

Port of Umpqua

Regular Meeting Minutes
October 18, 2023 at 7 p.m.
Port of Umpqua Annex
1841 Winchester Ave
Reedsport, OR

THESE MINUTES ARE FINAL and APPROVED.

Commissioners Present:

President Keith Tymchuk
Secretary Carey Jones
Treasurer Joe Mulkey
Assistant Secretary Deborah Yates

Commissioners Not Present:

Vice President Eric Boe

Port Staff Present:

Port Manager Scott Kent
Administrative Assistant Karen Halstead

Public Present:

Jeff Mulkey, Patrick Roelle, Dana Ferguson, Patrick Sullivan, Jim Zimmer, Chad Schuttpelz, Cody Schuttpelz and Stuart Schuttpelz

NOTE: All items handed out at the meeting are available for view by public request.

Proceedings:

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by President Keith Tymchuk.

It is noted that a quorum of Commissioners was present for this meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CONSENT AGENDA – All items listed are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion.

- **APPROVAL OF AGENDA: No Changes were requested.**
- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 20, 2023**
- **APPROVAL OF BILLS: \$3,745.29**

Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, 2nd by Commissioner Mulkey. The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Local Fishermen came to the meeting, representing themselves, Dana Ferguson was present representing Pacific Dream Seafoods.

Quite a few fishermen have commented to The Port regarding the dock operations now compared to how it used to be when The Port managed the operations. The main complaint is that there is no longer the freedom to off-load products without state required paperwork.

Having Pacific Dream Seafoods (PDS) at the dock is not the problem, it is the lack of opportunity to unload without having the State required Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Dana Ferguson: When PDS leased the dock from The Port it went from being a public dock to a private dock. There are state requirements when other fish buyers come to offload at the dock now. For example, other fish buyers are required to have an MOU with the fish buyer who is registered at the dock, and that is Pacific Dream. These are state requirements, not PDS rules and no one has requested an MOU from PDS.

Patrick Roelle: It's unfortunate that there is only one hoist in this port. If there were multiple hoists this issue would be easier to handle. There has been discussion about laws that cannot be avoided. Everyone has to follow the laws that came into place when the dock went to a private enterprise. If he were in the shoes of the private enterprise who was leasing that dock, he would find it difficult to interrupt his business, especially during the heavy use time period to move or use his equipment for someone else to do business at the same time. He would also find it difficult for other people to dictate to him, as a business owner, what rates he could charge. His purpose of speaking tonight was to say in his opinion it was a mistake to hand the dock over to a private enterprise in the first place. He appreciated having his own key card when The Port ran the dock because it gave him the flexibility to use the dock on his schedule.

Dana Ferguson: He realizes that the fishermen want the dock to operate the way it used to. The keycard option is gone, it's broken and obsolete and no one is paying to fix it, and it's the same thing with the icehouse, he has been having to pay to fix it all the time. PDS was trying to charge the boats that work down in Winchester Bay the same price for ice as it was before, which he thought was \$50/tote.

When it comes to allowing the fishermen to off-load product themselves, it would be the fishermen that would get ticketed by the State Police, not PDS because that is their law.

Stuart Schuttpelz: Speaking for himself and his business; the F/V Taryn Rose and S & S Fisheries, PDS has done a lot of positive things for Winchester Bay, he can see things moving forward. There are more hysters and 4 big freezers. Last season Winchester Bay had the highest Ex vessel (which is the season average) crab prices on the West Coast. As a fleet PDS paid more on average. One request Stuart has asked of PDS is that they post their fees and guidelines for off-loading and what kind of lead time does PDS need to allow another buyer

to come in and use the dock. If you are coming in with product and want to schedule dock time with PDS, that could probably be worked out. If you just expect to be off-loaded without prior notice, that is unlikely going to happen. When the dock was no longer available to everyone there was something that was lost but Stuart doesn't feel that PDS should be kicked aside for running the dock. There is a need for another dock, and possibly The Port should be looking for other properties where another hoist could be placed.

Patrick Roelle: His main concern is the fees PDS charges to offload products. He used tuna as an example, PDS doesn't buy tuna, yet they charge .30/lb. to off-load it for someone else and that is too much. Last year 20-tons of tuna was worth \$88,000 but \$6,000 offload fee was a huge hit to the profit. This year 20-tons of tuna is worth \$42,000, and the offloading fee of \$6,000 is not an option. He is hoping PDS would be willing to negotiate those types of fees in the future. He understands that PDS is a business who needs to run their business to benefit them. When thinking of their situation as a business it makes him want to get offloaded by The Port because he would then feel like he has a say in how things should go. By having a private enterprise in control at the dock the fishermen have no control over anything.

Carey: Mentioned that The Port has discussed purchasing another piece of property (the Old Hallmark Property), to put in another dock and hoist that The Port would have available to the fishermen. Unfortunately, The Port isn't getting much support from Douglas County, who owns all of that property. The Port does understand the fishermen's concerns and is actively trying to do something about it.

Discussion about The Port buying and developing the property ensued. The fishermen offered to write letters of support if that would help. Jim Zimmer offered to reach out to the County Commissioners to see if he could get them to respond to The Port's request. Keith pointed out even if the County did sell the property to The Port, it would be years away from building a dock due to all of the permitting processes.

Keith: Scott and Carey have talked with PDS regarding concerns on the prices they are charging at the dock vs. what is charged to off-load at other docks. Scott is researching this right now. The Port understands there are some things that PDS can do to improve the operations to serve the local fishermen better at the dock.

Carey: Considering that it will take a long time to put a dock in if The Port were to buy the Hallmark property, would it be advantageous if The Port were to put a hoist in at the Umpqua River Dock?

There was discussion on the possibility of putting a hoist at the Umpqua River dock. One concern is access due to the "right of way" easement confusion to the dock, that has been thoroughly researched in the past. When The Port sold the property to Fred Wahl, the way the sale was written it doesn't clearly show that there is an easement to get to the dock. The dock belongs to The Port, the property belongs to Fred. The Port always thought there was an easement but Scott, The City and The County have all researched this and there is no record of any easement.

Stuart: Regarding the poundage fees for off-loading. From what he has learned there are different fees charged for different species at other ports up and down the coast. He asked if the other fishermen would be okay if PDS were to charge an “average price” per type of products being brought in? He knows that there are costs to PDS that need to be considered when off-loading for someone else. These include the costs to pay for labor, their equipment being used, and liability insurance. He would not oppose it if PDS were to charge an average fee compared to what neighboring ports are charging and having the fees differ based on whatever product he is selling.

Scott: After he and Carey spoke to PDS he has received a revised cost list and that will be shared with everyone when PDS gives permission.

Dana: No one approached him when they had a buyer and they thought the fees were too much. He has never quoted anyone a price.

Chad: He had called Jon to verify that the price for him to off-load would be .35/lb. and Jon told him that was correct, it was .35/lb. and that was what Chad was charged.

Jim: Wasn't this information part of the lease agreement?

Keith: There are specific prices in the lease that are the fees to be paid to The Port. The Port did make it clear during negotiations that while The Port was not setting the price, the dock was not to be closed to other buyers and the rate was to be competitive. Carey reminded PDS of this when he spoke to them and now Scott has a revised price list that came to us today. In the next couple of days, he should be able to share that list.

Dana: The fishermen need to get MOU's started if they want to be able to sell to someone else over the dock. He suggested the fishermen get the MOU's as soon as possible so they will be ready when they do have product to off-load.

Joe: He completed an MOU, and it was never signed. Dana assured Joe if he would bring the MOU to him, Dana would make sure it got signed.

The fishermen agreed they didn't have a problem with PDS, they just want a fair price list that possibly will differ by species being off-loaded.

Keith, Carey & Joe's notes from this discussion for The Port to work on:

1. Re-contact the County about buying the Hallmark property.
2. Scott will get the new price list distributed upon PDS approval.
3. MOU's are a must for other buyers at the dock.
4. The Port guarantees there will be continued conversation with PDS.

Carey: Stated his appreciation to the fishermen for coming in, he would like to hear from them more often when there is a concern so The Port can address these things proactively.

Kieth: Wrapped up the conversation by letting the fishermen know The Port appreciates the fishermen for coming and discussing their concerns. The Port will keep trying to use what leverage we have to meet those concerns.

REPORTS:

STAFF REPORT:

Scott decided he'd email his Manager's report since the report was a bit lengthy and a lot of it had been superseded by the conversation with the fishermen.

SALMON HARBOR MANAGER:

Jim Zimmer (provided handouts for following topics):

Salmon Harbor will be adding two new maintenance positions soon; one will be for the harbor side; the other position will be full time maintenance at the resort. These positions will be advertised within the month.

Jodi is working with Travel Oregon to try to get some funds for the commercial dock. The goal is to keep seafood local. Travel Oregon has funding available to help with some nice signage and a locking gate for after hours.

Another project Salmon Harbor is working on with Travel Southern Oregon and Travel Oregon to put in a kayak launch at Dock 9.

There is a new website "Discover Winchester Bay" that is almost complete. The website will encompass all of Winchester Bay and what there is to offer, complete with links to the various categories of businesses and attractions. This website will include the museum, Salmon Harbor, The Parks Department, and the merchants.

Jodi got a grant through Yamaha that will include ATV safety gear and classes for the kids.

A Travel Oregon grant was submitted for 12 electric bike stations throughout Winchester Bay. The idea is to get people actually moving around the bay and into the merchant areas.

Winchester Bay Adventure Expo will be July 4-6th, this will be a 3-day expo showcasing the businesses and outside vendors who will be brought in. They are hoping to have a fish market space for Commercial Fishing Vessels and Guides to connect with customers.

Last year Savannah started an event called "Jingle On The Bay". This will be the second year and it'll be on December 2nd. There are a lot of events planned including Santa arriving on a Coast Guard boat.

There are new maps available that show everything Winchester Bay has to offer. The maps will have a QR Code that can be scanned to provide additional detailed information.

The Lighthouse Foundation hired Southern Oregon University to complete a market study on how many visitors came to Winchester Bay between January and September 16th, how long they stayed, and how much money they spent. Salmon Harbor was able to see they are getting back to pre-pandemic levels. The information from the study can be broken down into categories, i.e. Sand Dune enthusiasts, folks camping and fishing. If The Port would like information from this the study, it can easily be broken down dynamically. This information can be really helpful for grant opportunities.

S.T.E.P. Deb Yates:

COMMISSIONERS:

Deb: Last year The Port donated a decorated tree to REEF as part of their annual fund raiser. Deb had decorated the tree on The Port's behalf. REEF has requested for The Port to donate another decorated tree this year. She is going to be decorating one for S.T.E.P. who donated \$50 to cover the decoration costs. She was asking if The Port would be willing to donate the same amount to cover the costs to decorate The Port's tree. The money would come out of the promotion fund since this is being done to promote The Port of Umpqua.

Keith: This is well within Scott's authorized spending limit. After discussion on how much it actually costs to decorate one of these trees, he suggested that The Port donate \$100 to cover the costs.

There was follow-up discussion regarding the conversation with the fishermen. Deb asked if the commission thought Fred would be willing to sell the boatyard back to The Port? The consensus was that as long as it was never used as a "boat yard" they thought he may be willing to sell.

It was suggested if The Port were going to consider putting a hoist at the Umpqua River dock, they may also want to consider adding a Hyster and a certified scale. In the past that was a big hinderance in getting buyers to come to The Port's dock because it is hard for the buyers to bring in their own certified scale.

Carey: Wishes The Port would invest in more property instead of selling what we have. The issue is that The Port isn't proactive when property becomes available. He thinks The Port should have bought the old Bohemia property, Rob Crocker was able to buy it for a very low price and it included the building(s) along with the land. Knife River is going to be selling the piece of property where the gravel pit is located within the next 5 years and The Port should be working towards buying it. That would give The Port room to grow and help with the economic development on the waterfront. He gave examples of investments that other ports have made and the revenue they have brought in because they did invest in the properties.

The discussion came back to the logistics of The Port having a hoist on the Umpqua River dock and how it would be managed. It was suggested if The Port were going to manage the dock that there would need to be a gate put in that had an access code to get through it. That would protect the hoist and equipment that would be there. It would make sense to have a gate locking mechanism set up so if someone were to access the property through the gate a

computer in the office would be notified that someone was there. Each fisherman could have individual codes so it could be tracked. This is how the keycard system used to work with the hoist except it wasn't relayed directly to the office. Karen would go out and download the activity log.

Joe: Scheduling was always an issue in the past. He brought up the idea that there be an online scheduling system for the dock and the fishermen could reserve dock time that way.

Keith: He and Jim Zimmer will reach out again to Chris Boice and see how The County feels about selling the Hallmark property.

Joe: It took a while for PDS to get okay'd for putting the new hoist out at the Winchester Bay Dock, he wondered if Scott should start looking into the engineering now so it will be ready to legally mount a crane at the Umpqua River dock when it becomes available?

Scott: The Port does need to get Nor'West involved to come up with the foundation.

The Commissioners agreed it would be a good idea to look into the Knife River property as a potential future investment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

The next Port of Umpqua Regular Meeting will be held November 15, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Port of Umpqua Annex building, 1841 Winchester Ave., Reedsport, Oregon 97467.

****Note: THESE ARE QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS WHILE SIGNING CHECKS, BOTH AT THE END OF THE MONTH, AND DURING THE CHECK SIGNING AT THE MEETING:**

9/30/23:

Commissioner questions from check signing at end of the month to be included in the Oct. 18, 2023 minutes:

There were no questions.

Checks were signed by Commissioners Yates and Boe.

Questions from check signing at the October 18, 2023 meeting:

Carey: Why did The Port pay Fred Wahl to charter a boat?

A: Scott needed to get a look at the tide gate at Providence Creek and at the time the only access to that was by boat. The Port hired a driver and chartered a boat.

Checks were signed by Commissioners Jones and Mulkey.

Keith Tymchuk, President

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Karen Halstead, Admin. Assistant

Minutes – October 18, 2023
Recorder – Karen Halstead