

**MINUTES (AMENDED)
NOME PORT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
November 19th, 2020**

The Regular Meeting of the Nome Port Commission was called to order at 6:47 pm by Chairman West in Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 102 Division Street.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Lean; West; Henderson; Rowe; Sheffield; McLarty

Absent: Smithhisler

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

In the audience: James Mason; Cathy Rubano

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman West asked for a motion to approve the agenda:

Motion to approve made by McLarty, seconded by Henderson.

At the Roll Call:

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

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Oct 15th, 2020 Motion made by McLarty, seconded by Henderson to approve minutes;
Regular Meeting

At the Roll Call

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

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

- 20-09-17 Legislative Consultants- Alaska Budget Report
- 20-10-19 Polar Star will make winter voyage to Arctic – Arctic Today
- 20-10-30 PND Memo – Recommendation for Outer Harbor Fender Piling
- 20-11-12 U.S. Boats Faced Russian Aggression Near Alaska – NY Times
- 20-11-12 Russia's Northern Sea Route Shipping is growing – Barents Observer

Discussion:

- Sheffield commented that she had been in discussions with the POLAR STAR staff at Regional Headquarters, who are working in the Arctic and planning three trips back to Dutch Harbor for resupply during the upcoming months, but not planning to stop in Nome. UAF and other agencies are working with the POLAR STAR to get oceanographic information released from the various science groups on board.

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATES

McLarty commented that he has recently taken a new position with NSEDC as the Vessel's Manager. That this position was historically not in Nome, but he will be managing vessels in UNK as well.

HARBORMASTER'S REPORT

- HM Stotts provided an overview of maintenance items currently being done in prep for winter, and items slated to be done in the spring.
- HM Assist Schuneman is still working at the port office for the next couple weeks confirming container and vessel storage, and assisting in finalizing all winter billing. He will transition to Public Works Roads after the holiday to assist with snow removal.
- We are compiling an operations and maintenance manual for ease of planning, training and budgeting.
- The Port office is now closed to the public, but staff remain available to respond to customer inquiries while coordinating final billing on commercial accounts and resolving manifest inconsistencies.

Discussion:

- Henderson asked if there was any movement on the GARCO building upgrades, or if anything is planned with that building anytime soon.
 - PD Baker stated that USDA Rural Development had some funds, but only under the loaning programs. We are researching grant opportunities for several of our projects that need funds, and should revisit the priorities list with the group again soon.
 - HM Stotts commented that Building Maintenance patched some areas of the roof, and Assist HM Schuneman keeps the in-house storage organized.

PORT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

PD Baker stated that the project to replace zinc anodes on the West Gold, City and Fish docks, went out to bid and was awarded at the last City Council meeting to Global Diving and Salvage. There was only one other bidder, American Marine.

Discussion:

- McLarty asked if the City was utilizing the current stock of anodes for this project.
 - PD Baker stated that it had been debated, but the quantity and sizes did not sufficiently match up with the project, so it was left to the contractor to provide.
- West asked for the total awarded bid price, which PD Baker responded was \$219,515.00. The second bid came in at \$340,000, give or take.
- Sheffield asked if we knew when Congress may vote on Nome's Deep Draft Port.
 - PD Baker replied that approval of that legislation is typically sometime toward the end of the year, but indications from DC are uncertain due to the current political landscape.

PD Baker provided a brief update on dock damages done by DeForge Maritime's NOLA GAIL/THELMA 302, regarding PND Engineers doing an on-site inspection, cost estimate and initial design drawings for the repair. DeForge Maritime has accepted responsibility for the damage, and is willing to complete the repairs per PND specs. DeForge will provide a qualified contractor to do the repairs under PND oversight.

Discussion:

- McLarty asked how the damages occurred.
 - HM Stotts provided a brief overview; The NOLA GAIL/THELMA302 was towing into the Outer Harbor with a persisting SE swell, which caused the barge's stern to swing northwest toward the docks, making contact with the north end of the Middle Dock, then the south end of the West Gold Dock.

The stern of the barge is tapered, and when empty, sits higher than the elevation of the sheet pile docks. As the barge was elevated with the crest of each swell, the stern was pushed beyond the top of the sheet pile. As the barge fell into the upcoming troughs, it landed on the sheet pile, bending it in, and causing tears in the sheets in several places. This occurred several times before the tug was able to shorten the tow gear up enough to pull the barge away from the docks.

PD Baker provided an update on the Inner Harbor CAP 107 Study to deepen and widen the federal dredge limits within Nome's Inner harbor. The team conducts monthly project calls, and is presently evaluating alternatives that include not only to deepen and widen the current dredge footprint, but also dredging of the Snake River to support the new moorage project. The biggest challenge is with the South Wall design criteria that currently limits any high-capacity equipment/cargo loads.

PD Baker briefed the group on the recent bid opening for the Launch Ramp Replacement Project. There were four bids submitted, but unfortunately all bids exceeded the project budget, presently capped at \$2.1M. (\$1.7M-EDA; \$300K-NSEDC; and \$100K -City), with the lowest bid at \$3.1M.

PD Baker informed the group on the proposed layout of the intersection of the Causeway access as part of the Port Road Improvements Project. Multiple alternatives had been provided by DOT's contractor, PDC Engineers, regarding how best to facilitate traffic flow.

DOT heard from users requesting no stop signs or roundabouts, and these alternatives are intended to address those concerns. HM Stotts spoke briefly on the staff's markup #5 and the DOT provided Alt #8 which realigns the West Beach access to the north.

Group discussion followed:

Henderson asked what the issue was with a roundabout brought up by opponents of that option. He added that that section of the Port Road causes the most congestion and traffic issues with his drivers and that a roundabout would force traffic to slow down in that area.

Lean commented that any option needs to have open area, no depressions or curbs as it would be a snow removal and PWR maintenance nightmare. Leaving the area open will allow flexibility in use for future development, freight loads, etc. Lean added that the option realigning West Beach road to the North (alt #8) seemed like the best option.

McLarty stated that he liked alt #8 as well, as it allowed more turning room and visibility to the north and south, and is more protected from ocean storms. He inquired on whether the intersection would be paved, and if traffic control measures would be done through road painting.

West commented that another alternative would be to divert all West Beach traffic from the current location to a route that wraps around NJU's settling ponds and then join the road that leads to the Post Office Annex.

Rowe asked if there was an issue having a stop sign on the south facing traffic flow, from town to the causeway. Group discussion concurred that with the high volume of trucks hauling gravel to the port increasing each year, that flow should remain a priority. Rowe added that the option realigning the West Beach road to the north looked to be the most expensive option, and the Alt #5 markup looked to be close to the layout we currently have in place.

Motion:

The following motion was moved by McLarty and seconded by Henderson:

Recommend the following Port Rd Intersection Design Alternatives to Alaska Department of Transportation (ADOT), as part of the Port Road Improvements Project, listed in the order of priority:

- A. Markup of Alternative 5, as shown on the attached
- B. Markup of Alternative 8, as shown on the attached
- C. Alternative 7 as presented

At the Roll Call
Ayes: Henderson, Rowe, Sheffield, McLarty, Lean, West.
Nays:
Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED** unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

- Thornbush Pad – Recommended Path Forward on Development

Henderson commented that during the work session the group had decided to move forward in recommending geotech work be performed on the TBS pad, and the group agreed.

Motion:

The following motion was moved by Henderson and seconded by McLarty:

Recommend having geotech work performed on the Thornbush property while a contractor is in Nome to do work for other parties during December 2020, for capturing boreholes to determine subsurface conditions for planning further development.

At the Roll Call
Ayes: Rowe, Sheffield, McLarty, Lean, West, Henderson.
Nays:
Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED** unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

- Causeway Middle & Westgold Dock Damage

PD Baker provided an overview of communications with DeForge Maritime who is planning to work with Ridge Contracting to complete the repairs. PND is drafting design drawings for the repair work, and will provide on-site inspection during construction.

West asked about the timeline of the repair. PD Baker responded that DeForge has indicated early spring, with specific dates provided as the time gets closer.

McLarty asked if DeForge will be paying for engineering fees. PD Baker responded that yes, they have agreed to pay all costs associated with the damage.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

None.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Rowe commented that he appreciated the ability to join the meeting through Zoom and it was a good work session and meeting.

Sheffield commented that she also appreciated the Zoom ability, and also that the status of the ice is even more weird than what we are used to due to the large amount of warm water still in the area.

Lean commented that he appreciated the Zoom ability also due to the amount of COVID cases in Nome. He added that crab fisheries are still being discussed at the NSEDC and federal level but feels that there won't be a local crab season in Nome next summer. There is however an interest in pink salmon.

McLarty suggested that port staff reach out to Nikolai and ask if he has drill log info on that area that he could share.

Henderson commented that it was a good meeting.

West agreed it was a good meeting too.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Lean for adjournment 8:10 pm.

APPROVED and **SIGNED** this 21st day of January 2021.

Jim West, Jr.

Jim West, Chairman

ATTEST:

Joy Baker

Joy Baker, Port Director