

MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 7, 2026

PORT OF ASTORIA
REGULAR MEETING
COMMISSION CHAMBERS
422 GATEWAY AVE., SUITE 100
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; Jim Campbell via zoom; Tim Hill; and Thaddeus Fickel.

Staff Present: Executive Director Will Isom; Deputy Director Matt McGrath; Finance and HR Director Melanie Howard and Office Manager Dianna Delgado.

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

Also Attending: Finance Committee member David Oser, Budget Committee member Steve Kraske, Jay Corella of *The Daily Astorian*, Brady Backstrom of Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare, and Lori Beth Kulp.

Pledge of Allegiance

Changes/Additions to the agenda

Public Comment for items on the agenda

No public comment was received.

Consent Calendar

The Consent Calendar consisted of the following:

- Meeting Minutes – Finance Advisory Committee Meeting 2/18/2026, Regular Meeting 03/03/2026, Workshop Session 3/17/2026
- Event Calendar – April 2026

Commissioner Hill moved to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. Commissioner Fickel seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

Votes were as follows: Stevens – Aye, Rohne – Aye, Campbell – Aye, Hill – Aye, Fickel – Aye.

Action Items

7a. RFE 0249 – Airport Ramp Repairs

Deputy Director McGrath presented information regarding the need to replace six concrete panels on the east side of C Row and improve drainage between B and C Rows. Earthworx Excavation was the only contractor to submit complete bids for both components of the project and offered the most competitive pricing at \$38,485. McGrath requested approval to proceed with Earthworx Excavation to complete the work within the next month

Commissioner Fickel moved to approve RFE 0249 for Airport Ramp Repairs with Earthworx

Excavation LLC, in the amount of \$38,485. Commissioner Stevens seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

Votes were as follows: Stevens – Aye, Rohne – Aye, Campbell – Aye, Hill – Aye, Fickel – Aye.

7b. FY2026-27 Budget Updates

Finance Director Melanie Howard summarized the 2026–27 budget process and meeting schedule. The first Budget Committee meeting is scheduled for May 13, with a tentative second meeting on May 20. Melanie also requested that the Commission renew the term of Budget Committee member Steve Kraske through June 2028.

Commissioner Fickel moved to reappoint Steve Kraske to the Budget Committee for a three-year term, expiring on July 30, 2028. Commissioner Hill seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

Votes were as follows: Stevens – Aye, Fickel – Aye, Rohne – Aye, Campbell – Aye, Hill – Aye.

7c. Georgia Pacific Tax Deferment

Executive Director Isom reported that Georgia Pacific requested an extension of the Strategic Investment Program project completion deadline, from April 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026, due to construction and permitting delays. Both the county manager and county attorney expressed no concerns. The amendment had already been signed by Georgia Pacific, and the county is reviewing it.

Commissioner Fickel moved to allow Executive Director Isom to extend the project completion deadline in Section 1.1 of the existing Strategic Investment planning Agreement from April 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026. Commissioner Hill seconded. The motion carried 4-1 amongst the Commissioners present.

Votes were as follows: Stevens – Aye, Fickel – Aye, Rohne – Aye, Campbell – Aye, Hill – Aye

Public Comment for items not on the agenda

- Lori Beth Kulp commented on the upcoming cruise ship arrivals and the logistics surrounding excursions. Kulp expressed concerns about where tour buses are placed and the accessibility challenges this creates for passengers. She also raised concerns related to the Marketing Director’s contract, role and prior ethics findings, along with concerns about the Facility Use Agreements requirements for small tour operators, including insurance levels and overall fairness of the contract structure. She urged the Commission to reconsider the Facilities Use Agreement and explore changes to how cruise transportation operations are managed.
- Brady Backstrom of Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare requested that the Port allow Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare to purchase 8-12 parking passes at the previous annual rate, explaining that the 32-unit Baker Building supported housing facility has insufficient parking for its residents, many of whom rely on personal vehicles. He emphasized that the request was temporary and intended only as an interim measure while space remains available. He also highlighted Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare’s mission to support community stability and independence, noting that improved parking access would help residents maintain routines and thrive. He asked the Port to consider allowing temporary use of nearby lots to meet these access needs.

Commission Reports

Commissioner Hill did not have anything to report.

Commissioner Fickel commented on the following:

Reflected on hosting visiting friends and experiencing local attractions through their eyes, emphasizing appreciation for the region and stewardship of community resources.

Commissioner Rohne commented on the following:

Expressed a preference that public comment topics be addressed with the Executive Director outside regular meetings to ensure efficiency and clarity.

Commissioner Stevens commented on the following:

Outlined a recent article summarizing House Bill 4177, which aims to clarify communication rules for public officials outside formal meetings. The bill awaits the governor's decision.

Commissioner Campbell commented on the following:

Commented on the Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare's parking request, noting that parking availability becomes very limited during peak fishing seasons.

Executive Director Comments

- The Port is tracking very close to budget operationally: On an 11-million-dollar budget revenues are within \$30,000 and expenses are within \$6,000 year-to-date.
- The first cruise ship of 2026 arrives Thursday.
- The airport hangar project is complete, the FBO construction project is underway
- A thank-you letter was received from U.S. Coast Guard Captain Neil Corbin for the support during the March 20 memorial service for aviation survival technician 2nd class Tyler Jagers.
- Reminded commissioners to complete their annual Statements of Economic Interest to avoid fines.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

- Workshop Session – April 21, 2026, at 4:00 PM
- Regular Session – May 5, 2026, at 4:00 PM

Adjourned

Chairman Rohne adjourned the meeting at 4:28 PM.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:



Dirk Rohne, Board Chairman
Board of Commissioners



Thaddeus Fickel, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

Respectfully submitted by:
Dianna Delgado, Office Manager
Katie Brown, Administrative Assistant

May 5, 2026
Date Approved by Commission