

**MINUTES OF THE PORT OF BELLINGHAM
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 15, 2025
REGULAR IN-PERSON/HYBRID MEETING**

Commissioners:

Consent Agenda
Item # A

Bobby Briscoe
Ken Bell
Michael Shepard

President
Vice President
Secretary

Staff:

Tiffany DeSimone
Elliott Smith
Holly Stafford
Matt Rodriguez
Tamara Sobjack
Annika Bjorkman
Matt Cress
Stephanie Wiley
Tracy Lewis

Interim Executive Director
Director of Real Estate and Asset Management
Port Legal Counsel
Aviation Director
Chief Financial Officer
Senior Property Manager – Real Estate
Marine Terminals Business Dev. Manager
Community Outreach Supervisor - Events
Executive Assistant

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

At approximately 3:00 pm, Commissioner Bell opened the public meeting and announced the purpose of the executive session:

- To discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency - RCW 42.30.110(1)(i).

4:00 PM OPENED PUBLIC MEETING

At approximately 4:00 pm, Commissioner Bell opened the regular meeting, and announced all Commissioners were present with Commissioner Briscoe attending remotely.

READ ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULES

- Bellingham International Airport Advisory Committee (BIAAC), August 14th @ 4 pm at the Airport Rescue Firefighting Station and on Zoom
- Marina Advisory Committee (MAC), September 16th at 6 pm at the Port Admin Office in-person only

4:00 PM PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Bell stated there are two Public Comment periods: One at 4:00 pm and another at the end of the meeting. Out of respect for everyone who attends the Commission meeting, each public comment period may be limited to 15 minutes total. Speakers are asked to keep their comments to less than 3 minutes. Please feel free to submit further comments in writing.

Commissioners heard public comments from 12 individuals. To access the recording visit [July 15th, 2025 | Port Commission Meeting](#).

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Motion to approve minutes from June 17, 2025 Regular Scheduled Commission Meeting
- B. Motion to approve the 2026 budget schedule
- C. Motion to authorize the Interim Executive Director to enter into an insurance contract and authorize payment for the renewal of the Port's Property, Cyber and Crime insurance coverage for the period from July 1, 2025 through July 1, 2026
- D. Motion to authorize the sale of a vessel, pursuant to Resolution No. 1349
- E. Motion to approve execution of a Mutual Separation Agreement with Executive Director Rob Fix containing the essential terms of: (i) Executive Director Fix's separation from employment with the Port of Bellingham (the "Port") is mutual; (ii) Executive Director Fix will receive twelve (12) months' salary as severance; and (iii) Executive Director Fix releases the Port from all employment-related claims
- F. Motion to approve a Renewal and Modification of Lease between the Port of Bellingham and Wood Stone Corporation for premises at 1801 W. Bakerview Rd, Bellingham, WA 98226
- G. Motion to authorize the Interim Executive Director to execute a month-to-month contract extension between the Port of Bellingham and SP Plus Corporation at Bellingham International Airport for parking management services

Discussion: None

Motion: Approve Consent Agenda Items A-G

Motion Approved 3-0 Vote

PRESENTATION

- 1. Unleaded Fuel Presentation given by Matt Rodriguez defining the different types of fuels, FAA regulations, state legislation, and the proposed unleaded AVGAS transition plan for Bellingham International Airport.

Discussion: Jason Hart, the Director of Operations with Bellingham Aviation Services provided some numbers on fueling in Bellingham. Very thorough presentation and Commissioners asked for a continued education and outreach component to be added for the next steps.

- 2. Quarter 2 Financial Update presentation by Tamara Sobjack.

Discussion: Discussion on Aviation revenue numbers, audit process, and public disclosure staff hours.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1. Motion to adopt a resolution providing for the form of ballot proposition and specifying certain other details concerning submission to the qualified voters of the Port District at a General Election to be held therein on November 4, 2025, of a proposition whether the number of Commissioners of the Port District should be increased from three (3) Commissioners to five (5) Commissioners, each assigned to one (1) of five (5) newly drawn separate districts.

Holly Stafford gave an overview of the process and proposed next steps the Commissioners could take.

Commissioner Briscoe asked for another public comment period specifically to address this Action Item due to individuals that were unable to make the 4:00 time. Commissioners heard from 2 additional individuals.

Discussion: Commissioners expressed their opinions on the proposition
Motion Approved 2-1 (Briscoe - No)

2. Motion authorizing the Interim Executive Director to enter into a grant agreement with USDOT/MARAD providing \$17,931,000 for the Bellingham Shipping Terminal Rail Connection project awarded under RAISE FY2024.

Matt Cress gave a presentation on the Bellingham Shipping Terminal Rail Connection and grant.

Discussion: Commissioners agree this is a significant upgrade to the terminal will offer the diversity of cargo we need for the revenue and working jobs on the waterfront. Commissioners asked the team look into expansion of lay down space or warehouse space in the north area of the footprint of the existing shipping terminal to accommodate the growth this opportunity will offer.
Motion Approved: 3-0

3. Motion to authorize Interim Executive Director to execute a new lease, in substantially the same format as the attached proposed Lease, between the Port of Bellingham and Whatcom Food and Farming Station for approximately 58.81 acres of land and improvements at 6209 Northwest Drive, Ferndale.

Elliott presented the proposed lease and discussed the uses for Whatcom Food and Farming Station.

Discussion: Discussion on safeguards that are in place to ensure the property is being used as designed and in alignment with the Port's highest and best use for the entire 25-year lease. Thanks to Annika Bjorkman and Tyler Schroeder for their efforts in coordinating this opportunity for our community.
Motion Approved 3-0 Vote

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Commissioner Bell called for a final public comment period. Commissioners heard from one individual.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Comments on the success and impressiveness of the NW Tune-Up this year.
 - a. Stephanie Wiley was asked to give a briefing on the recent events (4th of July Fireworks, NW Tune-Up and upcoming Race Week).
2. Commissioners expressed their appreciation for staff and Tiffany DeSimone's leadership.

COMMISSIONER BELL ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT APPROXIMATELY 6:30 PM


President/Vice President


Secretary