

**MINUTES OF THE PORT OF BELLINGHAM
COMMISSION MEETING
HELD Tuesday, March 16, 2021
REGULAR REMOTE MEETING**

**CONSENT AGENDA
ITEM # A**

Present:	Commissioners:	
	President	Ken Bell
	Vice President	Michael Shepard
	Secretary	Bobby Briscoe
Staff:	Rob Fix	Executive Director
	Jon Sitkin	Port Legal Counsel
	Shirley McFearin	Director of Real Estate
	Tiffany DeSimone	Manager of the Marinas
	Carey Jones	Executive Assistant

3:00 PM OPEN PUBLIC MEETING, IMMEDIATELY RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

At approximately 3:00 PM, President Ken Bell opened the public meeting, and then immediately recessed to Executive Session. The purpose of the executive session will be to discuss potential litigation, real estate transaction pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 (i) (c).

4:00 PM CLOSE EXECUTIVE SESSION; RECONVENE PUBLIC MEETING, ROLL CALL

At approximately 4:00 PM, President Ken Bell opened the public meeting and announced that all three Commissioners were present.

PRESIDENT KEN BELL READ THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULES

Bellingham International Airport Advisory Committee (BIAAC) –
April 8th @ 4PM via Zoom

MARINA ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC) –
April 13th @ 6PM via Zoom

4:00 PM PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD-

Chip Burgess thanked the Port Commissioners for bringing up the apprenticeship utilization language for Port projects at the January 5th Commission meeting, and said the Labors Union is here to help and answer any questions.

Heather Katahdin requested a low barrier village and camp to be created with any willing local nonprofits. She mentioned a portion of the railroad tracks that appeared to be exposed to the public that needs fencing.

CONSENT AGENDA-

- A. Approve minutes from the March 2, 2021 regular scheduled commission meeting.
- B. Commission's authorization to sell vessels, pursuant to Resolution No. 1349.
- C. Motion by the Commission approving a modification to the Airport Ground Lease between the Port of Bellingham and Alpha Distributors Inc.

- D. (a) Motion approving Resolution 1354-F to adopt changes to the Harbors' Rules, Regulations, and Rates Handbook (Rules & Regulations) applying to Squalicum Harbor, Blaine Harbor and Bellingham Cruise Terminal.
(b) Motion approving the Executive Director to enter into Modification of Lease with Merchant Leaseholder tenants to incorporate the Port's standard Lease terms and conditions for Merchant Leaseholders.
- E. Motion by the Commission approving the Renewal and Modification of Lease between the Port of Bellingham and Captain's Locker, Inc. doing business as Web Locker at the Marina Square Building.
- F. Motion by the Port Commission to approve a Modification of Lease between the Port of Bellingham and Drayton Harbor Oyster Company for premises in Blaine, Washington.
- G. Approval of a motion authorizing the Executive Director to execute Amendment #2 to extend the Pacific Security contract for the period June 1, 2021, to May 31, 2022.

Motion: Approve Consent Agenda items A - G

Discussion: Commissioner Bell pulled item G (Renewal of the security contract) for a discussion. All three Commissioners were in agreement.

Revised motion: Approve Consent Agenda items A - F

Motion approved with a 3 - 0 Vote

Commissioners and Executive Director Rob Fix had a discussion to approve item G today, but to leave room for future amendments to the contract.

Motion: Executive Assistant Carey Jones motioned to Approve Consent Agenda item G, with an option to make future amendments to the contract.

Motion approved with a 3 - 0 Vote

ACTION ITEMS-

1. Motion to approve a 3% increase in recreational moorage rates at Squalicum Harbor effective April 1, 2021.

Discussion: Manager of the Marinas Tiffany DeSimone discussed and recommended a 3% increase to the recreational moorage rates at Squalicum Harbor.

Commissioner Shepard said he recognizes the need to invest and bank money for future costs that the Port has in the inner harbor. He supports the pathway of creating a differential in prices to make Blaine more attractive for the Ports recreational and commercial fleet. The challenge is that the Commissioners were waiting on an update/refresh of the moorage model before any rate increases. Commissioner Shepard said it is his request that the Port holds off on a rate increase until the moorage model has been updated.

Commissioner Briscoe said he does not like to raise rates unless the Port has to, the moorage model needs to be refreshed so the Port Commission can made an informative decision on the publics property.

Commissioner Bell told Manager of Marinas Tiffany DeSimone that he would like her to bring forward an updated rate model. As well as wait until the pandemic settles down before the Port considers raising rates.

Motion declined with a 0 - 3 Vote

2. Motion by the Port Commission to approve a new Commercial Lease between the Port of Bellingham and Pacific Cruises Northwest, Inc., dba Port Fairhaven to operate a fish and chip restaurant in the Bellingham Cruise Terminal.

Discussion: Director of Real Estate Shirley McFearin introduced Drew Schmidt from San Juan Cruises. The motion before you is for Drew to take over the small restaurant space and put in a fish and chip restaurant likely to open in June at the Bellingham Cruise Terminal.

Commissioner Shepard said it is an exciting time to position the Port for recovery, and increase traffic at the Bellingham Cruise Terminal.

Commissioner Briscoe congratulated Drew, and wished him well on his new venture.

Commissioner Bell thanked him for believing in the future of the Port of Bellingham.

Motion approved with a 3 - 0 Vote

OTHER BUSINESS

Executive Director Rob Fix requested a moment of silence to honor Business and Commerce Advisory Committee member Jeffrey Callender, who passed away on Friday, March 12th.

Commissioner Shepard followed up on the public comments that were made earlier in the meeting, in regards to the fencing issue, and homelessness in Whatcom County.

Commissioner Shepard asked for an update on the development at the Waterfront. Executive Director Rob Fix said there would be an update at the next Commission meeting that will be held Tuesday, April 20th at 4:00PM.

Commissioner Bell addressed the Ports Public Comment Period, and requested to amend the policy to have one at the beginning and one at the end of the meeting.

Commissioner Shepard said the amendment to the Public Comment times seems like a practical request. The Commissioners are also very accessible by phone and email.

Commissioner Briscoe believes in today's times this request to adjust the Public Comment time seems reasonable.

Commissioner Bell made a motion to move the Port Public Comment period to the beginning and the end of the Port Commission Meetings starting April 20th, with an option to be extended if necessary. Commissioner Briscoe 2nd the motion. All three Commissioners approved the motion.

Commissioner Bell brought up some of the permitting mandates that are being handed down from Olympia and nationally that are affecting local low-income housing/projects/jobs in Whatcom County. Commissioner Bell asked for the support of his fellow Commissioners to help him put together a list of what Whatcom County needs to help move the permitting process forward in a timely manner, and then send that information to the State Legislator and WPPA.

Commissioner Briscoe likes the idea of putting down ideas to help create what needs to be done in a manner that works for everybody and brings jobs to Whatcom County.

Commissioner Shepard said he believes land use planning needs to be modernized for organizations that are trying to bring big projects to our state.

Commissioner Briscoe feels that when a Commissioner speaks in public unless previously discussed with other Commissioners, they need to state that this is their personal option and not the opinion of the Port Commissioners.

Executive Director Rob Fix requested the Port Commission sign a Letter addressed to the Federal Delegation regarding the Phased Border Reopening. The Commissioners took a few minutes to read the letter before Commissioner Bell made a motion to approve the letter to be sent to Senators Murray and Cantwell; Representatives Larsen and DelBene. Commissioner Briscoe 2nd the motion. All three Commissioners approved the motion.

5:30 PM PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD-

Eddie Yuri resident of downtown Bellingham spoke about the homelessness problem in Whatcom County. He spoke about homeless citizens camping on Port property, and being asked to vacate. He requested the Port to allow them to stay for a period of time until they can find a more permanent location. He spoke about basecamp vs camping in a tent.


Heather Katahdin spoke about the homeless issues in Whatcom County, lack of services, and how local taxes are spent. In closing, Heather said that as a community we need to be creative with our solutions, respect our neighbors and share our abundance.

Michelle Thompson spoke about the site on Laurel and Cornwall. She spoke about how they organized the temporary living space, so the space would be taken care of while they utilized the land for a short period.

Buster B said he is not allowed at basecamp due to some past issues, he said he has no other place to go.

No further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:50 PM.


President, Ken Bell


Vice President, Michael Shepard