

**MINUTES
NOME PORT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
August 15th, 2019**

The Regular Meeting of the Nome Port Commission was called to order at 7:05 pm by Chairman West in Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 102 Division Street.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Lean; West; Henderson (telephonically); Rowe; Sheffield; McLarty;

Absent: Smithhisler; (excused)

Also Present: Lucas Stotts, Harbormaster; Joy Baker, Port Director

In the audience: James Mason, Nome Nugget; Emily Hofstadter, KNOM; Randy Harper;

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman West asked for a motion to approve the agenda:

Motion made by Lean to approve the agenda, seconded by Rowe;

At the Roll Call:

Ayes: Lean, West, Henderson, Rowe, Sheffield, McLarty

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

June 20, 2019 Motion was made by Lean, seconded by Sheffield to approve with two
Regular Meeting corrections requested by McLarty.

At the Roll Call:

Ayes: West, Henderson, Rowe, Sheffield, McLarty, Lean,

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Randy Harper commended the port design and how well it endured the recent storm. He also mentioned an email sent to Harbormaster Stotts (too late for meeting packet) requesting approval to store his jack-up rig in the harbor for winter.

COMMUNICATIONS

- 19-06-24 UFA Alert – Vessel Registration Update
- 19-07-02 New US Senate defense bill requires Arctic Port – Arctic Today
- 19-08-08 As sea ice melts, momentum grows for Nome's port – Arctic Today
- 19-08-08 Port of Nome 2019 Ship Schedule

Discussion:

Commissioner Sheffield indicated that the ice conditions in Beaufort/Chukchi are unprecedented as there is an immense amount of open water. Ice north of Barrow is about 300 miles away, and 200 miles away from Kaktovik. Also, Rick Thoman, has retired from the National Weather Service and is now working for UAF, is coming to Nome, and open to provide information to the Port on long-range ice forecasts.

COMMISSIONERS' UPDATES

None

HARBORMASTER'S REPORT (*Verbal*)

Harbormaster Stotts updated the group on traffic schedules, specifically congestion related with only having one dock. Line handling has increased with not only cruise ships requiring assistance but some research vessels also requesting services. Rock/gravel export is consistently moving across the Port, with staging coordination mixing with ship security and cargo staging but no issues thus far. No major in-house maintenance is underway, but staff is performing minor maintenance as time allows.

Stotts has also been in dialog with Andrew Lee regarding his winter plans, but has yet to get a solid answer on his plan for wintering his vessel. McLarty suggested establishing an email thread to get discussions in writing. PD Baker added that relying on other vessels of convenience isn't a good plan. His operation needs a dedicated towing vessel with enough power/size to control the barge.

PORT DIRECTOR REPORT (19-07-18 and 19-08-04 Written Reports)

PD Baker highlighted a point in the report that the Corps study team has finally conceded to using sheet pile docks in concept design rather than caisson docks, which will save \$45M on the project.

PD Baker provided an update on the Cook Inlet Tug/Barge assist tug that was coming to Nome. CITB decided a better plan would be to ship the vessel from Barrow to Seward to have a new skin put on the belly (underside), and then ship it to Nome next summer.

Also, PND has finished drafting the Facility Inspections report, but we have asked for a summary of findings and recommendations, which will be brought to a September work session.

Commissioner Sheffield asked about the status of the Parlow shipping report and whether the group would be reviewing the final draft. PD Baker advised that several folks have been reviewing the latest draft. Sheffield requested an electronic copy of the latest.

Sheffield also asked if there was any new information available on the ship head tax – PD Baker replied that she is waiting for a reply from the state.

Discussion:

Discussion continued regarding winter anchorage, with suggestions of somehow incorporating this allowance into the next tariff update, and also marking a map to determine the number of spaces. A map will be brought to the September meeting, and interested parties invited to join in the discussion.

OLD BUSINESS

Fiscal Plan for Funding Major Asset Repair/Replacement & Capital Improvements for Recommendation to Council

PD Baker highlighted new information on this issue with various expenses, including the Westgold Dock repair. As the audited information is being compiled, we should have an idea of where the Port stands fiscally in the Sept meeting, including what is owed to the City through the General Fund.

Discussion:

Discussion ensued regarding the status of the port's fiscal matters with PD Baker reiterating how the City pays all operating and non-grant project expenses up front, and it collects reimbursement from the Port as operational revenue is billed and collected. Considering the F19 numbers are still fluctuating, it was suggested that this issue be tabled again and pushed to the September meeting.

Motion was made by Henderson, seconded by McLarty to table this issue until updated F19 figures are available, to include a status of what funds the Port has on hand and the amount owed to the General Fund:

At the Roll Call:

Ayes: Henderson, Rowe, Sheffield, McLarty, Lean, West

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

NEW BUSINESS

Northwest Arctic Transportation Plan – Draft Section on Arctic Shipping Trends

PD alerted the group of the recent meeting in Nome, put on by the State of Alaska DOT and PDC Engineers to gather input on the full draft plan, which can be found on the project website. Those that are interested in providing input can comment through early December by submitting those comments directly or submitting them today or in the next few months through the City.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Randy Harper inquired as to whether the City had a plan to incorporate stevedoring now or in the future, and if not, it would be worth considering in keeping down congestion and control access.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

S. Henderson – none

C. McLarty – it's helpful to have finance personnel to attend our discussions about finance and funding issues. Also, is there a plan to have a surplus or auction sale this fall?

C. Sheffield – heading to Kaktovik, and whaling is expected to start early this year so might miss the meeting. Also, is the AOOS wave buoy back in the water (yes)? Also, I've had difficulty finding the minutes on the port website – Baker indicated there is a glitch with the system in allowing those meeting materials being tagged to the different Commissions.

C. Rowe – none

C. Lean – read through the NWATP report and found some present day ice maps versus 25-30 years into the future. He believes we could be ice-free in 10+ years. Also, have been reading concerns about the port bringing changes in shipping and overcrowding to the region and affecting subsistence and commercial local use – but it's not the port expansion that's going to change use patterns. I want to be very clear about that – what's going to bring changes is climate change, ice retreat and international industry plying the waters. If Nome doesn't stand up behind the port, we're going to be behind the 8 ball, and I think impacts to subsistence and commercial fishing are going to be worse. If we're an active manager of that new transport/traffic then we have a better chance of controlling our destiny.

C. West – gravel export quantities have been significant this season and I believe it's only going to continue into the future, driving revenues for the Port/City. However, there is significant risk to mixing pedestrian and industrial traffic so it I am really glad to Corps is pursuing separation.

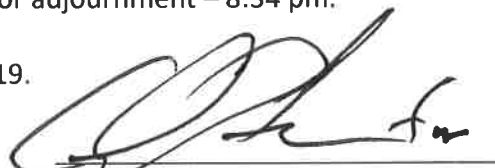
SCHEDULE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is SCHEDULED to September 19th, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Sheffield and seconded by Lean for adjournment – 8:34 pm.

APPROVED and **SIGNED** this 19th day of September 2019.


Jim West, Jr., Chairman

ATTEST:



Joy Baker, Port Director