

Port of Umpqua

Regular Meeting Minutes
November 15, 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
Vice President Eric Boe
Secretary Carey Jones
Treasurer Joe Mulkey
Assistant Secretary Deborah Yates

Port Staff Present:

Port Manager Scott Kent
Administrative Assistant Karen Halstead

Public Present: Rhonda Black, Tom Black, Cliff Glover, Dana Ferguson, and Bryan Sykes

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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

- **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** As presented.
- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** No minutes were presented for approval.
- **APPROVAL OF BILLS:** \$10,329.74

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was none.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

**1. South Coast Development Council (SCDC) annual membership fee –
Bryan Sykes**

Bryan has been serving as the interim director for SCDC since the departure of Shaun Gibbs at the end of February. Recently he sent out the annual membership invoices.

Bryan explained the goals of SCDC: To bring more focus and resources to the area and help local businesses to make improvements.

Bryan previously was with CCD Business Development Corporation before he stepped in as the interim director for SCDC. Bryan has used his administrative skills to get SCDC set up for the next Executive Director whom they are hoping to hire very soon. The Executive Committee is currently in the final stages of interviewing for that Executive Director position and hope to have someone on board by the end of the year.

Bryan gave an update on the projects and grants he has been working on since Shaun left.

SCDC membership is offered in multiple “tiers”; each tier allows for a specific number of “voting members” on the executive board:

Platinum and Gold Tiers each allow 16 voting members. The Port currently has a Gold membership.

Bronze & Silver allows for 10 voting members between the two tiers, although as of right now all of those voting spaces are filled.

Keith: The Port has worked well with SCDC in the past. They have done well by The Port and he recommended to renew at the current level.

Scott: He too recommended that The Port renew at the Gold level.

Carey: Doesn't see where The Port is getting its money's worth from SCDC. It's a good organization but over the years that he has been on the Port Commission he hasn't seen where it benefited The Port at all.

Deb: Asked if there was a lower priced tier that The Port could renew with.

Brian: The tiers start at \$2,500 for Bronze, \$5,000 for Silver, \$7,500 for the Gold and \$10,000 for Platinum and above.

Deb: As it's been said, Shaun was very good at economic development. Without knowing the strengths of the new director, she suggested The Port renew at a lower level until we know what benefits the new director can offer The Port. Next year if all works out well, The Port could go back to a Gold level membership.

After some discussion it was decided, The Port would renew their membership at the Bronze level and re-evaluate this membership level next year.

- ✓ **Commissioner Yates made a motion to support SCDC at the Bronze tier level at \$2,500 for the current year and to see how the new director does, 2nd by Commissioner Boe.**

Before the vote, Commissioner Jones asked if The Port pays for a lower membership tier, would Port Manager Kent still have voting privileges?

A: No, he would not.

Joe: How are the membership fees distributed and used?

A: The fees go into the Membership Fund for overall operations.

The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

2. SDAO/ OPPA membership fee – Scott Kent

This membership is required for The Port to be able to participate in SDIS’s health insurance program. Staff strongly supports this renewal. Also, a portion of this money is for the OPPA membership; OPPA lobbies on The Port’s behalf at the State Legislature.

- ✓ **Commissioner Jones made a motion to pay membership fees to SDAO & OPPA at the rate of \$2,034 in total for the current year, 2nd by Commissioner Mulkey. The motion was passed by unanimous vote.**

3. Strategic Business Plan Review – Scott Kent

Scott: The SBP has been completed by the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) and copies of this document were previously emailed to the commissioners. The SBP meets all of the requirements for Business Oregon.

Keith: When it comes to the SBP he has always felt that it establishes specific projects to be on The Port’s radar, which increases the chance of qualifying for potential funding.

Carey: Had a question about the Port District map that was included in the SBP but couldn’t remember specifically what the question was. Scott told Carey that The Port could approve the SBP tonight and if something needs to be updated that can be done via an amendment process. He reminded the Commission that the agreement with LCOG expires in November.

- ✓ **Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the 2023 Strategic Business Plan as drafted by Lane Council of Governments, 2nd by Commissioner Mulkey. The motion was passed by unanimous vote.**

4. Power Point presentation by Rhonda Black, Umpqua Soil & Water Conservation District (USWCD):

Rhonda had brought a PowerPoint presentation to share with The Port explaining the work that USWCD does and to discuss tide gates.

Soil and Water receives funding from a capacity grant through the Watershed Enhancement Board. This funding allows them to provide technical assistance to landowners. This technical assistance can come in a variety of ways; listening to questions and concerns, information about available programs, funding options and helping to network landowners with the people who can help.

There are a variety of ways that USWCD can help such as with Runoff Management, Heavy Use Protection, Livestock Exclusion Fencing and Tide Gate Replacement. Rhonda showed some pictures of projects that have been accomplished with the help of USWCD putting landowners in touch with organizations offering grant assistance. Soil testing is a free service that is offered to anyone. Soil samples are collected by USWCD and then sent to a certified lab for testing and those results are then provided to the landowners.

USWCD started working on tide gates with a BLM grant in 2007. In 2008 USWCD inventoried all of the tide gates on the Umpqua, Smith River, Schofield, and in some tributaries including Providence Creek. After the inventory was complete, they formed the Umpqua Estuary Restoration Partnership which includes representatives from NOAA, ODFW, and ACOE. These partners were taken on a tour and after the tour the groups recommended that a technical assistance group get together to help figure out what was needed for these tide gates. The first step was to prioritize the tide gates, once that was done, more partners were brought in. Watershed Councils were among those partners. USWCD has started working on projects with the help of The Partnership of Umpqua Rivers (PUR).

Rhonda showed some of the tide gates that have been created through this partnership.

Cliff Glover, landowner: Explained the different concepts of how various types of tide gates operate.

Cliff recently had some tide gates put on his land; these tide gates now allow for 32 acres of his land to be flooded during the winter (November to April) which allows juvenile salmon a place to go for habitat. During the summer (April to November) Cliff adjusts the tide gates to a lower level putting them at the same height as the channel so there is no flooding at all. A map of Cliff's property was shown, and he explained the locations of his old tide gates and where the new tide gates have been placed.

Carey: He's been maintaining all of his ditches himself and he didn't know there were monies available to help with culverts and tide gates.

Cliff: He didn't know about available funding either until USWCD approached him offering to help with his tide gates. The tide gate designs were created by Neil Koontz, who is the main tide gate person for Oregon, Washington, and Northern California.

Rhonda: There is money available for different projects in the form of grants. Those grants are applied for through USWCD on behalf of the landowners. These grants may take a while, but they are available.

Carey: How much grant money can a single property owner get?

Rhonda: It depends on which grant you're applying for. The OWEB small grants can be as low as up to \$1,000. These grants are for small acts of kindness such as livestock exclusion fencing off the stream or to put in an off-stream livestock watering place. There are other small grants that can go as high as \$15,000. The larger grants such as the Watershed Enhancement Board Grant, can potentially go as high as \$100,000.

NOAA Grants are offered annually and for the last 2 years these were "no match" grants. The 2 grants available right now are for "Habitat Restoration for Coastal Resilience" and that has \$240,000,000 available. The other grant is for "Habitat Restoration and Resilience for Tribes and Underserved Communities"; Reedsport and Douglas county are considered underserved, and that grant has \$45,000,000 available. Hopefully these will remain non-match grants in the future. Both of these are 3-year grants. The point is there is money out there that is available.

The Providence Creek tide gates were re-sleeved in 2009 and The Port funded this project. Every time a tide gate is re-sleeved it causes the culvert to get smaller and it doesn't last very long. Recently Rhonda spoke to a landowner near Providence Creek, and the landowner mentioned that the tide gates were leaking again. It may be time to start thinking about those tide gates.

In 2010 USWCD and PUR came to a Port meeting ready to move forward with work on these tide gates. At that time some of the landowners weren't sure they wanted a government entity to be working on their property. Now, times and attitudes have changed. At that time USWCD was requesting a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) from The Port so they could move forward in seeking funding for design and engineering and to have public meetings to keep the landowners informed about what is being done.

The engineer they have worked with told Rhonda that Providence Creek will need bigger tide gates to replace the existing tide gates. There are 2 tide gates that are perched fairly high. In the process for fish passage, it is harder for the fish to get through the existing tide gates. When the tide gates that are there now open it quickly flushes the fish out. The plan is for bigger tide gates with muted tide gate regulators on them and would help with the fish passage. The engineer said the replacement tide gates would be designed similar to what Cliff has, side opening, round and be much larger.

Carey: How come The Port owns those tide gates and not the property owners?

Rhonda: That goes back quite a while, from what she has learned, Commissioner Hubbard who was on The Port board in the 1940's owned that land. Originally, he was going to put in a grass seed operation out there and somehow, he managed to convince The Port to take ownership of the tide gates.

Keith: When The Port last did the 2009 project The Port's stance was that The Port did not own the tide gates but did acknowledge a responsibility for them.

Carey: If The Port were to move forward and contact property owners for a public meeting, it would have to include people all the way over to the golf course, right?

Keith: The last time it included property owners within a certain amount of linear feet from Providence Creek, and that included his house which is well above the level of the creek.

The Port agreed they would like to have Rhonda explore the funding options and let The Port know how much would be needed in matching funds.

Rhonda said she needs an MOU between USWCD and The Port of Umpqua to move forward. Scott and Rhonda will work together on creating that.

Deb: What do we do if other landowners see that The Port is working on Providence Creek and decide they want The Port to take care of their tide gates, how do you handle that?

Keith: Pointed out there is a historical link specifically with Providence Creek. That was acknowledged in 2009 when The Port agreed fixing them was a project The Port needed to cover.

Joe: Asked Rhonda if she had worked on this type of project that included grants with a non-private entity?

Rhonda: This is the first time, and there are some other organizations that aren't too happy about it.

Joe: Is there a better chance of getting grant funding if she were to work with the property owners vs. having The Port involved?

Rhonda: The Port is in a position to be able to match a grant where a private property owner may not be able to. With the NOAA and OWEB grants it is okay you are a public entity. Where problems came up in the past was when they were going to try to use the Natural Resource Conservation Service, that is only available to private landowners.

Carey: What would be the timeline for researching which grants are available for this project?

Rhonda: It takes a long time; grants are a slow process. OWEB grants may need to be applied for multiple times before receiving one. Cliff's project took a long time, they had to get the permits which took the longest because they had to go through ACOE, DEQ, DSL and ODFW. There's some surveying that is required which takes time too. It all depends on what grant you are applying for. Smaller grants may not take as long as the bigger grants will.

The larger OWEB grants can be extended. You can get approved for the grant and maybe the permitting took longer than the grant timeline allowed, you can extend that timeline out but you have to request for the extension. It just depends on who is the grant resource.

The commission thanked Rhonda for the information, she and Scott will meet in the future to look further into the options.

REPORTS:

PDS / Dana Ferguson: Came in to see if The Port had any questions for him. Reported that he isn't sure when the new crane will be up, they are waiting to get a survey done on the dock. The building is built, the tank is in, all of the inside is plumbed and wired to the hoist. He plans to have the guy who sold them the crane come and be there when it's set up to make sure it's installed properly.

Carey: When does PDS plan to start on the building? They showed him plans for it the last time he met with them.

Dana: They are talking with someone in Coos Bay. Scott added he thought they were going to engage HGE Architects out of Coos Bay. Scott had recommended they work with them because HGE did some of the architectural engineering for the RV Park and they are familiar with the soil in the area. Plus, HGE is a reputable engineering and architecture firm.

Keith: Spoke with County Commissioner Boice and was told that The County has other plans for the Hallmark property and at this time they are not interested in selling it to The Port.

S.T.E.P. Deb Yates:

It's been a great year for the Salmon, they have been healthy and huge.

COMMISSIONERS:

Deb: Gave an update on the REEF Christmas Tree she decorated on behalf of The Port; the total cost for decorations came to \$53.

Carey: Now that The Port knows The County isn't going to sell the Hallmark property, after the holidays he would like to readdress where to put another hoist. He doesn't see the potential in putting the hoist on the Umpqua River dock, it's too far for the fishermen to have to go plus there is no storage there.

Joe: Explained if The Port were to put another hoist at the Umpqua River Spit, it still wouldn't be a "public" hoist.

Eric: He spoke to Salmon Harbor Manager, Jim Zimmer regarding dredge spoils which Jim has indicated has been a problem. Eric has a solution to get rid of a lot if not all of those spoils. He thinks they could create vertical banks starting in the East Central Basin. Eric called Seattle's Fishermen's terminal and inquired about what it would cost to tie up a 120' boat. He was told there is no room which would create demand for moorage in Winchester Bay. Salmon Harbor could possibly charge \$1,400/month for a stern tie up only.

Keith: Thought that The County had come up with a similar plan.

Eric: Jim told him that Salmon Harbor has contracted with someone to do a survey of the issue of dredge spoils and how to revitalize that East Central Basin.

Keith: Carey, Scott & Keith met with the group who is planning to do build a recreational development. They have acquired the land and are ready to move forward. There was discussion about how bad the condition of the road is out there and there are some opportunities there as well. In theory the State would take some responsibility for part of the rebuild and the developer said they would maintain it.

Carey: The developer thought the biggest hurdle for the road will be the State requirements for 100' turn lanes going onto the road at the top of Gardiner Hill, and the highway will need to be expanded to allow for them. It was a very positive meeting; the developer has done a very thorough job of researching all aspects of the project.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

The next Port of Umpqua Regular Meeting is scheduled for December 20, 2024 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:**

10/31/23:

Commissioner questions from check signing at end of the month to be included in the November 15, 2023 minutes:

There were no questions.

Checks were signed by Commissioners Yates and Jones.

Questions from check signing at the November 15, 2023 meeting:

Carey: What did HMW CPA's & Associates do to help with quarterly reports?

A: The State requires different reports now with PLO and they helped The Port to get those done correctly.

Checks were signed by Commissioners Jones and Mulkey.

Keith Tymchuk, President

Karen Halstead, Admin. Assistant