



**MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 01, 2024**

**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; Frank Spence; Jim Campbell; Tim Hill; and Dirk Rohne.

Staff Present: Executive Director Will Isom; Deputy Director Matt McGrath; Finance & HR Director Melanie Howard; Executive Assistant Dianna Delgado.

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

Also Attending: Mark Popkin of Popkin Real Estate, John Southgate of John Southgate Consulting, and Rebecca Norden-Bright of *The Astorian*.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commission Reports

Commissioner Hill reported on the following:

Apologized for missing the meeting with Representative Cyrus Javadi on September 27th and expressed interest in hearing about the visit.

Commissioner Spence reported on the following:

Completed the 16-minute Public Meeting Laws training and has printed the certificate of completion. He noted that all Commissioners are required to complete this training.

Commissioner Rohne reported on the following:

Met with Representative Javadi during his Port visit. Javadi asked insightful questions, including, "what will that return to the Port?" when staff shared project ideas and plans. Rohne highlighted that understanding the revenue and activity generated by completed projects would be valuable information for future grant applications.

Commissioner Campbell reported on the following:

Noted that Airport Advisory Committee meetings will resume.

Commissioner Stevens reported on the following:

- Met with Astoria Mayor Sean Fitzpatrick, City Manager Scott Spence, and Executive Director Will Isom to discuss potential collaborative projects. The group agreed that quarterly meetings would be beneficial, given the shared interests between the City and the Port.
- Noted that Representative Javadi expressed significant interest in the Port, taking detailed notes on its current projects and challenges. Before departing, Javadi encouraged the Port to reach out as needed.

Changes/Additions to the Agenda

There were no changes 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 – Regular Session 8/6/2024; Workshop Session 8/20/2024
- Financials – July 2024 Final; August 2024
- Event Calendar – October 2024

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

Action Items:**8a. Central Waterfront Development – Request for Expressions of Interest**

The Port's collaboration with the City of Astoria began three years ago to develop the Astoria Waterfront Master Plan, focusing on revitalizing the area around the West Basin Marina, including the current Riverwalk Inn Hotel. In late 2023, necessary zoning changes were implemented, and the Port engaged Mark Popkin of Popkin Real Estate to assist with development, property acquisitions, and lease arrangements. Popkin has been instrumental in advancing the Central Waterfront Master Plan. Additionally, John Southgate of Southgate Consulting, contracted by the City of Astoria as the primary consultant, has provided invaluable expertise throughout the project. While the master plan may appear straightforward at first glance, a deeper examination reveals numerous intricate details that require careful consideration.

- Southgate presented the Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) with the following highlights:
 - The RFEI is a significant step in implementing the Waterfront Master Plan, aiming to transform the central waterfront into a mixed-use area. As a native Oregonian, Southgate appreciates Astoria's unique culture and history and looks forward to working with developers who will create a distinctive space for the Central Waterfront.
 - Southgate emphasized the flexibility within the RFEI, acknowledging that developers might propose ideas not included in the master plan or suggest development in alternative areas (such as other piers) that could benefit the central waterfront.
 - The RFEI references the Waterfront Master Plan to outline the project's expectations.
 - The selection process will involve choosing developer(s) for the site, followed by an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) period in which designs are refined and developers provide timeline estimates.
 - The RFEI aims to minimize discouragement among developers by reducing the initial financial investment required to compete with others.
 - Commissioner Dirk Rohne expressed concern about the flexibility within the RFEI, noting it could result in designs that may not align with Astoria's character, as well as potential delays in project completion. Southgate acknowledged the importance of this concern, stating that while flexibility is necessary, adherence to timelines is also critical. Developers will be evaluated on their submissions, ensuring that proposed ideas align with the City's and Port's values.
- Commissioner Frank inquired if the RFEI would primarily focus on the development or replacement of the hotel and asked about the expiration date of the current Riverwalk Inn lease. Mark Popkin of Popkin Real Estate clarified that the focus has yet to be determined and will

depend on developer proposals. Although a hotel is the preferred choice, developers could propose alternative ideas. The lease for the Riverwalk Inn is set to expire in October 2025.

- Commissioner James Campbell asked if involving a name-brand hotelier would be beneficial. Popkin explained that while a brand-name hotel could attract more visitors, brand requirements often impose design restrictions; however, they are not ruled out as an option.
- Commissioner Robert Stevens asked the Port's leadership team if they anticipate the project will center around the hotel. Isom responded that the Master Plan includes extensive planning for elements such as traffic access, lighting, and walkways that were designed with a hotel in mind. Deviating from this plan would require reworking significant aspects, making it challenging to proceed if the primary use is altered.

Commissioner Rhone moved to Approve Request for Expressions of Interest Substantially as Presented and to Publish the Solicitation Scheduled and Relevant Dates. Commissioner Spence seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

Public Comment for items not on the agenda:

There were no public comments.

Executive Director Comments:

- Met with Mayor Fitzpatrick and City Manager Spence last week to discuss potential projects that could be supported by urban renewal funds available from the city. These funds aim to stimulate economic growth and eventually recover the investment through tax revenue. The boatyard expansion, particularly the new buildings and infrastructure in phase 1 of the Boatyard Master Plan, was highlighted as aligning well with the criteria. This project would create family-wage jobs and support the commercial fishing industry, a key component of Astoria's economic landscape.
- Representative Javadi took detailed notes as the Port's leadership team and Commission shared updates on the Port's projects and challenges. While the Port has achieved significant milestones this year, upcoming projects like the redevelopment of Pier 2 West and dredging at the East Mooring Basin carry substantial costs. Javadi's extended visit, despite his responsibilities as both a representative and a dentist, underscores his genuine interest in the Port.
- Engaged in discussions with Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici's office. Bonamici recently met with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to address the challenges surrounding passenger processing procedures. The issue remains unresolved, involving both capital and labor aspects. Isom received an email from the Oregon Office of Emergency Management suggesting they may have resources or ideas to assist the Port.
- The purchase of the Bales Hangar, approved at the September 3rd Commission meeting, will be finalized on October 2nd with the completion of final documentation and payment. This acquisition will be financed through Business Oregon.
- Commissioner Hill inquired about the decision to finance the hangar through Business Oregon rather than a bank. Isom explained that Business Oregon offered significantly better terms, particularly with a more favorable interest rate. While the Port is exploring grant funding options, traditional bank financing would impose early payoff penalties, whereas Business Oregon does not.
- Commissioner Spence commented on the deteriorating condition of Pier 2 West, noting that traffic has been restricted on the west side of the pier. Isom explained that, as the Port is still in the pre-construction phase, construction may not begin for at least another year. Rian Johnson from PND Engineering inspected the pier's condition on September 17th, and work is underway to identify



immediate repair solutions until the larger construction project can begin. The Port has maintained ongoing communication with Da Yang Seafoods regarding the situation.

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- Workshop Session – October 15, 2024 at 4:00 PM
- Regular Session – November 5, 2024 at 4:00 PM

Adjourned:

Chairman Stevens adjourned the meeting at 4:50 PM.

APPROVED:

A blue ink signature of Robert Stevens, consisting of a large, stylized 'R' and 'S'.

Robert Stevens, Board Chairman
Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

A blue ink signature of Tim Hill, written in a cursive style.

Tim Hill, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

Respectfully submitted by:
Dianna Delgado
Executive Assistant

November 5, 2024

Date Approved by Commission