

PORT DISTRICT OF SOUTH WHIDBEY ISLAND
Minutes of the Public Hearing for the 2008 Preliminary Budget
October 10, 2007
Freeland, Washington

Present at the meeting were:

Commissioner Lynae Slinden, Clinton
Commissioner Rolf Seitle, Langley
Commissioner Geoff Tapert, Freeland
Ed Field, Port Manager
Molly MacLeod-Roberts, Port Clerk

Ed Bassett, Langley Resident
Don McArthur, SW Youth Connection
John Martin, Clinton Resident
Michaela Wheatley, South Whidbey Record
Chuck Leavitt, Langley Resident
Dennis Gregoire, Freeland Resident

Absent: None

1. MEETING CALL TO ORDER:

The Public Hearing for the 2008 Preliminary Budget of the Port District of South Whidbey Island was convened by the Board of Commissioners on October 10, 2007, at the Freeland Library Conference Room in Freeland, WA. Commissioner Geoff Tapert, President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE 2008 PRELIMINARY BUDGET:

Commissioner Tapert noted that copies of the 2008 Preliminary Budget (**EXHIBIT A**) were available to the attendees and opened the Hearing by soliciting public comment. There was no public comment during this period.

3. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS ON 2008 PRELIMINARY BUDGET:

City Park and Ramp Project: Port Manager Ed Field said he had discussed the City's Park and Ramp Project earlier today with City of Langley Mayor Neil Colburn and City Administrator Walt Blackford, and at this time they indicated that there is no City inclination to proceed with the contract. Ed explained to the Commissioners that the impact would be that the vast majority of the \$200,000 in the Port's 2007 Budget would not be spent. He said it would not necessarily change the 2008 Budget, other than a corresponding change in beginning cash for 2008 to approximately \$640,000.

Commissioner Seitle asked how much of the reserves will they expend in the next budget cycle. Based on the Preliminary Budget as written now, Ed said it would only be \$33,000 but he would like to increase that amount. Commissioner Slinden asked if that included the money that was going to go toward the ramp improvements. Ed said they had projected the ramp money would be entirely spent in 2007, so the Port will have an additional \$200,000 in reserves on January 1, 2008.

2008 Staffing Needs: Commissioner Tapert asked Ed for his input on staffing needs over the next year.

1. Harbormaster. Ed explained he had originally expected to hire a Harbormaster in Fall 2008, based on the assumption that he would be able to spend a fair amount of time at the marina next summer. Based on the last couple of months, Ed said he doesn't see that he would have nearly enough time to give that task justice. He hopes the Harbormaster position will be filled by either a boating person with an engineering background or an engineer with a boating background, so the individual could also be used somewhat on the construction and transition phases as well. Ed said he would like to accelerate the hiring of that person up to March or April of 2008 as the boating season begins. The position would not necessarily be full time in 2008, but would certainly be full time in the summer of 2009 and less in the winter.
2. Financial Coordinator: Ed said there the amount of work involving financing of the marina, grants, IAC/RCO issues, etc. has "absolutely mushroomed" in the last month. He is buried with his current workload, and it's not getting any better. Ed said the issue of safety and operations is significant, and he needs to refocus on such issues. He would like to bring in someone immediately to handle the "big picture financial stuff" – things like CTED, coordination with property owners, grants, IAC encumbrance issues, etc. Ed said the position is not necessarily a permanent one, but there is a huge need for the next year or two.

Commissioner Tapert said the Harbormaster seemed like an overlap position and asked if the Port could contract with the City's current Harbormaster. Ed said that City Public Works Director Rick Hill has only two Public Works employees and one of them is the Harbormaster. Hill wants to keep that person as a Public Works employee, so Ed thinks it best that the Port hire a new person for the position. Commissioner Tapert thought the Harbormaster position was only seasonal, but Ed said it would be a year round position that is considerably more than full time in the summer and considerably less than full time in the winter.

Commissioner Seitle said the Financial Coordinator needs to be someone with legislative research, grant writing and finance management capabilities and added that the person could work half-time. Commissioner Slinden suggested an internship for the position, but Commissioner Seitle said the person would need to already have experience. Commissioner Tapert asked if the person's job would be that of "Assistant Port Manager" and Ed said no, it would be that of Financial Manager or Financial Coordinator, handling areas that Ed does not have in his "skill set," such as grant writing, concession issues, etc. Ed would still like to be in charge and direct the overall operation. Commissioner Seitle agreed and recommended writing a job description and advertise for the position of Financial Coordinator. He suggested putting one full-time position in the 2008 budget and then it could be split between the Harbormaster and the Financial Coordinator. Commissioner Seitle said \$60,000 should be placed in the budget for the additional staffing needs, to include wages as well as payroll taxes, etc.

ACTION: A Motion was made by Commissioner Seitle and seconded by Commissioner Slinden to amend the 2008 Preliminary Budget to include \$60,000 for additional personnel costs. The Motion passed unanimously.

Langley Facilities: Engineering, Design & Permitting: Commissioner Seitle asked if the \$100,000 on this line would be incurred in 2008. Commissioner Tapert said it was a placeholder. Ed said it depends on how long it takes to get the Master Plan and the permits out. Once those go out, the “burn rate” will drop dramatically for six months or more while the permitting agencies look at them. A lot of the engineering and permit submittals will be done in early 2008, followed by a “flat period” before it kicks back up at the end of the year.

Langley Boat Ramp and Parking: Commissioner Seitle asked if the Port is planning to revisit the Langley boat launch from a budget point of view. Ed said he planned on discussing it during the regular meeting. Commissioner Slinden asked if that discussion would influence and be a significant issue with the budget. Ed said he had asked the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO, formerly the InterAgency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, or IAC) representative if the Port pared off a portion of the waterfront or the ramp, could they still save half the grant? The representative said no, it’s the whole package or none. Ed said as far as grant issues go, it is verging on dead unless the Port wants to go with it as currently configured. Commissioner Seitle asked if the RCO would provide the necessary funds for in-water improvements if the Port expends the necessary funds for the uplands improvements. Ed said with the RCO, it is “all or nothing.” The RCO has control over all of it because the property was originally acquired through IAC acquisition money. Ed noted that RCO has not paid anything as of yet on this project, so on this specific RCO contract, the Port is “clean.” Commissioner Seitle asked if they could revisit the boat ramp project as a Port project without any IAC money and all present agreed that was possible.

Port Accountant Chuck Edwards recommended the Port should put the \$200,000 in the 2008 Budget so they do not have to revisit the Budget. He explained it is a gross disbursements-type budget, not a line-item budget.

ACTION: A Motion was made by Commissioner Seitle and seconded by Commissioner Slinden to amend the 2008 Preliminary Budget to include \$200,000 under Capital Expenditures: Langley Harbor/Boat Launch. The Motion passed unanimously.

Final Adoption: Commissioner Tapert asked if there were any other Budget revisions. Commissioner Seitle asked if there were two more meetings to discuss the Budget, and Chuck responded that the Commissioners will need to adopt the Final Budget for 2008 (as amended at this meeting or any others) at the Port’s Regular Meeting in November.

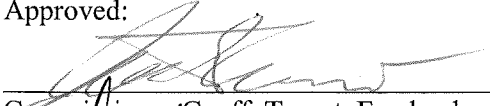
Additional Comments: Commissioner Tapert asked if there was any further discussion of the Preliminary Budget by the Commissioners. There was none. He then asked if there was any public comment on the Budget.

1. John Martin: Mr. Martin introduced himself as Assistant Harbormaster for the City of Langley and said he was strongly in favor of the Port taking over the Marina. He went on to express his great displeasure with the City’s management of the Marina. Martin said he had a boating background and would be happy to assist Ed in any way. He said there are 10 pages of City Ordinances that the Port should be looking at, since some do not apply or should be removed prior to the Port’s taking over, and he provided an annotated copy for Port use. Although the Ordinances were not applicable to the business of the Budget Hearing, Ed accepted the copy for future use and thanked John for his assistance.


4. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

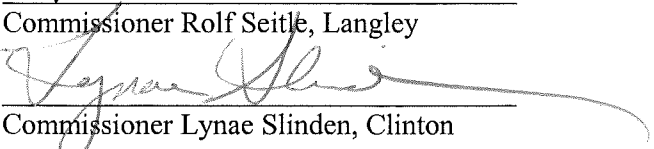
Approved:



Commissioner Geoff Tapert, Freeland

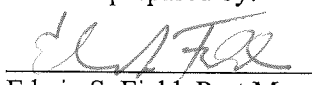


Commissioner Rolf Seittle, Langley



Commissioner Lynae Slinden, Clinton

Minutes prepared by:



Edwin S. Field, Port Manager

Exhibit A: 2008 Preliminary Budget for 10/10/07 Public Hearing