

MINUTES SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING JANUARY 12, 2021

The Port of Tacoma Commission met for a special meeting, January 12, 2021. Commissioners Ang, Keller, McCarthy, Marzano and Myer were all present via telephone/video conference.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner McCarthy called to order at 12:00 noon and provided opening remarks. He stated the Port is a local government doing its work in a difficult time as democracy is being challenged and attacked at a national level noted the breach of United State Congress at the Capital in D.C. on January 6, 2021. Today's meeting is taking place one day after the Washington state legislature has been sworn in and convened in Olympia, Washington, as well as the Supreme Court of Washington. Tomorrow the executive branch of Washington will be sworn in. He commented that it is time for governments to display the good work being done in democracy. He stated the Commission is honored and proud to defend, in its capacity, the ability of governments and people to function in a democracy. He then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Listeners were reminded that the Port publishes instruction for providing public testimony during a Commission meeting, and how to submit written comments to the Commission, on its website. Instructions are also included on the posted agendas. No members of the public signed up for public comment at today's study session, and no written comments were received. Commissioner McCarthy noted that public input has been received on the Port's strategic plan throughout the planning process.

3. STUDY SESSION

A. Strategic Plan: Community Connections

Presenters: Leslie Barstow, Manager, Public Relations
Carol Bua, Director, Communications
Sean Eagan, Director, Government Affairs
Eric Johnson, Executive Director
Evette Mason, Manager, Government Relations
Matt Hoffman and Jim Darling, Maul Foster & Alongi, Inc.

This is the final planned work session to go over the fifth of five foundational goal which is Community Connections. Mr. Eagan presented the revised foundational goal statement:

Engage and advance relationships with the Pierce County community in a timely accessible, and inclusive way.

Discussion:

- Commissioner Meyer prefers the revised language. The original draft language referred to the Port's commitments "throughout Pierce County." It was too broad in his opinion. He wants to make certain the reference to Pierce County community doesn't mean for each and every community within Pierce County.
- Discussion took place regarding whether the word "relationships" should be replaced with "partnerships" in the goal statement. Commissioner Meyer prefers "partnerships." Staff responded with its thought process in choosing the word "relationships." Commissioner McCarthy prefers "relationships." He commented that there are a lot of communities where the Commission may report information to them but calling it a partnership might be too much of a divesting of decisions the Commission makes.

Staff presented three strategies to achieve the foundational goal. Current engagement efforts in each of the areas were described. Staff then described draft supporting actions and draft metrics for each going forward.

Community Connection Strategy 1 (CC-1)

Strengthen, build and maintain relationships with a wide variety of public community, and business stakeholders through direct engagement.

Discussion:

- Consider bus tours of the Port that include passenger pickup and drop off at areas outside of the Port. Commissioner Marzano noted people from outlying areas, or that have to cross the toll bridge may chose not to due to the added expense.
- Commissioners would like to continue the “Coffee with a Commissioner” events. A suggestion was made to increase it to two commissioners per event and to rotate the commissioners.
- Commissioner Keller increased presence at regional festivals. She also suggested an advisory council.
- Commissioner Ang suggested environmental field trips for students showing how the Port intersects industry and nature. She suggested partnerships with other entities, such as Pretty Gritty Tours and the Tacoma Historical Society that feature the Port. Internships and connecting with the schools. She mentioned University of Washington Tacoma’s Master of Arts in Community Planning capstone project. Staff responded that internships and capstone projects were contemplated more in the context of the education and workforce development goal area.
- Commissioner McCarthy suggested that there be special bus tour to take public officials from Pierce County to the Port of Seattle to show them Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA) licensed properties such as Terminal 5 and Terminal, noting the Port of Tacoma is half owner. Likewise he suggested bringing elected officials from King County down the Port of Tacoma to see NWSA licenses properties.
- Staff described some of the Port’s efforts in the areas identified by Commissioner Ang.
- Commissioner Meyer commented on the draft metric “20 speaking engagements per year.” He wants a focused, speaking engagement program.

Community Connection Strategy 2 (CC-2)

Strengthen, build and maintain strategic relationships with federal, state and local governments, and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians.

Discussion:

- Commissioner Keller noted the number of boards, committees, and councils the commissioners serve on throughout the community. Through those roles, the commissioners work with other local elected leaders, collaborating in the development of their legislative agendas. She suggested including which boards, etc. the commissioners belong to on the Port’s website.
- Commissioner Marzano commented that he likes all the ideas and thoughts presented. He wants staff to come back with a cost factor regarding personnel to accomplish these strategies.
- Commissioner Ang commented that she likes the plan of offering tours to newly elected official and legislators. She suggested tours and presentations should be catered to the unique entities and legislators.

Community Connection Strategy 3 (CC-3)

Develop an implement a comprehensive communications plan to measurably increase the reach and impact of our communications, strengthen the Port’s reputation and emphasize our priorities and accomplishments.

Discussion:

- Commissioner Keller suggested that language in the proposed strategy language that reads, “strengthen the Port’s reputation ...” implies that there is a problem. She suggested there may be a

better way to convey the goal of spreading the message of the good work the Port is doing. A crisis and incident communications protocol will be included the communication strategy.

- Commissioner Meyer stated he has an overriding concern throughout the strategic plan process that not enough referenced to customer service or to customers in general. He asked where the customer focus is within the communication plan. Communications staff views the relationship with customers as owned by the commercial team. Communications will take direction from the commercial team and supplement their outreach. Work product will be created for use by commercial in their outreach.
- Commissioner McCarthy wants the commissioners to be included on each and every item that goes out from the communications department. He doesn't want to come upon a story by happenstance. He commented staff should engage commissioners and have a conversation about the types of stories they want to do a story on before launching into it as commissioners know what their communities are interested in. The Commission president is to be the Port spokesperson in many respects and should be utilized more by staff in this respect. He emphasized the need for candid, honest, and clear communication in the stories put out by the Port.
- Commissioner Ang asked for clarification on what staff sees as an increasing the Port's presence on the federal level. Staff described bringing elected and their staff out to the Port for tours, increasing one-on-one briefings, using staff, the executive director, commissioners, and subject matter experts. Staff commented that much of this work has been deferred to the NWSA, now is the opportunity for the Port of Tacoma to make these efforts directly and for Port of Tacoma specific projects. Examples included transportation infrastructure advocacy, and deepening the Blair, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers is fifty percent of that project.
- Commissioner Meyer wants to make certain that the goals of the NWSA are integrated somewhere in the Strategic Plan and be very clear in what the goals statements really mean.

B. Update on Community Outreach Engagement

Presenter: Rod Koon, Senior Manager Communications

The Commission was provided with a look back or 'report card' on the community outreach and engagement work related to the Strategic Plan. Staff reported on survey participation and results from the online open house.

4. ADJOURN

The meeting ended at 2:05 p.m.

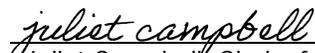


Dick Marzano, President
Port of Tacoma Commission

Attest:



Deanna M. Keller, Secretary
Port of Tacoma Commission



Juliet Campbell, Clerk of the Port
Port of Tacoma