

**REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**Fabulich Center: 3600 Port of Tacoma Road, Fife, WA**  
**September 15, 2022 – 12:00 Noon Public Session**



The Port of Tacoma Commission met for a regular meeting on September 15, 2022 at the Fabulich Center, 3600 Port of Tacoma Road, Fife, WA. Commissioners Ang, Keller, Marzano and Meyer were present. Commissioner McCarthy participated via video teleconference.

**CALL TO ORDER | EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Commissioner Meyer called the regular meeting to order at 10:03 am and announced that the Commission would recess into an executive session for 30 minutes, until 10:30 am, to discuss the following item:

One (1) item of Selling/Leasing Real Estate      RCW 42.30.110(1)(c)

Executive Director, Eric Johnson, then stated that the factors that weigh into a decision of selling or leasing property include, in this instance, the size and zoning of the property, the distance of the property to marine terminals, and the potential for job creation, consistent with the Port's Strategic Plan. The Commission then recessed into Executive Session.

**SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS (CLOSED):**

At 10:40 am Commissioner Meyer announced that the Commission would now recess into a closed, OPMA-Exempt Special Order of Business to discuss a labor collective bargaining agreement until 11:35 am.

**RETURN TO ORDER**

Commissioner Meyer returned the meeting to order at 12:04 pm. He then led the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Meyer also acknowledged that we are situated on the shores of the Salish Sea and reside on the ancestral lands of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was approved unanimously without revision.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. Approval of the Minutes:** August 18, 2022

**B. Approval of the Check Certification:** August 4 through September 1, 2022, totaling \$5,465,037.78

**C. Resolution 2022-15-PT:** Designate Executive Director Eric Johnson as TEFRA-Hearing Officer.

**MOTION: "Approve the above Consent Agenda".**

*Motion was made and seconded.*

**VOTE: MOTION CARRIED 5-0**

**SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS (OPEN):**

**A. World Trade Center Tacoma Update:**

1. The World Trade Center Tacoma's financial situation continues to improve and stay on track.
2. Tools that were developed during the pandemic are aiding in connecting with virtual trade missions.
3. The Globe Awards are scheduled for September 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Port Administration Building this year.
4. The outbound Mission to Vietnam next month was reviewed. Commissioner McCarthy will be joining this delegation.

**B. Tacoma-Pierce County Economic Development Board (EDB):**

1. Small business grant programs were reviewed. The EDB submitted a small business sector grant for several companies under their umbrella.
2. Antiracism work: The internal and external changes made were reviewed. The EDB is being more intentional on not missing big swaths of our economy and the BIPOC community. They are working with a lot of smaller companies. They have also hired a consultant to assist in ensuring a functional culture to assist all companies.
3. Over the last two years, the EDB has provided 100 business webinars.
4. Workforce development, recruitment projects and cluster acceleration programs were reviewed.
5. Commission states that they appreciate the EDB's leadership, especially with the Tideflats Subarea Planning process.
6. Funding of the EDB is basically a 50/50 split between the private and public sectors.
7. Two Chokepoints: The moratorium on Nalley Valley and the limited workforce are inhibiting county growth. A lot of work is being done to address these issues.

Inflation is supposed to be a drag on the economy, but we really haven't seen that yet in Pierce County. We also face a short land supply. We need to preserve the industrial land that we have and make the best possible use of it.

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY:** None.

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- **Boat Tours:** Eric Johnson reported successful boat tours last month with over 1,200 people attending. Of those on the tours, 80% were there for the first time. He thanked Leslie Barstow for all of her work on this event.
- **New Hires:** The Human Resources Department continues to be quite busy. One of our newest employees is Katie Skelton, who is our new Community Relations Specialist. She was introduced to the Commission. She is a native of Pierce County.
- **Invisto:** Invisto is a coalition of Tacoma Community College, Cloverpark Technical College, and Pierce College. I sat down with them recently to include the President, Ivan Harrell of TCC, to discuss workforce development and training opportunities.
- **Tideflats Subarea Plan:** The Commission sent a letter to Mayor Woodards and the Tacoma City Council on the Tideflats Subarea Plan Environmental Impact Statement alternatives. They urged the City Council to move all four alternatives forward, refraining from any amendments that would further delay the process. Commissioner Keller also testified in person.
- **AAPA Lighthouse Award:** The Port was recently notified by AAPA that we won a Lighthouse Award in the environmental category for the water quality resource guide titled: *Educational Tools for Managing Stormwater at the Port of Tacoma: Resources for our tenants, customers, and community*. The award will be presented on October 18th at the AAPA meeting in Orlando.

#### **COMMISSION ACTIONS**

##### **A. Proclamation 2022-06-PT:**

**MOTION: "Adopt Proclamation No. 2022-06-PT, recognizing September 15, 2022 through October 15, 2022 as National Hispanic Heritage Month and call upon the people of Pierce County to recognize the achievements of the Hispanic/Latino community and to celebrate the great diversity of the American people."**

*Motion was made and seconded.*

##### **DISCUSSION INCLUDED:**

1. Commissioner Marzano read Proclamation 2022-06-PT into the record.
2. The Tacoma City Council and the Pierce County Council have elected their first Hispanic/Latino Councilmembers with the election of Olgy Diaz and Paul Herrera this year.

**VOTE: MOTION CARRIED 5-0**

##### **B. Resolution 2022-11-PT: First Reading – Port of Tacoma Bylaws Update:**

##### **DISCUSSION INCLUDED:**

##### **1. Number of Meetings per Year:**

- A. Commissioner Meyer: Stated that the Commission does need additional meetings, but not an additional six; he prefers an extra four meetings, bringing the total to 16 per year.
- B. Commissioner Marzano: Stated that he supports having an extra quarterly meeting. We can always increase the number of meetings as needed.
- C. Commissioner McCarthy: Stated that he would like 18 meetings per year. He feels the Commission needs time for some work and study sessions.
- D. Commissioner Ang: She would like to keep to 16 meetings per year and not set meetings just for sake of setting them.
- E. Commissioner Keller: She also prefers to have 16 meetings per year.

**2. Proposed Meeting Timing, Starting January 2023:**

- A. Regular Commission meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month.
- B. One extra meeting quarterly on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of February, May, September and November. We already have the Budget Study Session in November, so we actually will only be adding three meetings per year.
3. **Agenda Order:** Commissioner McCarthy suggested that Special Orders of Business on our public agenda be listed after Commission Action Items, rather than before, as he prefers to take the actions earlier in the meeting. If we have an outside presenter we could move them up to the top of the agenda. Commissioner Keller states that the Chair can suggest amending the order of the agenda and then the full board should vote on that.
4. Next month those changes will be incorporated and the bylaws will be proposed for adoption.

**C. EPA Brownfields Grant Acceptance:**

**MOTION 1: "Authorize entering into a grant agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for \$500,000 for site assessment work in the Tacoma Tideflats."**

**MOTION 2: "Request authorization in the amount \$550,000, for a total authorized amount of \$550,000, for the project Strategic Property Acquisition Support, Master Identification No. 101603.01."**

*Motions were made and seconded.*

**DISCUSSION INCLUDED:**

1. This grant will be used to develop inventories of sites, prioritize sites, complete site assessments and cleanup plans, etc. This grant cannot be used for actual cleanup actions.
2. The target area is the entire Tideflats with three priority areas: Central Peninsula, Wheeler Osgood property and the Marc Avenue area.
3. The work plan for our deliverables and the terms of the grant were reviewed.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0**

**D. WRDA 214 Increase – Expediting Federal Permits through the Army Corp. of Engineers:**

**MOTION: "Authorize increasing the authorized amount of existing Interlocal Agreement (ILA) No. 069213 with the US Army Corps of Engineers by \$150,000, to an amount not to exceed \$756,000, to allow for expedited federal permit review services associated with the US Army Corps of Engineers Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) Section 214 funding, Master Identification No. 101239.01."**

*Motion was made and seconded.*

**DISCUSSION INCLUDED:**

1. The Port prepaays for the expedited permit service. The Army Corp. of Engineers (ACE) provides a dedicated project manager who has familiarity with the Port and its projects. This agreement started in 2002.
2. The expedited service saves anywhere from 32% to 66% of time in obtaining permits.
3. Another permitting issue is that the ACE has to consult with National Marine Fisheries Service for those permits. Our NMFS liaison works on expediting those permits.

**VOTE: MOTION CARRIED 5-0**

**NONACTION NEW BUSINESS:** Commissioner Keller stated that the Commission needs to discuss the issue of homelessness. There are encampments everywhere and there is a lot of pressure to use public lands to house the homeless. This should be a policy discussion. What else can we do about this? Commissioner Keller requests that Executive Director Johnson come up with a proposed policy on this at a future meeting. Commissioner Marzano suggested we look at what our city and county councils are doing on the issue of homelessness. Do we want encampments when there are trucks and cargo handling equipment moving 24-7? The Commission feels that this is not a safe alternative.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None.

## ISSUE BRIEFINGS:

### A. 2023 Budget Priorities:

1. The 2022 and 2023 CIPs were compared.
2. Economic Vitality: We will continue to focus on land acquisitions, developing parcels to support marine cargo activity, maintain Port assets, and fund interns.
3. The items proposed to be funded in the budget to achieve the tasks in the Port Strategic Plan were reviewed.
4. The Port just received 2023 tax information from the county. Staff will return to discuss the tax levy in October.
5. Commissioner Keller requested an analysis of the separation of staffing between The NWSA and the Port of Tacoma.
6. We will be retaining a consultant to help the Port sell the Maytown property. Commissioner Ang would like to know what the deliverables are – What are we getting for our money?

### B. Freight Mobility Study Briefing, Part II:

1. The next set of decisions will look at river crossings and connections to major highway networks, ie. crossing the Puyallup River. What are our priorities and why? We don't own infrastructure that we depend on.
2. The findings presented today represent analysis over the last two months.
3. Canyon Road extension is not included in this report, as it is not yet fully funded.
4. For this exercise, we used 2018 as the base year and 2040 as the model year.
5. Congestion changes were reviewed at various times of the day along State Route 509 and Interstate 5.
6. Five Projects Investigated:
  - #1 - Replace 11th St Bridge:** This would provide a more direct access to higher ground in Tacoma for increased safety. However, the East 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge doesn't help congestion on Lincoln to a great degree. This would result in very localized impacts.
  - #2 - Lincoln Avenue Bridge:** Building a second bridge to the south was studied. Most of the congestion is west of the Lincoln loop. With the second bridge we could move the traffic. However, this is kicking the can down the road.
  - #3 - Portland Avenue Freight and Access Improvement:** There is no construction funding as yet for this project, but it does have design funding. Construction would cost approximately \$3.3M and would include pavement and signal improvements to I-5.
  - #4 - Lincoln / Portland Avenue Intersection Improvements:** Staff is investigating the effects of installing a truck roundabout. Commissioner Meyer stated that we need a free right turn onto Lincoln Avenue from Portland Avenue. This would help move traffic if we had an extra lane on the Lincoln Avenue Bridge. The City of Tacoma is interested in working on that intersection, but it is not in their budget. Commissioner Meyer feels that the Lincoln corridor is a main part of our roadway infrastructure. He would like to study this avenue's vulnerability, ie. is the Lincoln Ave Bridge up to current seismic standards? Some of the joints in the bridge are scheduled to be replaced.
  - #5 - Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge:** Staff is studying the east entrance to the bridge. This bridge is projected to have 4x more traffic than the Lincoln Avenue Bridge and 15x more traffic than the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge. The bridge currently has a weight limit and cannot carry emergency vehicles or trucks with containers. Reversible lanes are another possibility that has been investigated.
7. We have a project on the books with the City of Fife for Taylor Way & SR-509. We will be adding a second left turn lane from Taylor Way onto SR-509. This will be a relatively inexpensive project.
8. Vacation of 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Milwaukee Avenue: Commissioner Meyer wants to see these streets vacated. He also asked about ITS improvements and why aren't we talking about them.
9. Next steps were discussed. The Commission is interested in seeing the final takeaway from this study. Three bridges are on the menu and we can only pick one due to monetary restraints. Consensus is that the Fishing Wars Bridge should be the highest priority. The four entities who can work on this include the Port of Tacoma, City of Tacoma, City of Fife and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. Two-thirds of the Fishing Wars Bridge project was previously completed.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS / COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

**Commissioner Marzano:** Expressed gratitude for all of staffs' time and work with the boat tours this year.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Commissioner Meyer adjourned the meeting at 2:55 pm.

Deanna M. Keller

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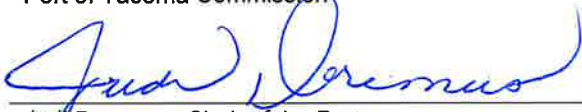
Deanna M. Keller, Vice President  
Port of Tacoma Commission

Attest:



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Kristin Ang, Secretary  
Port of Tacoma Commission



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Judi Doremus, Clerk of the Port  
Port of Tacoma