

**PORT DISTRICT OF SOUTH WHIDBEY ISLAND**

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting**

**March 12, 2019**

**Freeland, Washington**

**Commissioners Present:** Curt Gordon (Clinton), Ed Halloran (Langley) and Jack Ng (Freeland),

**Port Staff Present:** Stan Reeves (Executive Director), Molly MacLeod-Roberts (Port Clerk/Accountant), Pat Kisch (Maintenance & Operations Supervisor), Larry Lehtonen (Fairgrounds Director), Jesse Levesque (Fairgrounds Marketing & Events Coordinator)

**Absent:** Patrick Boin (Interim Harbormaster)

**MEETING CALL TO ORDER:** Following a Workshop from 6:15 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. for informal Commission review and discussion of vouchers and recent correspondence, the Regular Meeting of the Port District of South Whidbey Island's Board of Commissioners was convened on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, in the meeting room of the Freeland Library at 5495 Harbor Avenue in Freeland, Washington. Commissioner Curt Gordon (President) called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**Approval of Current Vouchers:** Vouchers audited and certified by the Auditing Officer as required by RCW 42.24.080 and those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been recorded on a listing which has been made available to the Board, and have been presented to the Board for review.

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the Regular Meeting of February 15, 2019.

**ACTION:** A Motion was made by Commissioner Ed Halloran and seconded by Commissioner Jack Ng to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, including the authorization and acceptance of Vouchers dated March 2019 as signed today in the amount of \$69,734.46. The Motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mel Trenor of Island Beach Access asked for permission to add a small sign to the display case at Clinton Beach to acknowledge the Rotary Club as a major contributor to the Universal Accessibility Mats project. The Commission said yes and directed him to work with Reeves and Maintenance & Operations Supervisor Pat Kisch. The permit allows for the beach mats to be placed beginning May 15<sup>th</sup>, but Kisch noted that there is very little sand there now, with a heavy slope on the lower portion after a lot of sediment was moved around. Gordon suggested contacting Dawn Pucci at Island County if there's a way to permit moving sand around so the mats can go in. Kisch said he would look into it.

**APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDS:** Gordon noted that the Port's 2019 Economic & Tourism Development Sponsorship budget is \$30,000 and the total amount of application requests is \$34,250.

- **South Whidbey Assembly of God - Celebrate America & Fireworks:** Matt Chambers presented the \$2,000 request for the annual July 3<sup>rd</sup> event in Freeland Park. He noted that this is the 25<sup>th</sup> year for the event. Per the Port's request to track where attendees are from, in 2018 the group asked vendors to try to obtain zip codes. Chambers reported 21% were from Clinton, 17% from Langley, 20% from Freeland, 2% from Greenbank, 10% from Coupeville, 13% from Oak Harbor and the remaining 20% were from off-island. The other places included Lynnwood, Bellingham, Seattle, Portland, Canada, Lake Forest Park, Stanwood, San Francisco, Tacoma, Boulder, Danville, Baltimore, Marysville, San Antonio and others.

- South Whidbey Commons - “Bluesberry” Festival: Board Member/Event Producer Greg Coe was on hand to present the group’s first time request for funding in the amount of \$5,000 to help sponsor the costs for staging, sound and lights for the production of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bluesberry Festival. About 450 people attended last year’s event with half from off-island and half from on-island. The Commons hopes to double the attendance and expand it to a two-day event held adjacent to the Mutiny Bay Blues Blueberry Farm and featuring local & regional acts, food trucks and other vendor booths that will be a destination for both regional and local residents. Marketing will be on a regional and local basis, including mentions and ticket giveaways on two regional public radio stations.
- Organic Farm School - Professional marketing tools to implement Regional Marketing Plan: The amount requested was \$3,000. Executive Director Judy Feldman had a significant scheduling conflict and was unable to attend the Port meeting. The Commission noted that the School’s application included excellent documentation of the measurable outcomes of last year’s sponsorship. They agreed that the mission of the Organic Farm School is well defined and aligns with the Port’s mission of economic development.
- Island Shakespeare Festival (ISF) - Promotional materials & distribution: ISF’s Board Member & Director of Development Peggy Juve and Artistic Director Olena Hodges presented the \$6,000 request. Juve noted that the Festival is in its 10<sup>th</sup> season. She provided additional information from Google Analytics to augment the application. The Analytics showed a significant increase in visits to ISF website from 2017 to 2018 and those website visitors were from all over Washington and the rest of the United States. There were 180 people who auditioned this season from all over the country. There are 18-20 actors hired per season, plus set & costume designers, stage managers and directors all of whom are housed and spending money in the community during the season. Additionally, family members and friends of the cast & crew come visit South Whidbey to see the show(s), bringing additional revenue to the community. Juve reiterated that ISF still does not charge admission; it is a “Pay As You Will” theater company. With every playbill, ISF provides a brief form for patrons to complete that asks where they are from, their reason for coming to Whidbey Island, how did they learn about the show, are they staying overnight, etc. That attendance analysis showed cumulative attendance of 4,459 in 2018 from 65 different zip codes in Washington State, 37 states and 13 countries. Approximately 834 people had 900 overnight stays. In 2020, ISF is looking to move back to Langley (to the South Whidbey Community Center, formerly the Langley Middle School). Halloran noted that ISF does an excellent job of tracking and collecting visitor data and encouraged other applicants to take note. Hodges noted that ISF is now a member of the Theatre Communications Group, a national organization for professional theatres which publishes the American Theatre magazine. ISF now advertises in the magazine in the summer under Washington State theaters.
- Greater Freeland Chamber of Commerce - 2019 Tourism Brochures and website update/renovation: Leanne Finlay was on hand to present the Chamber’s \$6,500 request. In addition to the annual request of \$5,000 for funding the tourism brochures (about 38,000 brochures per year), the Chamber is asking for \$1,500 toward the cost of updating its existing website, redesigning it and training one of its board members to be able to update it and train others into the future. Halloran questioned whether seeking funds to update “a business tool” (the website) was appropriate for this type of sponsorship.
- Northwest Agriculture Business Center (NABC/Whidbey Island Vintners & Distillers Association (WIVDA) - Marketing, incl. new website & email marketing strategy: Karen Krug and Rita Comfort presented WIVDA’s \$3,750 request. Krug explained that the group’s request is a “one time ask” rather than an ongoing one. It’s for a marketing project to raise the visibility of Whidbey’s rural craft beverage community and increase the number of out-of-area visitors to all tasting rooms on the Island. WIVDA is providing \$9,400 of the \$18,400 for the project, and the Port of Seattle has awarded \$5,250. The group is also partnering with the Washington Tourism Alliance ([www.ExperienceWA.com](http://www.ExperienceWA.com)) for marketing focused on getting people from off-island and out-of-state to come to Whidbey Island for the agri-culinary experience with its boutique wineries and distilleries and the unique opportunity of meeting your winemaker or distiller and asking questions, etc. There are two events in 2019: Savor Spring in May (highlighting chefs) and Autumn on Whidbey (highlighting artists) in November. Both will have an aggressive digital campaign as well as brochures on the ferries and the cruise ships. Comfort said it’s

important to note that WIVDA holds off-season events and numbers of participants has increased steadily, and the Wine Trail brings visitors year-round. Krug reiterated that it is a one-off request to kick start the program after which it will be self-sustaining.

- Whidbey Island Fair - 2019 advertising campaign and distribution of Fair Premium Book: Fair Administrator Carol Coble was on hand to present the Fair Association's \$5,000 request. This is the Fair's 96<sup>th</sup> year and the 2018 Fair had over 18,000 people come through the gates. Their ads in the Whidbey Weekly are widely distributed on the ferries and elsewhere.
- Whidbey Island Arts Council - Off-Island Advertising/Promotion of 4 programs: Whidbey Island Arts Council's Board President Tom Harris and Executive Director Kay Parsons presented the \$3,000 request for advertising/promoting the Whidbey Island Music Festival, Whidbey Art Trail (year-round program), Whidbey Working Artists Open Studio Tour and Island Consort (shoulder season programming). Those programs draw at least 5,000 people every year with 2,500 coming from off-island. The Open Studio Tour and the Art Trail have generated over \$250K in art sales revenue. The Council has also spearheaded the formation of The Whidbey Arts Marketing Alliance (WhAMA) for the sole purpose of marketing the arts and culture of Whidbey Island. They have hired a regional media consultant and are currently evaluating the findings of the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) analysis. WhAMA has an Events Calendar that can be embedded on any website that will include ALL events in one place.

Reeves had previously reviewed the applications and provided recommendations to the Commissioners within the \$30,000 budget based solely on the information in the packets and the criteria used for awarding the grants. Gordon noted that he prefers the grants to be awarded for advertising rather than tools. Each of the Commissioners had created a list with associated amounts and the Board quietly compared and discussed the lists.

**ACTION:** A Motion was made by Halloran and seconded by Ng to approve the applications as follows for a total of \$29,750:

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|---|---------|
| • South Whidbey Assembly of God – Celebrate America & Fireworks   | \$2,000 |
| • South Whidbey Commons   | \$4,000 |
| • Organic Farm School   | \$3,000 |
| • Island Shakespeare Festival – Advertising/Promotion of Festival | \$5,000 |
| • Greater Freeland Chamber of Commerce – Tourism Brochures        | \$5,000 |
| • NABC/Whidbey Island Vintners & Distillers Association           | \$3,750 |
| • Whidbey Island Fair Association                                 | \$4,000 |
| • Whidbey Island Arts Council                                     | \$3,000 |

**The Motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Resolution No. 19-01 Establishing Agreements for Port Grant Funding**

**ACTION:** A Motion was made by Halloran and seconded by Ng to approve Resolution No. 19-01, Establishing Agreements for Port Grant Funding in Support of Economic Development with South Whidbey Assembly of God, South Whidbey Commons, Organic Farm School, Island Shakespeare Festival, Greater Freeland Chamber of Commerce, NABC/Whidbey Island Vintners & Distillers Association, Whidbey Island Fair and Whidbey Island Arts Council. The Motion passed unanimously.

There was a five minute recess to allow the applicants to leave the meeting.

#### **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

**January 2019 Financial Statement and Executive Director Report:** The Commission acknowledged receipt of the January 2019 Financial Statement which was distributed to them previously. Executive Director Stan Reeves reported the Port received \$36,000 in tax, operating and bond revenue and incurred

\$123,000 in operating and capital expenses during January 2019. Ending cash balance at 1/31/19 was \$1,141,000, consisting of \$780,000 in the Bond Fund and \$361,000 in the General Fund. Reeves had also provided his updated cash flow projections through the end of 2019, a preliminary Profit & Loss for February 2019, and a tracking summary of the bond fund. The Harbor's revenue for the month of January was higher than it had been for the last 5 years, but February's was lower than average.

**Fairgrounds Property Improvements/Renovations (Agenda re-ordered)**

Arena Footing: Reeves had provided the Commission with a quote from ABI Attachments, Inc. for the purchase of a "groomer" (6.5' TR3 Rake, Profiler Attachment and Rail Blade) for the Arena. A total of \$15,000 is in the 2019 budget for upgrading the arena footing. Half of the budget would be used to purchase the groomer and the remainder would be used to purchase sand, cull out the rocks, have a grader smooth everything out and then put in the new sand. For now, Reeves requested Commission approval to purchase the groomer for the not to exceed amount of \$7,500 with the remainder of the project limited to \$7,500 per the budget. Gordon asked if that was a commitment and Reeves said, "Yes." Halloran felt there should be some slack in the budget to allow the job to be finished. Gordon said he fully supported the purchase of the groomer. He would like them to stay within the budget, but said Staff can come back to the Commissioners if costs exceed the budget and it is necessary to complete the work.

**ACTION: A Motion was made by Halloran and seconded by Ng to approve the purchase of a groomer for the Arena at the Fairgrounds per Quote #Q0313522 provided by ABI Attachments, Inc. for the amount not to exceed \$7,500.00. The Motion passed unanimously.**

Coffman Kitchen: All the drawings (architectural, structural, mechanical, engineering & plumbing) are in. Once reviewed, the drawings will go back to The Driftmier Architects for permit submittal to the City of Langley. The project is on track to go out to bid in May, with bid awarded in June and construction starting August 1<sup>st</sup> (right after the Whidbey Island Fair).

On-Call Engineering Services: Reeves spoke with Quin Clements of Davido Consulting Group earlier in the day. Clements has been working on an "as-built" for the Fairgrounds and it is essentially complete. Now they can look at what the property currently has for drainage purposes and determine what work needs to be done to fix the problems.

**Renaming the Fairgrounds:** Jesse Levesque (Fairgrounds Marketing & Events Coordinator) had led the Fairgrounds Advisory Committee and the Port-wide Marketing Committee through two short brainstorming exercises to come up with new names for the property. The three recommended names for Commission consideration/action are:

1. Whidbey Island Events Center at the Historic Fairgrounds
2. Whidbey Island Fairgrounds & Events Center
3. Whidbey Island Events Center at the Fairgrounds

Gordon preferred not to lead with "Events Center." He believes "Fairgrounds" should be the first and foremost/primary part of the name and Events Center is secondary.

**ACTION: A Motion was made by Ng and seconded by Halloran to rename the Island County Fairgrounds as the Whidbey Island Fairgrounds & Events Center. The Motion passed unanimously.**

**STATUS REPORTS:**

**South Whidbey Harbor**

Harbormaster Operations & Harbormaster Report: Reeves reported that he had accepted the resignation of Harbormaster Duncan McPhee as of March 6<sup>th</sup> and subsequently promoted Assistant Harbormaster

Patrick Boin to the position of Interim Harbormaster effective March 1<sup>st</sup>. Boin has hired Nick Halstead (seasonal dock hand for the last two summers) as Assistant Harbormaster.

### **Port Operations**

- **Maintenance & Operations Supervisor Report:** Kisch presented his monthly report on maintenance & repairs completed/ongoing/planned at Clinton Beach, Humphrey Road Parking Lot, Bush Point, Possession Beach Waterfront Park and the Fairgrounds. Kisch has been doing a lot of clean up at **Bush Point**. He's been clearing out the shop and working on the exterior and has already filled one 20 yd. dumpster. Other than several power outages in the **Possession** area, the Port facilities weathered the snow events fine. On President's Day, Kisch received several phone calls from Washington State Ferries, Washington State Department of Transportation, and Pacific Pile & Marine (the contractor for the Ferry Dock Road project). In addition to the Port providing 10 spaces at **Humphrey Road Parking Lot** for use as a cell phone waiting area during construction, Pacific Pile wanted 10 more spaces for use as a lay down/staging area. Kisch provided tentative approval for the additional 10 spaces. The next day Pacific Pile requested more space to stage piling casings for 30 days, and Kisch negotiated 19 more spaces at \$50 per space for 30 days (total of \$950).

### **Fairgrounds**

- **Fairgrounds Director Report:** Larry Lehtonen presented his monthly report. He thanked the Commission for renaming the property; Staff will now be able to market and promote the Whidbey Island Fairgrounds & Event Center. Lehtonen has been approached by a group of organizations interested in forming a Creative District and including the Fairgrounds in it. He is attending weekly meetings to gain knowledge but has made it clear that Port will not commit until the details of a Creative District are clearly defined, reviewed and approved by the Port's Executive Director and Commissioners. Annette Roth from the Washington State Arts Commission is the Creative District Program Manager will be in Langley April 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> for a site visit. Levesque is working on a schedule and would like Reeves and/or the Commissioners to meet Roth at some point during her stay. Gordon cautioned that the Port will need a lot more data & research before any decision can be reached. Reeves and Lehtonen agreed.

Lehtonen and Levesque are planning out new events, including "Dinner and a Show" (using the Pole Building's kitchen & dining room for Black Box audiences to enjoy a meal, beverages or snack before, during and after a show); DjangoFest NW using the Fairgrounds as a 2<sup>nd</sup> stage, and Harvest Fest (working with Langley Chamber, Whidbey Grown, local vintners & distillers, etc. for an October public educational and consuming event).

- **Fairgrounds Advisory Committee (FAC) Report:** No report.

**Mukilteo Parking:** Reeves received the contract from the Department of Commerce (DOC) for the \$500,000 grant. He subsequently contacted the Enduris (the Port's insurer) to obtain the additional required rider which will cost just over \$1,000 in additional premium cost per year. He then signed and returned it to the DOC. Once the DOC receives and fully executes the contract, the Port's grant manager at DOC will send all the information and forms for the Port to submit for reimbursement by the end of the month. Reeves is ready to bill about \$20,000 with that first submission. The Port met with Transportation Engineering Northwest (TENW) and the City of Mukilteo on February 20<sup>th</sup> to discuss expanding the scope of the traffic study. TENW will include four additional intersections for data collection, do more analysis on parking stall turnover in the proposed lot, and some other items. The total of TENW's traffic study proposal is now \$68,000. Gordon noted that the traffic study is required in order to have a Developers Agreement with the City of Mukilteo and the entire cost of the study will be reimbursed from the DOC grant. Last Friday, Reeves & Gordon met with representatives from the Tulalip Tribes and the City of Mukilteo and made some initial steps towards getting the Developers Agreement completed. On Monday, Reeves spoke with the Port's engineering consultant (Quin Clements of Davido Consulting Group) about SEPA and other planning requirements and gave Clements approval

to discuss and work out what the requirements will be with Mukilteo's Planning Director. Gordon noted that it was important for the Port and Clements to directly respond to the Planning Director's email. He added that there are a number of people in Mukilteo who oppose adding parking on the shoreline, and would like the tribal property to be converted to a park. At the meeting last Friday, the Tribes' attorney and the real estate representative noted that the Tribes could request the old tank farm property become sovereign property. If it was declared as sovereign property, the City of Mukilteo would not have any say in how the property is used.

**Clinton Dock:** No update.

#### ACTIVITIES/INVOLVEMENT REPORTS

**Halloran:** Marine Resources Committee (MRC), City of Langley Council Meetings, Washington Public Ports Association (WPPA), and Joint Parks Committee

**Langley:** Langley Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Inge Morascini reported that Mystery Weekend was a great success with an estimated 25% increase in attendance over last year and profits of over \$19,000. In 2018, the Langley Library estimated 200-300 people come through during Mystery Weekend. This year, the Library took an actual count and there were 1,046 people. An estimated 2,000 individuals were walking around Langley during the weekend. Reeves had also attended the Council meeting and introduced Patrick Boin as the Interim Harbormaster. The City is pleased that the Clipper will have at least 15 afternoon visits to the Harbor and Langley in March and April. Puget Sound Express has taken over whale watching trips from Mystic Sea Charters; trips will depart from the Harbor during March & April. There are openings on the Historic Preservation Commission and the Ethics Board. The amendment to the dog leash ordinance was approved.

**MRC:** An additional \$18,900 was made available to all the MRCs by the Northwest Straits Foundation to assist with study/research of the resident Orca population. The regular work plan for Island County MRC is pretty much approved with 4 major items.

**WPPA:** All three Commissioners plan to attend the Spring Meeting in Spokane May 15-17.

**Joint Parks Committee:** No report.

**Ng:** Island County Economic Development Council (EDC), and Port Promotion & Marketing Committee (P&M)

**EDC:** The board president of the EDC resigned; she is moving out of the area. Island County Commissioner Janet St. Clair has replaced Commissioner Helen Price Johnson on the board. Island County has awarded the EDC a Rural County Economic Development Funds grant of \$140,000 per year for the next 3 years. Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson will be the guest speaker at the EDC's Annual Luncheon in May.

**P&M:** Now that the Fairgrounds is renamed, the committee will meet quarterly with the next meeting 3 months from now.

**Gordon:** Council of Governments (COG), Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (IRTPO), and Clinton Community Council (CCC)

**COG:** Jim Theofilis (Executive Director of A Way Home Washington) provided a presentation on the non-profit organization's efforts to find and bring money to designated counties for preventing/ending youth homelessness. Lori Cavender (Founder/Executive Director of Ryan's House for Youth) also provided a presentation at the meeting.

**IRTPO:** Island County Transportation Planner Brian Wood resigned; he's going to work for the State in Olympia. The process for a roundabout at Banta Road has started. The Deception Pass Bridge will be repainted throughout the spring/summer.

**CCC:** The CCC is once again cleaning up Dan Porter Park. They continue to work on getting the Washington State Department of Transportation to improve the walkway leading to/from the ferry dock, hopefully with funding from a Regional Mobility Grant.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

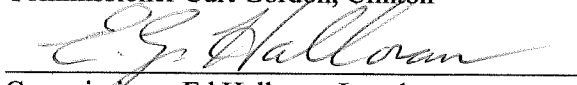
NEW BUSINESS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: The Meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Approved:

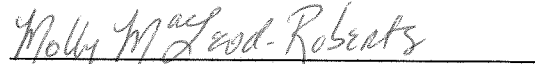


Commissioner Curt Gordon, Clinton



Commissioner Ed Halloran, Langley

Minutes prepared and submitted by:



Molly MacLeod-Roberts, Port Clerk/Accountant

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Commissioner Jack Ng, Freeland

**Public Disclosure Statement:** The foregoing Meeting Minutes, audio recording and all supporting documents presented are available at the Port of South Whidbey, 1804 Scott Rd., Suite 101, Freeland WA 98249.