

**MINUTES
NOME PORT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
August 20th, 2020**

The Regular Meeting of the Nome Port Commission was called to order at 7:02 pm by Chairman West in Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 102 Division Street.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Henderson

Also Present: Lucas Stotts, Harbormaster; Glenn Steckman, City Manager; Joy Baker, Port Director

In the audience: Ken Hughes; James Mason; Ken Morton

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman West asked for a motion to approve the agenda:

Motion to approve made by Smithhisler, seconded by Lean.

At the Roll Call:

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

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

June 18th, 2020 Motion made by Sheffield, seconded by Lean to approve minutes;
Regular Meeting

At the Roll Call

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

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

None.

COMMUNICATIONS

- 20-06-09 Memo on Safeguarding U.S. National Interests in Arctic – White House
- 20-06-24 Senator Murkowski Statement for the Record re Mayor Beneville
- 20-06-24 Non-Credentialed Mariner Positive Drug Tests – USCG Safety Bulletin
- 20-07-15 Congressman Young Statement for the Record re WRDA 2020
- 20-07-15 Letter to Sector ANC Partners from CAPT MacKenzie (USCG)
- 20-07-28 Letter to Port Director from USACE re 2021-2023 Maintenance Dredging

Discussion:

PD Baker stated that the statement by Senator Murkowski on Mayor Beneville was very nicely done. HM Stotts commented that the memo on safeguarding U.S. National Interests in the Arctic was interesting and noted the mention of at least two different Arctic base locations to support large vessel activity.

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATES

None.

HARBORMASTER'S REPORT

HM Stotts commented the following;

- Overview of facility vessel traffic has been very busy with multiple companies exporting gravel which has kept the West Gold and Mid Docks very busy. There has been more material stockpiled on the Cswy this season than any other on record.
- USCG ALEX HALEY due into the City Dock on Thursday Sept 17th for a 4-day port call.
- SIKULIAQ and USCG due in mid-Nov, which shows missions extending later each season.
- The Lower IP (ramp pad) has been very busy transshipping cargo throughout the region, the congestion of which has been compounded by having several of the larger mining vessels still onshore. This shows that while uplands cargo laydown space is needed, we also need to plan for vessel haul-out / laydown area for additional and larger vessels.

Discussion:

Chairman West asked about the status of the Mid Dock repair from the DIANE H/KUMTUX allision earlier this season. HM Stotts commented that the repair was completed the previous week. The contractor use dye-penetrant to make sure the crack was terminated, ground out the sheetpile crack, then plated and welded from both sides.

PORT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

PD Baker reported;

- The draft F20 budget is going to the Council on Monday. The F21 activity for July and August is looking good based on increased gravel exports, but will advise further at end of season.
- The Corps CAP 107 Study to deepen/widen the dredge limits of the Inner Harbor is moving along. Recent monthly project calls requested details on the burial depth of the NJUS force main and vessel specs with data of incidents associated with the congested harbor.
- The team is doing a structural analysis on the South and East Walls to determine dredge toe depths and surface load limits. The East Wall was built with tie backs, but the South Wall does not. Once the analysis is complete, information will be shared with the Commission.

- The CAP Study sediment sampling and analysis RFP is on the street and due back on Aug 27th – we are hopeful that samples can be obtained before freeze up, but some contractors have indicated a desire to work from the ice. The Corps has agreed to extend the report due date to March 15th 2021 to allow flexibility in obtaining the samples.
- We anticipate flipping the switch on a 4-camera ‘bubble’ by the end of Sept, once it can be installed on a taller pole that is adjacent to the High Ramp. This design should provide adequate camera coverage of both cargo ramps and the adjacent staging/laydown area.

Discussion:

- Lean commented that tension rods of some type may serve to strengthen the existing South Wall and not require a rebuild of the entire face.
- McLarty commented that there may be an issue with overall face height of the sheetpile.
- West commented that if we are going to do sediment samples through the ice we need to be sure any jack up mining barges are not in the way.
- West asked if the Corps had put the next 3-year dredging contract out to bid, which PD Baker commented no, but it is presently being reviewed by port staff.
- Sheffield inquired on the status of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) legislation, with Baker commenting that it had been passed out of the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, and onto the main body for a floor vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Landside Property Development – Laydown & Access

Discussion:

Lean commented;

- That as we have a member of the Planning Commission here he wanted to comment that he was thinking we need to keep our eye on the property north of Little Creek Rd, where the dog lots were located. It was noted that that area is all mining tailings and thawed ground and could be a good spot for USCG office or other governmental building or future development of that type.
- That the Snake River Bridge and approach are very important to the Port and City of Nome so we need to keep a close eye not only on the Port but also ground to the North, but there is property in that area that is already platted for the cemetery.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

None.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Rowe commented that it was important to make sure we get what the Port/City wants in these projects and there have been a lot of good ideas and priorities. Straightening out of access ways and taking out some of the grade on the TBS north side access.

McLarty commented that he likes planning and being ahead of the curve on some of these items. Feels that we will have a lot more miners utilizing the Port of Nome in the 2021 season due to the price of gold. Laying the TBS pad and new container rows is important before we get more users.

Sheffield commented that 6hrs after leaving Seward yesterday the USCG HEALY had a catastrophic propulsion system failure on one side which resulted in them having to cancel all research missions in the Arctic and head to Seattle for dry dock repairs. This throws a huge wrench in research activity in the Beaufort and Chukchi Sea. The OSCAR DYSON is leaving Seattle soon to try and salvage some of these science missions but is not ice-hardened so will not go as far north as the HEALY. Lastly, there was recently a big marine debris event starting end of July for Gambell, Savoonga, Unalakleet, Nome, Wales, Diomede, and Shishmaref. Trash with foreign (Russian and other) writing on it has been washing up in mass and the USCG, DEC, NOAA Marine Debris Program and others are working to track the source.

Smithhisler had no comments.

Lean commented that the ADF&G research vessel PANDALUS is in port after just finishing their trawl work, with results to be released soon. A lot of folks are interested in this information.


West commented that development of the TBS pad is a good idea to do now so we should be working with our neighbors on drainage, settling and other issues on development in the area. Likes the idea of identifying short, medium and long term needs for port development. Noted that there are a lot of inquiries right now about large amounts of gravel being loaded out from the Port of Nome in the 2021 season. One project was 280,000 tons of gravel and other smaller loads that would start later in the year. Noted it was nice to see freight coming in on the bigger mainlines but wondered how 2020 wharfage will compare to previous years in cargo, fuel and gravel.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by McLarty for adjournment 7:43 pm.

APPROVED and **SIGNED** this 17th day of September, 2020.

ATTEST:


Joy Baker, Port Director


Jim West, Chairman