to discuss the airport rate amendment. A proposal can be brought up for a vote at the next commission meeting.
- Commissioner McClaine has copies of the Port Newsletter for distribution.
- Commissioner Spence thanks Melanie Howard and Stacy Bandy for their work with the newsletter. Spence adds that Jim Grey has done an outstanding job bringing the Port's finances to their current state.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates:**

- Regular Session – April 5, 2022 at 4:00 PM
- Workshop Session – April 15, 2022 at 4:00 PM

**Adjourned:**

Chairman Spence adjourned the meeting at 5:37 PM.

**APPROVED:**

Frank Spence, Board Chairman  
Board of Commissioners

**ATTEST:**

Dirk Rohne, Secretary  
Board of Commissioners

Respectfully submitted by:  
Stacy Bandy  
Executive Assistant – Administrative Coordinator

April 5, 2022  
Date Approved by Commission