Port of Astoria

MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 18, 2026

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

Call to Order
President Stevens called the Workshop Session to order at 4:00 PM.

Roll Call
Commissioners Present: Robert Stevens; Tim Hill; James Campbell; Dirk Rohne; and Thaddeus Fickel (via zoom).
Staff Present: Executive Director Will Isom; Deputy Director Matt McGrath, Environmental Compliance & Permits Manager Stacy Bandy; Finance & HR Director Melanie Howard; Terminal Manager Dianna Delgado; and Administrative Assistant Katie Brown.
Port Counsel: Eileen Eakins was not present at this session.
Also Attending: Jay Corella of *The Daily Astorian;* Finance Committee Member David Oser; and Budget Committee Member Steve Kraske.

Pledge of Allegiance

Changes/Additions to the Agenda
Commissioner Rohne requested that an additional item be added to the agenda: a letter to the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) urging restoration of funding for the Select Area Fisheries Enhancement (SAFE) Program. President Stevens acknowledged the request and asked for a motion to formally add the item.
Commissioner Rohne moved to approve the addition of the Bonneville Power Administration SAFE program letter as Action Item C. Commissioner Campbell seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.
Votes were as follows: Stevens – Aye, Rohne – Aye, Campbell – Aye, Hill – Aye, Fickel – Aye.

Public Comment

Advisory Items
6a. Provide an outline of the planned agenda and activities for the Airport Open House and Fly-In, discuss any salient issues.

- Deputy Director McGrath presented an update outlining the planned agenda, logistics, and activities for the upcoming Airport Open House. McGrath reported that promotional efforts have been highly successful, noting early RSVPs and social-media engagement indicating over 100 confirmed attendees, with an anticipated total turnout of 4,000–5,000 people. Activities include Classic cars parade, magic show, Radio Control aircraft demonstrations, P-40 blank fire demonstration, Sky-raider cockpit tours, EAA Young Eagles introductory flights for kids ages 8-17, face painting, and fire and police displays.

- Commissioners asked about LifeFlight operations, and McGrath confirmed that Life Flight's operations and aircraft will be relocated to the south side of the fuel farm to ensure safe separation from pedestrian areas.
- McGrath acknowledged substantial financial and in-kind support from event sponsors, specifically noting contributions from Lum's and Joe's Mobile. He emphasized that the Airport Open House is a significant undertaking that requires strong community partnerships, as well as extensive coordination among airport personnel, volunteers, performers, and external agencies. Commissioners expressed appreciation for the effort and shared their enthusiasm for the upcoming event.

Action Items

7a. Second Reading, AN ORDINANCE ENACTING RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, STORMWATER MANAEMENT, AND TENANT HOUSEKEEPING AND NUISANCE ABATEMENT ON PORT PROPERTIES; ESTABLISHING ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURE AND PENALTILES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF AND REPEALING PRIOR ORDINANCES.

The ordinance was presented to the Commission for approval and, if approved, it would go into effect in 30 days. The ordinance is intended to formally establish Environmental Rules and Regulations.

Commissioner Fickel moved to approve Environmental Rules and Regulations Ordinance 2026-01. Commissioner Hill seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present. Votes were as follows: Stevens – Aye, Hill – Aye, Fickel – Aye, Campbell – Aye, Rohne – Aye.

7b. Contract with EliteDynamics (Microsoft Business Central ERP)

Finance & HR Director Melanie Howard reported that the contract recommendation is the result of a year-long RFP review process, ultimately determining that the Business Central ERP system, implemented through Elite Dynamics, is the best fit for the Port. The proposal includes a one-time implementation cost not to exceed $65,727 and recurring annual fees not to exceed $54,455. The new ERP system will replace QuickBooks and provide integrated customer and vendor management, expanded operational capabilities, increased efficiency, and reduced errors. Positive references were received from several ports, including Newport, Anacortes, and Longview. The contract underwent eight revisions, and implementation planning was supported by consultants and thorough legal review.

Commissioner Rohne moved to approve the contract with EliteDynamics for a three-year subscription term with annual recurring fees not to exceed $54,455 and one-time professional service fees at a not-to-exceed amount of $65,727. Commissioner Hill seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

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

7c. Letter to the BPA

Commissioner Rohne explained to the Commission the importance of writing a letter to the BPA urging restoration of funding for the Select Area Fisheries Enhancement (SAFE) Program. Administrative Assistant Katie Brown will prepare a draft with input from the Commission, and the final letter will be signed by all Commissioners.

Commissioner Rohne moved to approve the drafting of a letter to the BPA urging restoration of funding for the SAFE program. Commissioner Hill seconded. The motion carried 5-0 amongst the Commissioners present.

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

Commission Comments

Commissioner Fickel commented on the following:

- Appreciates the ability to attend meetings remotely.
- Expressed enthusiasm for the Airport Open House.
- Praised Port staff and contractors for recent airport bathroom renovations.

Commissioner Campbell commented on the following:

- Raised concerns about the sediment buildup and insufficient drainage at the airport's tide gates. Observations suggest that silt and debris have accumulated to the point that water is not draining as designed, causing saturation of the subsurface beneath the airfield. Recommended evaluating the condition of the primary channel, determining whether dredging or other sediment removal may be necessary.

  Environmental Compliance and Permits Manager Stacy Bandy confirmed that the issue is being addressed in coordination with Warrenton Public Works. The Port has secured the necessary state and federal permits for replacement of tide gate #22 and transferred the permits to the City of Warrenton, which manages the diking district responsible for the infrastructure. Airport staff have documented the low-tide conditions and will share this information with the city as planning continues.

Commissioner Stevens commented on the following:

- Announced the Brownsmead Corn Feed fundraising event on August 29th; shared ticket and event details.

Commissioner Hill commented on the following:

- Echoed Commissioner Fickel's comments regarding enthusiasm for the Airport Open House.

Commissioner Stevens commented on the following:

- Reported on attending the Clatsop Cruise Hosts meeting the previous week,
- Noted that he signed the final loan documents for the Port's $1.8 million oil spill loan.
- Acknowledged and thanked the boatyard crew for their work on the annual boatyard BBQ, describing it as successful.

Executive Director Comments

- Reported the state has formally approved the loan associated with the recent oil spill response project. Isom explained that the Port's finance team presented the application to the Infrastructure Finance Authority, and with the loan now approved, staff will finalize the necessary paperwork and bring it back to the commission for final authorization. Isom emphasized that, although the loan extends over 25-year term at 4.6% the Port views it as a short-term solution to ensure the contractor is paid promptly while the Port continues pursuing long-term external funding or reimbursement opportunities.
- Isom acknowledged the significant amount of work involved in preparing for the upcoming Airport Open House, praising staff for their coordination, planning, and commitment to making the event successful.
- Highlighted the importance of adopting the new ERP as a foundational improvement for the organization. Noting that the change goes beyond accounting upgrades, moving the Port away from fragmented systems and manual workarounds toward a unified, integrated platform that will strengthen financial controls, reduce errors, streamline operations, and ultimately improve customer service through modern tools such as customer account portals. Isom expressed appreciation for the extensive work done by Howard and staff to evaluate options, involving multiple departments, and ensure the selected system meets long-term operational needs.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

- Regular Meeting – September 01, 2026, at 4:00 PM
- Workshop Session – September 15, 2026, at 4:00 PM

Adjourned:

President Stevens adjourned the meeting at 4:43 PM.

APPROVED:

Robert Stevens, President
Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Thaddeus Fickel, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

Respectfully submitted by:
Katie Brown, Administrative Assistant

September 01, 2026
Date Approved by Commission