



MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 8, 2026

PORT OF ASTORIA
AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
KAST TERMINAL BUILDING
1110 SE FLIGHTLINE DRIVE
WARRENTON, OR 97146

Call to Order

Chairman Steven Dillard called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Roll Call

All Present: Steve Dillard, John Raichl, Henry Balensifer III, Matt McGrath, United States Coast Guard Lt. Luke Mills, and Katie Brown.

Reports

a) Open House & Fly-In Planning Updates

Deputy Director Matt McGrath and John Raichl reported on the following:

- Planning for the Airport Open House on August 22 continues on schedule, with forms, maps, and logistics materials now being finalized.
- A request has been submitted to bring in a PBY aircraft and other warbirds.
- Sponsorship outreach is progressing, with approximately \$1,250 collected to date. Currently working on a public facing sponsorship summary to explain how sponsorships help keep the event free.
- Two local classic auto clubs expected to bring approximately 100 classic cars, arriving around 11:00 a.m. and staging a departure at approximately 1:30 p.m.
- Life Flight aircraft positioning for the event has been resolved; aircraft will be staged on the opposite side of the fuel farm to avoid previous congestion issues.
- Planning meetings for the event are currently held on Mondays on a biweekly basis.

b) Port Staff

Matt McGrath and reported on the following:

- The FBO Building Remodel is underway. The delivery of doors has been delayed, which has pushed the completion date to mid-July. The work is expected to be completed before the Airport Open House.
- Work continues on Taxiway A and B realignment through FAA coordination. FAA asked to decommission the very high frequency omni directional range station (VOR) the Port declined so the FAA agreed to do upgrades to it.
- Wildlife management efforts continue. Deer have returned to the airfield, and fall culling (likely October) is anticipated, pending ODFW coordination. Staff is exploring setting up a feeder to better consolidate the deer.
- The airport has become eligible for military contract fueling through Valcon after reaching the required 50,000 gallons of qualifying sales. Margins remain favorable, and significant growth in jet fuel volume is expected. Additional fuel capacity may eventually be required; solutions include an extra tank or additional mobile fuel trucks.
- Improvements to customer service, facilities, and airfield maintenance remain ongoing.

c) U.S. Coast Guard

Flight Services Officer, Lt. Luke Mills reported on the following:

- Major construction projects are underway at the Air Station, including roof replacement and ventilation system upgrades. Contractors will be onsite frequently, and staff will remain vigilant about Foreign Object Prevention “FOD”.
- Due to national shortages of MH-60 aircraft, the Air Station’s third helicopter is unlikely to be operational before the Airport Open house.
- Coast Guard-wide planning continues toward eventually phasing out the MH-65 Dolphin, with long-term fleet replacement shifting to MH-60 variants. For full discussion, please refer to the meeting audio.

d) EAA

Steve Dillard reported on behalf of the EAA on the following:

- Planning another Young Eagles Day during the Airport Open House.
- Continuing the Flying Start program for adults.

Discussion Items

a) Airport Status and Improvements

Committee member John Raichl emphasized the importance of communicating recent improvements and positive trends at the airport to the Port Commission, noting written remarks shared by retired Coast Guard Operations Officer Dan Leary highlighting that Astoria FBO service is “at an all time best,” with customer service, responsiveness, and innovation from airport staff particularly Chris and Johnson, significantly transforming the airport and earning strong industry feedback from groups such as Brim Aviation and AOPA representatives. John Raichl stated that providing a formal Airport Status Report to the Commission would help showcase improvements in drainage, hangar maintenance, access roads, and FBO service quality, reinforce growing community and pilot support, and provide positive visibility for the Port’s investments and staff efforts. He volunteered to draft a written summary of these improvements for committee review before forwarding it for inclusion in Commission materials.

b) Electronic Attendance and Quorum Options

- Chairman Steve Dillard revisited the committee’s earlier discussions on establishing remote participation options with the goal of allowing remote members to participate, count toward quorum, and vote.
- Dillard explained that draft procedures for hybrid and virtual meetings had been prepared using existing Port bylaws as a template. The committee discussed requirements of the Oregon Government Ethics Commission “OGEC”, noting that any formal remote meeting policy would require publicly posted access information such as a phone number or videoconference link and that access must remain available throughout the meeting.
- Henry Balensifer offered to request an informal OGEC opinion.
- Because there were not enough members present to take action, the committee agreed to defer any formal adoption of remote participation procedures until the next meeting.

Good of the Order

- Committee members echoed improvements in maintenance practices, tenant relations, and airfield appearance.
- Increased student pilot activity and flight-training presence were noted as positive indicators.
- The airport vehicle program, including the crew car and two rentals, has improved transient-pilot access.
- Balensifer noted anticipated future CIP needs include a road review or overlay for 12th Street where cracking has begun on the city side.
- Members briefly discussed business changes at Oshkosh Aerotech and impacts of national manufacturing shifts on local operations.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

- Airport Advisory Committee – September 14th, 2026, at 4:00 PM

Adjourned

Steve Dillard adjourned the meeting at 4:50 PM.

APPROVED:

Robert Stevens, Board Chairman
Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Thaddeus Fickel, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

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

July 7, 2026
Date Approved by Commission