

PORT DISTRICT OF SOUTH WHIDBEY ISLAND

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

July 9, 2008

Freeland, Washington

Present at the meeting were:

Commissioner Lynae Slinden, Clinton

Commissioner Rolf Seitle, Langley

Commissioner Geoff Tapert, Freeland

Ed Field, Port Manager

Dane Anderson, Port Financial Coordinator

Molly MacLeod-Roberts, Port Clerk

Jeff VanDerford, South Whidbey Record

Mike Noblet, Clinton Resident

Absent: None

1. MEETING CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the Port District of South Whidbey Island's Board of Commissioners was convened on July 9, 2008, at the Freeland Library Conference Room in Freeland, WA. Commissioner Seitle, President, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. BUSINESS MEETING – THE CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Consent Agenda:

1. Minutes: Minutes from the Special Meetings of May 5 and June 10, 2008.

2. 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. The vouchers so listed and presented are summarized on the attached Voucher Listing **(EXHIBIT A)**.

ACTION: A Motion was made by Commissioner Tapert and seconded by Commissioner Slinden to accept the Consent Agenda, including authorization of Vouchers #3473 - #3501 in the amount of \$20,894.69. The Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Tapert was concerned that the Clinton Progressive Association's reimbursement for chair rentals might be inappropriate. A brief discussion followed and it was agreed it was a very small amount and was acceptable. Commissioner Tapert noted that one of the electric bills for Possession Park had significantly increased in the previous three months and Port Manager Ed Field said he would look into the matter with Wayne Nance, the Park's manager/caretaker.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT – Including Items not on Agenda:

There was no public comment except as noted under Project Action Issues.

4. ACCOUNTANT REPORT:

A. Financial Statement: The Commissioners acknowledged the May 2008 Financial Statement, which had been mailed to them previously **(EXHIBIT B)**.

5. PROJECT ACTION ISSUES:

A. South Whidbey Harbor:

1. **Phase 1 Concept Final Review and Direction:** Commissioner Seitle noted that at the Port's special meeting on June 25, the Commission had directed Art Anderson Associates (AAA) to produce "Option B+", which resulted in the current "Phase 1" plan **(EXHIBIT C)**. He said AAA's refined concept represents what he considers to be an optimum approach with respect to funds and utilization of the breakwater. Commissioner Slinden agreed that it was a viable option.

ACTION: A Motion was made by Commissioner Tapert and seconded by Commissioner Slinden to adopt Phase 1 dated 07/07/08 for inclusion as part of the levy lid lift proposal for the November election. The Motion passed unanimously.

Mike Noblet, Clinton Resident: Noblet said there are a lot of people hurting on Whidbey Island, and taxes keep going up incrementally. He said that the Port of South Whidbey is a very junior taxing district, and there are other levels of districts that provide essential public services. He feels the Port is asking to increase property taxes for something that 99.9% of the taxpayers will never use. He said the project has developed a life of its own, and he asked if the Commission had considered a "do nothing" alternative. Noblet said the park district and maybe the school district will be putting something forward on the November ballot as well. He asked, "Which is the highest priority?" He said the needs of the fire district are a higher priority than the marina, which he feels is an unwarranted project at this stage with the Island's current economy conditions.

Commissioner Tapert said he didn't understand how the project has "developed a life of its own," when the Port has gone the extra mile to give it up to the people for a vote. Noblet said the project has been the preferred direction from day one. Commissioner Tapert explained it has been on the table since the Port adopted the Master Plan in 2004 indicating it would expand the marina in Langley.

Commissioner Seitle said there have been many public hearings on the marina; all of them showed overwhelming approval and interest in the project. He explained that the Port's main charter as a government agency is basically to work on economic development for the District. A well-recognized consulting firm has looked at the economic benefits to the District that would come from improving the harbor. Commissioner Seitle noted there are at least 30 boaters on the waiting list for a permanent moorage slip, marina tourists will

spend money in the South Whidbey area during their visits, and Langley merchants and their employees will also benefit. There are many people who work in Langley but live in Clinton or Freeland. The economic model shows the project will provide economic benefits to the District, and that is the basis for the Commission's selection of this project. District residents who don't own boats will still benefit economically from boaters coming to the marina and spending their money in the District.

Commissioner Slinden noted that the Port's Comprehensive Scheme identifies the Port's mission as a three-legged stool: Recreation, Environmental Protection & Care for the Marine Environment, and Economic Development. All three of those are addressed by the Port's proposed project at the Langley Marina. She said there have been several public hearings for the Comp Scheme and for this particular project. The Port negotiated an InterLocal Agreement with the City of Langley to take over the management of the facility, and part of that commitment is to improve the marina, which needs help due to deferred maintenance, creosote pilings, etc. The best way to do that is to come up with a plan that will bring business to the South Whidbey community. She pointed out that a passenger-only ferry would provide a less expensive, alternate mode of transportation. Commissioner Slinden said there a lot of things to look at for the facility – it is not just to serve wealthy boat owners. Providing public access to the waterfront for recreation is important, and the Langley marina is one of the few places on South Whidbey that allows that. Part of the project is to improve Phil Simon Park at the marina. The creosote pilings of the old marina and the existing marina will require removal, and that is part of the plan as well. She said the Commission is looking at an overall, broad-based approach to fixing what exists there and improving it for the whole community. She noted that the Commission could have mandated that the public pay for the project with an IDD. Instead, they chose to present the project to the public and put it to a vote.

Commissioner Seitle noted that if the vote fails, the Port is still obligated to operate the facility. He said the marina is not just for the benefit of boaters – it will benefit the entire South Whidbey community. He said the Commission appreciates Noblet's input.

Noblet expressed concern that it would pass because it will be way down on the ballot and people might not pay attention. Commissioner Slinden explained that the Port has no say in where it will appear on the ballot, and the Port has followed the proper process.

Commissioner Tapert commented that 36% of all tax statements for South Whidbey District parcels are mailed to zip codes outside of the Port's taxing district. He suspects that many of those are waterfront properties, so a very large portion of the property taxes being paid are paid by people who don't live here full time, and don't get to vote in the district.

Commissioner Slinden noted if the levy lift passes, it would result in an increase of only \$32.40 per year for a home assessed at \$360,000. As a small business owner, she can attest to what the economy is doing to her budget. She believes that this project will help rejuvenate South Whidbey's economy and will bring people and outside money into the community, instead of just "cycling it around among ourselves." This type of facility will accommodate the art community, tourists, boaters, kayakers and scuba divers.

Commissioner Tapert added that investing in infrastructure during an economic downturn is a good idea, as evidenced by the Public Works done during the Depression.

Port Financial Coordinator Dane Anderson said the numbers from the Port's marine economic consultant show a proposed Phase I marina with 67 slips that can be leased in addition to the moorage space for transient boaters will have an estimated total economic impact of \$1.9 million per year for the South Whidbey district.

The Commission thanked Noblet for coming and providing input.

2. Resolution No. 08-02: Levy Lift Ballot Measure for Harbor Expansion and Improvement **(EXHIBIT D)**: After a brief discussion, the Commission agreed the amount of the levy lid increase should be \$0.09 per thousand of assessed value, for a maximum of twenty years. Commissioner Tapert said the wording of the Proposition should include what the raise is as opposed to simply what the new rate will be (the \$0.09 per thousand as well as the resulting \$0.19 per thousand). Dane said the ballot measure is strictly limited to 75 words, and the word count starts with the second sentence, "For obtaining funds..." Since the first sentence is not counted, the Commission modified it to read as follows (modification in bold):

"The Board of Commissioners of the Port District of South Whidbey Island adopted Resolution No. 08-02 concerning an increase of **\$0.09 per thousand dollars of assessed value** to its regular property tax levy."

ACTION: A Motion was made by Commissioner Tapert and seconded by Commissioner Slinden to approve and adopt Resolution No. 08-02 as modified, calling for an election to increase the regular property levy rate by \$0.09 per thousand dollars of assessed value to \$0.19 per thousand dollars of assessed value to expand and improve the South Whidbey Harbor. The Motion passed unanimously.

3. Direction to Designers for Design, Permit and Review Tasks: Commissioner Seitle asked if the Commission agreed to have Reid Middleton provide a peer review of the Phase I concept in accordance with their proposal **(EXHIBIT E)**. Commissioner Tapert recommended putting "everything on ice" regarding all non-critical design, modeling, permitting, etc. until the results of the ballot measure are known. However, he agreed they should get Reid Middleton's comments and suggestions regarding Phase 1 as soon as possible. Commissioner Slinden agreed with his comments. Commissioner Seitle asked about the Mitigation Plan deadline of February 4, 2009, and Ed explained it is only for parking the breakwater at the marina – not for the major project. It needs to proceed, but it's a relatively minor process. Commissioner Tapert said it is appropriate that they should move forward on that along with any other obligations the Port has already committed to, but he is leery of moving forward on anything beyond that until after the ballot measure is voted on. Commissioner Slinden thought they should go ahead with a peer review and they can do the modeling, wave studies, etc. after the election if the ballot measure passes. The Commission agreed.

ACTION: A Motion was made by Commissioner Slinden and seconded by Commissioner Tapert to approve Reid Middleton's proposal to provide professional engineering services for peer review of a conceptual plan for the expanded Langley Boat Harbor facility. The Motion passed unanimously.

The Commission directed Staff to also move forward on the Mitigation Plan (only) for the breakwater.

B. Bush Point Boat Launch (and other sites as noted):

1. Installation of Monofilament Fishing Line Disposal Stations: Ed said that Washington State University's (WSU) Island County Extension is starting a Monofilament Fishing Line Recycle Program (EXHIBIT F). He said that WSU has provided the Port with recycling containers and requested they be mounted at boat ramps and fishing stations to try to cut down on marine debris. Ed reported that one is already in place at Bush Point, one will be placed next to the fishing shelter on the pier at Clinton, and he will be taking another container to Possession Park for Wayne to mount there. WSU Beachwatchers will pick up and empty all containers once a week. The Commission agreed it was a great program. Commissioner Slinden added that it would be helpful to have additional people routinely going to the sites in light of the recent vandalism problems the Port has experienced at Bush Pt. and at Clinton. Ed informed the Commission that two bolts were removed from the picnic shelter building at Clinton. Commissioner Tapert suggested they write to Washington State's Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and offer to pay 25% of the cost for a video surveillance system at Clinton. Commissioner Seitle said they could use a webcam or even a stop motion recorder. Commissioner Tapert said he would contact Whidbey Telecom and look into the possibility.

C. Whidbey Air Park:

1. Status Update: Ed reported that WSDOT Aviation Construction Project Manger Eric Johnson had finally contacted him today. Johnson said he would send a final edit on the scope within the next day or two, and at that point the Port could post a Request for Qualifications and later negotiate the final details with a consultant. Ed asked if the Commission wanted to the ad to appear in the local paper as well as the Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce, and the Commission said yes.

6. ACTIVITIES/INVOLVEMENT REPORTS:

A. Economic Development Council (EDC): Nothing new to report.

B. Council of Governments (COG): Nothing new to report.

C. Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO): Nothing new to report.

D. Marine Resources Committee (MRC): Nothing new to report.

E. Washington Public Ports Association (WPPA):

1. Facilities & Engineering Seminar in Grand Mound, WA: Ed will be attending this seminar Aug. 7-8, which will focus on project development through bid processes and contract management.

F. Community Trade & Economic Development (CTED): Nothing new to report.

G. Holmes Harbor Shellfish Protection District (HHSPD):

1. Next Meeting: Thursday, July 10th, 5:00-6:30 p.m. in Grigware Hall at Trinity Lutheran Church in Freeland.

H. Puget Sound Partnership (PSP): Nothing new to report.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

There were no Old Business items.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

There were no New Business items.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board of Commissioners went into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues at 8:35 p.m. The Executive Session concluded at 8:40 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Approved:

Minutes prepared by:

Commissioner Rolf Seitle, Langley

Edwin S. Field, Port Manager

Commissioner Lynae Slinden, Clinton

Commissioner Geoff Tapert, Freeland

- Exhibit A: Voucher Listing
- Exhibit B: May 2008 Financial Statement
- Exhibit C: South Whidbey Harbor Phase 1, AAA, dated 7/7/08
- Exhibit D: Resolution No. 08-02 – Increase regular real property levy rate
- Exhibit E: Reid Middleton’s Proposal for Professional Services dated July 2, 2008
- Exhibit F: WSU Monofilament Fishing Line Recycle Program information