

City Manager
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Port Director
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Harbormaster
Lucas Stotts



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Nome Port Commission
Jim West, Jr., Chairman
Charlie Lean, Vice Chairman
Derek McLarty
Shane Smithhisler
Russell Rowe
Gay Sheffield
Drew McCann

**NOME PORT COMMISSION
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 28, 2022 @ 5:30 PM
PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING**

The Regular Meeting of the Nome Port Commission was called to order at 5:30 pm by Chairman West at the Public Safety Building Conference Room.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Smithhisler, Lean, West, McCann, Sheffield, McLarty

Absent: Rowe

Also Present: Joy Baker (via phone), Glenn Steckman

In the audience: Nome Nugget

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman West asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion to approve made by McLarty, seconded by Sheffield.

At the Roll Call:

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

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

Discussion:

- Commissioner Sheffield asked for the status on having an agenda item for roles and responsibilities for Port Commissioners.
- Harbormaster Stotts said the information will be provided at the next meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 19th, 2022 Motion made by McCann, seconded by Smithhisler to approve minutes;

Discussion:

- Commissioner McLarty noted an error in the minutes, that the location on the minutes said Public Safety Building. Staff will edit it.
- Sheffield commented that she did not receive rules of conduct in a physical copy. CM Steckman responded that it was delivered verbal. HM Stotts noted that note would be added to the minutes.

At the Roll Call:

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

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED.**

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

- None

COMMUNICATIONS

- 22-04-08 AKDOT – 2022 Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan (NWATP) Excerpt
- 22-06-30 USACE CAP 107 – Deauthorization Letter to Sponsor
- 22-07-06 NOAA Funding Opp. – Marine Debris (Abandon/Derelict Vessels)
- 22-07-15 Updated Port of Nome Brochure
- 22-07-23 Arctic News – Arctic Sea Ice July 2022

Discussion:

- Commissioner Lean commented that the 2022 NWATP seemed to contain several outdated pieces of information in several areas and that this document was not very helpful with that outdated information.
- PD Baker commented on the CAP 107 letter and asked the Commission to provide input or recommendations later under New Business. She stated that the Corps is saying they need to go back to congress for both deauthorizing the federal limits of the sheet-pile on south and east docks for dredging and maintenance, and also if they are going to leave them as federal features.
 - Lean stated that it seems to be the Corps is trying to force the repair and responsibility of those walls on the City which does not seem right. That the City of Nome needs to try hard to get any repairs on those areas done by the Corps prior to the City of Nome accepting responsibility. That this needs to go to Congress either way so we should talk to our representatives and pursue the Corps making those repairs.
 - McLarty asked if there were any other conversations that may offer insight to the Corps thinking or a possible path forward.
 - PD Baker stated that the Corps were initially said it was a policy but discovered it was actually a law. The Corps says they are just following rules about those walls being used as docks and as such are supposed to be owned by the City.
 - PD Baker stated that the Corps is aware they've always been used as docks since they have been dredging the Nome Harbor since 1917, due to responsibility for the channel, turning basin and these sheet-pile walls. They have reconstructed the walls at least 3 times, so the City will pursue keeping these walls as federal features.
 - McLarty asked if there were any advantages to the City taking ownership of these area. PD Baker responded no, it is all a cost at this point.
 - Lean stated he found an entry in a 1924 Alaska Road Commissions activities document where the Corps stated that East and South walls were being rebuild for ships to load and offload better. Again, in WW2 the Army rebuilt those faces for the war effort. This shows the government has maintained those as docks all this time.

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATES

- Commissioner Sheffield stated she received a press release for a leadership orientation tour that involved policy makers from Washington DC, US NORTHCOM, D17, Sector Anchorage, NOAA and others. It stated that key leadership and policy makers would meet regional stakeholders and leadership. Sheffield stated that she felt that meeting should have been a public meeting and wanted to know who decided it was not to be a public meeting.

- CM Steckman stated that it was not scheduled to be a public meeting and the request was for a quick ground tour/meeting to introduce leadership in the USCG that had never been to Alaska. CM Steckman noted that the only leadership or stakeholders there were the City Manager, Mayor, two Port Commissioners and Utilities.
- An overview of the Nome visit was given as a breeze in, breeze out trip with basic questions on how things work. There was a brief windshield tour to the high school, then Old St. Joe's for a quick lunch/meeting and a run by the port before dropping them back at their plane.
- CM Steckman stated that it was not that type of meeting; that people come to meet with the City all the time on general issues and they are not public meetings.
- Sheffield felt that the press release by the USCG was misleading and made it seem like it should have had more leadership and members of the community present to weigh in.
- There was mixed general discussion amongst the group on this trip and what constitutes a meeting being a public meeting. Consensus was that that the City was not aware of the press release the USCG put out.
- PD Baker stated that the USCG noted they would be back later in August and said they would have a public meeting.

HARBORMASTER'S REPORT

- HM Stotts provided a brief update on the following;
 - New seasonal staff; Office Manager- Siobhan Bradley, Deputy Harbormaster – Alex Thomson and Dock Watch – Bob Baranska al working out very well.
 - Busy with fuel transfers to local tank farms.
 - Cruise ROALD AMUNDSON was just in and was a successful daytrip and PAX turnaround.
 - Thanks to Public Works for assisting with dock surfacing for the cruise ships.
 - CM Steckman noted we had over 700 PAX through Nome 7.23.22
 - Overview of the remaining 7 cruise ships we are expecting later in the season.
 - Port is now identified as a regulated facility due to our pipelines on the Causeway.
 - Navy into Nome late Sept- early Nov to test vessel capabilities of fast response vehicles.
 - Assisted the USACE, Chris Floyd in offshore soil samples for the port expansion project.
 - Bristol will be back in August to dig up the abutments on the causeway bridge to address drainage issues. The bridge will be close for a 2-day period between Aug 19th and 22nd.
 - Build-up of small releases and runoffs from multiple vessels in the Small Boat Harbor has been causing a sheen on the water staff is dealing with, sometimes on a daily basis.

Discussion:

- Commissioner McLarty asked when the sale date would be for the Port/ City surplus sale. HM Stotts responded that the City has removed most of their items from the sale list and it will now mostly be Port impounded items. We are looking to set a date for the sale by the end of August.
- McCann asked if we have an idea on the number or cruise ships that will be visiting in Nome in 2023. HM Stotts responded that we have not yet received those berthing applications but we should in the next few months.

PORT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

PD Baker provided an overview of the following:

- On the Local Service Facilities (LSF's), our design engineers and the Corps completed 65% design level at 30 June, and have progressed forward into preparing the 95% level by Nov 2022.
- BFI is filling their portion of the TBS pad and the project is underway. The City has the same contractor who will be coordinating the projects to fill the perimeter around the BFI pad, the drainage are, as well as grading the existing bad to benefit drainage.

- The Port/City will be hosting the 2022 Association of Harbormasters and Port Administrators Conference on September 26th through 29th. We are setting up online signup for sponsorships and vendors that wish to attend the conference currently. We are actively planning the conference working out details and open to any suggestions for local items they can do while in Nome. General discussion with the group on conference planning items.
 - It was noted that Port Commissioners, City Council and key City Staff are VIPS and are invited to attend the conference and banquet dinner.
- PD Baker provided an update on the Arctic Deep Draft Port expansion fuel lines configurations and routing. Extending lines from the existing fuel lines to the new dock locations, as well as new lines down the whole facility.
 - The Corps had an Industry Day in Nome on July 11th for contractors to visit the Nome expansion site and meet individually with the Corps to provide insight into project sequencing, materials procurement timelines, and methodology approaches.
 - It was shared that the City will need to provide laydown space for whatever contractor is awarded for the expansion. The City is looking at the GARCO shop and surrounding area for the contractor to use. By next summer we will need to begin clearing the site and relocating users to adjacent properties.

Discussion:

- Smithhisler asked if we will be using 6" and 8" fuel lines or if we are planning on anything different due to larger vessels.
 - PD Baker responded that industry professionals indicated that 8" is still the most preferred line size so that is what we will use.
- Sheffield asked about the incinerator proposal to USDOT update.
 - PD Baker stated that we anticipate word in August.
- PD Baker noted that inflation has been a potential concern but it is hard to tell right now how that will affect the project. It was also noted that the contractor will be supplying housing for the workers for the project.

OLD BUSINESS

- None

NEW BUSINESS

- 22-06-30 USACE CAP 107 – Deauthorization Letter to Sponsor
- ADDP Design Phase 1 – draft CRW drawing on fuel pipeline layout

Discussion:

- PD Baker stated that this is about whether the Port Commission wishes to recommend the Council pursue the congressional authorization that keeps the features as federal, or changes it to local – making the City responsible for the East and South walls.

Motion:

The following motion was made by Commissioner McCann and seconded by Commissioner Smithhisler:

Recommending to the Common Council request the Corps to pursue keeping the East/South docks and dredging footprints as federal features. The precedent is the Corps maintaining navigation into the Nome Harbor for over 100 years, and these structures have been used as docks, throughout that time.

At the Roll Call:

Ayes: McCann, Sheffield, McLarty, Smithhisler, Lean, West

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

None.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

- McCann – No Comment
- McLarty commented that he feels its important for the PC body to be present when there are meetings that that are appropriate for them to do so in the sake of transparency.
- Sheffield commented that she would encourage people to google the USCG press release and see how that was represented. Also commented that NOAA bottom trawl survey has entered the Bering Sea phase. They will have 2 vessels in Nome, the ALASKA KNIGHT and VESTERAALEN. This is important due to it giving us the sea temps and benthic make up of our waters. There is also avian influenza across the region, it has died down but is still present. There was an unusual mortality event for Harbor and Gray Seals so if you see any wildlife with signs of neurological damage please call Brandon Ahmasuk or her to report.
- Smithhisler commented that he felt it seems like there is more than one government in Nome and it is disheartening to him personally that the USCG did not reach out to any other local governments. He noted the Corps has done a good job of that and he feels the USCG should do the same.
- Lean commented that he is concerned that despite the high price paid for crab, the fishery is not the strategy that should be followed. As soon as crab reach legal size, they are caught. In an effort to catch that crab, many sub-legal are handled and a percentage die. Beside the waste of killing undersized crab, the barely legal crab are less valuable than just one year older crab. A second issue is that the largest males focus on mating to the point they do not grow to that more valuable size. If the largest crab are barely legal that is where most of the males will remain. By waiting or harvesting at a reduced rate, the fishery in the long term will make more money. The crab will have longer life in the reproductive life stage and reproduction will have a more constant production rate. In other words, there would be sustained yield as the states constitution requires.
- West commented that the recent USCG visit window was very compressed and was mainly to answer general questions on the project. Also, that it is already August and the facility is very busy, but thankfully there have been no major mishaps.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by for adjournment at 7:52pm.

APPROVED and **SIGNED** this 18th day of August 2022.

JWII

Jim West, Chairman

ATTEST:

Jh Baker

Joy Baker, Port Director