

**MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 04, 2025**

**PORT OF ASTORIA
REGULAR SESSION
COMMISSION CHAMBERS
422 GATEWAY AVE., SUITE 100
ASTORIA, OR 97103**

Call to Order

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

Roll Call

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

Staff Present: Executive Director Will Isom; Deputy Director Matt McGrath; Finance & HR Director Melanie Howard and Terminal & Customer Support Manager Sue Transue.

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

Also Attending: Port Finance Advisory Committee member Steve Kraske.

Pledge of Allegiance

Changes/Additions to the Agenda

Executive Director Will Isom requested the addition of item 8b. Build CMH Expansion Letter of Support to the agenda as an action item.

Commissioner Rohne moved to approve the agenda with the addition of action item 8b, CMH Expansion Letter of support. Commissioner Campbell seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

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

Public Comment for items on the agenda:

No public comment was received.

Consent Calendar

The Consent Calendar consisted of the following:

- Meeting Minutes – Workshop Session 1/21/2025, Airport Advisory Committee 1/27/2025, Workshop Session 2/18/2025
- Financials – January 2025
- Event Calendar – March 2025

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

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

Advisory Items:**7a. Port of Astoria Waterfront Developer Discussion**

- Isom presented the proposal submitted by a development team consisting of American Life, Atlin Investments, and Elevator Shaft, LLC, for redeveloping the Port's central waterfront, as outlined in the Central Waterfront Master Plan (CWMP).
- Isom provided background on the CWMP developer selection process, including coordination with the City of Astoria, necessary zoning changes, and the Port's engagement with Popkin Real Estate to guide the solicitation and evaluation of responses.
- The selection committee—composed of Port Commissioners Dirk Rohne and Tim Hill, Executive Director Isom, Deputy Director Matt McGrath, AWACC Executive Director David Reid, consultants of Popkin Real Estate, and John Southgate of Southgate Consulting—reviewed qualified proposals and conducted interviews. Popkin assisted with vetting, reference checks, and follow-up discussions.
- Based on the evaluation process, the committee recommended the proposal from Atlin's team due to their experience, financial capacity, and readiness to address land use planning challenges. Atlin's relationship with Onex, a cruise operator with ties to Alaska, was also a potential asset in bringing additional tourism to the area.
- Commissioner Rohne noted that several proposals were strong, and some teams showed impressive outreach to community stakeholders.
- Commissioner Stevens inquired whether the current tenant of the hotel had submitted a proposal. Isom confirmed that a response had been received, but it was brief—less than one page—so they were not brought in for an interview. Commissioner Stevens thanked Commissioners Rohne and Hill for their involvement in the RFEI process and encouraged all Commissioners and the community to review the proposal materials ahead of Atlin's full presentation scheduled for March 18.
- Commissioners were encouraged to share any questions or concerns with Isom in advance so Atlin could be prepared to address them during the presentation.
- The Port emphasized the importance of moving forward with a sense of urgency, while remaining thoughtful and careful.

Action Items:**8a. Sara Wirkkala – Columbia River Counseling Lease Agreement**

Terminal & Customer Support Manager Sue Transue presented the lease agreement for Columbia River Counseling, which currently occupies Suite 101 at the 10 Pier 1 Building. The current lease is set to expire in March 2025. The proposed renewal would extend the lease for five years with a termination notice requirement of 60 days.

The Port supports the lease terms as presented.

Commissioner Rohne moved to approve the commercial lease agreement between the Port of Astoria and Sara Wirkkala. Commissioner Campbell seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

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

8b. Build CMH Expansion Letter of Support

Columbia Memorial Hospital (CMH) requested a letter of support for a \$6 million match they are seeking from the State of Oregon. The funding would support the construction of a tsunami evacuation structure as part of the CMH expansion project. CMH has secured a \$20 million FEMA grant, which requires a 30% matching contribution to move the project forward.

Commissioner Campbell expressed support for the project and noted that it would be an important and necessary asset to the community.

Commissioner Campbell moved that the Port moves forward with the letter of support.

*Commissioner Rohne seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.
Votes were as follows: Stevens – Aye, Spence – Aye, Hill – Aye, Campbell – Aye, Rohne – Aye.*

Public Comment for items not on the agenda:

There were no public comments.

Commission Reports

Commissioner Campbell reported on the following:

Expressed interest in revisiting the East Mooring Basin project and exploring ways to rebuild the causeway and make it viable.

Commissioner Rohne reported the following:

Commented on the recent Fisher Poets gathering. It is a great event that celebrates Astoria's maritime history and brings many visitors to the city.

Commissioner Spence reported on the following:

Shared that he has questions for the American Life representative regarding the central waterfront redevelopment, specifically about the project's EB-5 funding model and whether changes under the Trump administration may affect it.

Commissioner Hill reported the following:

Commended the Executive Director, Deputy Director, and Port staff for their continued efforts and work behind the scenes.

Commissioner Stevens reported on the following:

Attended a town hall for local officials hosted by Senator Merkley and Congresswoman Bonamici.

Executive Director Comments:

- Will be travelling to Washington, D.C. along with McGrath to attend an event hosted by the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association. Plans to meet with members of the Northwest congressional delegation to advocate for the Port's priorities.
- The Port is currently in the hiring process for the Accounts Receivable and Payroll Specialist position. Finance & HR Director Melanie Howard is leading the recruitment and interviews.
- Port elections are coming up in May. There are multiple candidates for each seat.

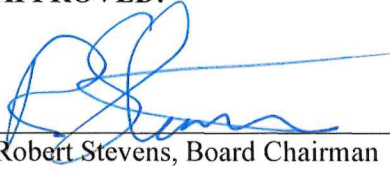
Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- Airport Advisory Committee – March 17, 2025 at 4:00 PM
- Workshop Session – March 18, 2025 at 4:00 PM
- Regular Session – April 1, 2025 at 4:00 PM

Adjourned:

Chairman Stevens adjourned the meeting at 4:47 PM.

APPROVED:



Robert Stevens, Board Chairman
Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



Tim Hill, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

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

May 6, 2025
Date Approved by Commission