



**MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 16, 2021**

**PORT OF ASTORIA
WORKSHOP SESSION**

Meeting held via videoconference due to social distancing measures

Call to Order:

Chairman Rohne called the Workshop 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; Finance & HR Manager Jim Grey; Staff Accountant Melanie Wiegardt; and Administrative Services Manager Ella Marion.

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

Also Attending: Kevin Leahy, Executive Director of Clatsop Economic Development Resources (CEDR); Melanie Olson, Regional Development Officer at Business Oregon; Tom Wortmann, Managing Director of Corporate Development at Scoular; Andrew Bornstein of Bornstein Seafoods and River Barrel Brewing; David Kroening of River Barrel Brewing and Buoy Beer; Ganesh Sonpatki, President of Param Hotel Corp; Lenny Cheney, General Manager of the Riverwalk Inn; Edward Stratton of *The Astorian*; and Cindy Yingst of *The Columbia Press*.

Changes/Additions to the Agenda:

Commissioner Spence requested to add "Report on the Joint Meeting with the City of Astoria Development Commission regarding the Updated Waterfront Master Plan" onto the agenda as item 6c.

Commissioner Spence moved to approve the revised agenda. Commissioner Campbell seconded. The motion was carried unanimously among the Commissioners present.

Public Comment:

There were no requests for public comment. **Commissioner McClaine entered the virtual meeting at 4:05PM before the Enterprise Zone Applications item.*

Action Items:

5a. Enterprise Zone Applications

Executive Director Isom gave a brief introduction of the Enterprise Zone applications. These are the second and third companies to apply to the program; the first company was Fort George in 2020. There was a joint meeting among the four bodies of the Enterprise Zone (City of Astoria, City of Warrenton, Clatsop County, and the Port of Astoria) where Kevin Leahy gave background information of the Enterprise Zone and both companies gave a short presentation about their planned capital investment and future employment. Isom deferred to Leahy and the applicants to answer any questions. Leahy advised that the Astoria City Council, the Clatsop County



Commission, and the Warrenton Commission have all approved moving forward with these economic development opportunities. Leahy offered the opportunity to ask questions or make comments. There were no additional questions or comments by any meeting participants.

5ai. SDYB Opco

Commissioner Stevens moved to approve the SDYB Opco Enterprise Zone application. Commissioner Campbell seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

5aii. River Barrel Brewing, Inc.

Commissioner Campbell moved to approve the River Barrel Brewing, Inc., Enterprise Zone application. Commissioner Stevens seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

5b. Stopwater Lease Assignment

Deputy Director McGrath advised that this lease assignment is a housekeeping task. The Stopwater lease runs for another ten years. Stopwater is the Bar Pilots and Saddle Mountain is one of their real estate management companies that currently has a sublease. The lease assignment transfers the lease from Stopwater to Saddle Mountain and does away with the sublease. This will go into effect April 1st. He is asking for Commission approval on the lease assignment. Commissioner McClaine stated he had reservations that neither Stopwater nor Saddle Mountain had business licenses with either the City of Astoria or the City of Warrenton. McGrath advised that Stopwater is a holding company for the Bar Pilots; Stopwater is not running the operation.

Commissioner Spence moved to approve the Lease Assignment from Stopwater to Saddle Mountain. Commissioner Campbell seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Advisory/Discussion Items:

6a. Riverwalk Inn Presentation

Director Isom advised that he spoke to the Commission a few weeks ago about the effects of the pandemic on the Riverwalk Inn and about the facility's capital and maintenance needs. At that meeting, the Commission gave Isom permission to engage with hotel operator, Param Hotel Corp, regarding the future of the hotel and the infrastructure issues. Since then, Isom has met with owner Ganesh Sonpatki and general manager Lenny Cheney regarding the issues. Cheney shared a PowerPoint presentation that discussed the renovations that the hotel has already done, the ongoing structural issues at the hotel, and future renovations planned at the hotel. Commissioner Campbell requested to have a tour of the hotel to see the issues. Cheney advised Commissioners could contact him directly to schedule tours. Commissioner Spence voiced his concerns about the condition of the building. He suggests that money should be invested as a rehabilitation of the building. Sonpatki commented that Param wants to be there long-term. He has been speaking with a local architect to determine the extent of the damage. They will be bringing in an engineer to determine what's safe. He wants to take care of this before it becomes a major issue, and he wants to address this in the right way. He also wants to make sure that the Commission's plans for the area work with the hotel. Commissioner Stevens commented that the presentation provided a lot of information about the status of the hotel. He would like this addressed before it becomes a safety issue. Sonpatki stated that they are currently monitoring the situation, and they would not operate if it were unsafe. It is a beautiful building, but there are issues that need to be addressed. He wanted the Commission to be aware, so they could determine a plan on how to work together to make it a safer building and solidify the long-term benefits for all parties.

6b. Executive Director Update

- The recently passed \$1.9T COVID Relief Bill includes \$350B to state and local governments. Isom is waiting for information from the Governor's office about how the funds will be distributed and the application process. The money needs to be spent by the end of CY 2024. Unlike previous relief packages, these funds can be used to recover loss of revenue for impacted

businesses. It specifically calls out tourism, travel, and hospitality. Grants consultant Shane Jensen is working on this. Based on the broad language of the bill, the Port should qualify under a number of different provisions.

- Isom and Deputy Director McGrath met with County administration last week. They spoke with County Manager Don Bohn and Finance & Administration Manager Monica Steele about the Port potentially accessing industrial revolving funds from the County for projects at the airport. This fund was originally set up for the North Coast Business Park, but has not been used. Bohn will be taking it to the County Commission to determine the future of those funds and what entities would be eligible to use them.
- There is a finance meeting on March 24th. Isom will not be attending, but Staff Accountant Wiegardt will be running the meeting as usual. He will be out next week on vacation, and will be reachable for emergencies.

6c. Report on the Joint Meeting with the City of Astoria Development Commission regarding the Updated Waterfront Master Plan

Commissioner Spence stated that he wanted this as an official item on the agenda to memorialize this historic joint meeting. He would like it entered into the Port's official record that the meeting was successful and represented a spirit of cooperation. This project was started by Isom and Astoria City Manager Brett Estes. Commissioner Spence thanked Isom for starting this partnership with the City of Astoria, and for also seeking a partnership with the County. He would like the Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFQ) that was created by the City's consultant added to the Port's official record. Commissioner Rohne suggested that the RFQ and the meeting minutes could be included in the consent calendar at the next meeting.

Commission Comments:

Commissioner Stevens commented on the following:

- He attended the Airport Advisory Committee meeting. McGrath presented several items to the committee, and Chairman Balensifer checked in with the remainder of the advisory members. Commissioner Stevens asked about a permanent airport manager for this year. Balensifer suggested that the committee formally recommend that an airport manager be included in the next year's budget.

Commissioner Spence had no comments.

Commissioner Campbell had no comments.

Commissioner McClaine commented on the following:

- He attended Senator Wyden's virtual town hall meeting. There was nothing Port-related in the meeting. There is an article in the paper that details the topics of the meeting.

Commissioner Rohne commented on the following:

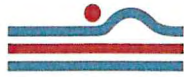
- He thanked everyone for their good work today. He feels that the Port accomplished a lot today with the approval of the Enterprise Zone applications.

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- Finance Advisory Committee – March 24, 2021 at 1:00 PM
- Regular Session – April 6, 2021 at 4:00 PM
- Workshop Session – April 20, 2021 at 4:00 PM

Adjourned:

Chairman Rohne adjourned the meeting at 5:00 PM.



Port of Astoria

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Dirk Rohne, Board Chairman
Board of Commissioners

Frank Spence, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

Respectfully submitted by:
Ella Mae C. Marion
Administrative Services Manager

April 6, 2021
Date Approved by Commission