

City Manager
Glenfi Steckmån

Port Director
Joy Baker

Harbormaster
Lucas Stotts



102 Division St. • P.O. Box 281
Nome, Alaska 99762
(907) 443-6619
Fax (907) 443-5473

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

**NOME PORT COMISSION
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
August 19th, 2021**

The Regular Meeting of the Nome Port Commission was called to order at 5:39 pm by Chairman Lean at the Public Safety Building located on the Greg Kruschek Ave.

ROLL CALL

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

Also Present: Joy Baker, Port Director

In the audience: Julia Lerner, Ken Morton, Kyle Davis, Cathy Rubano

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman West asked for a motion to approve the agenda:

Motion to approve made by Henderson, seconded by Lean.

At the Roll Call:

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

Nays:

Abstain:

The motion **CARRIED**.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 15th, 2021 Motion made by Lean, seconded by Henderson to approve minutes
Regular Meeting

At the Roll Call

Ayes: Rowe; Sheffield; Lean

Nays: McLarty;

Abstain: Henderson; Smithhisler; West

The motion **CARRIED**.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS none

COMMUNICATIONS

- 21-06-03 Graphite 1 Advances U.S. Supply Vision – Mining News
- 21-06-04 USACE to Mayor CAP 107 Project (SHPO)
- 21-06-07 USACE to Port CAP 107 Project (QTR Cost-Share Memo)
- 21-07-19 USCGC Healy Circumnavigating North America – Seafood News
- 21-07-30 Infrastructure bill 'once in lifetime investment' (Murkowski) APM

Discussion:

- None

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATES

- None

HARBORMASTER'S REPORT

HM Stotts provided an update on overall facility maintenance and operations in addition to;

- Anticipated 2022 cruise ship traffic.
 - Now estimated to be 24 vessel stops in Nome.
- East 'earthen' ramp status and current use which is going well.
 - The SEAHAWK hauled out successfully on that ramp for their annual USCG inspection and ten relaunched without issue.
- Anode replacement project update.

- Everything is going well as expected. The divers are done with all anode installation and are now looking for a window between traffic to finalize their inspection and report.
- The divers suggested we lower the elevation of the new anode installation location to get them a bit more under the ice line to prevent damages and give them longer life.
- Launch ramp replacement update.
 - STG is working on dewatering solutions and permitting for the ramp and purchasing a portable Aqua Dam to dewater the project site. STG is anticipating 10-12 days construction as soon as the site is dewatered successfully.

Discussion:

- None

PORT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

PD Baker provided an overview of facility projects and their status including;

- 21-08-13 Port Director/Projects Status Report
- Arctic Port Expansion Design:
 - General Navigation Features (GNF) Breakwaters/Dredging
 - Pre-const., Eng. & Design (PED) 75% COE – 25% City
 - Local Service Facilities (LSF) Docks/Roads/Utilities/Bridge/Dolphins
 - Non-Federal Sponsor (NFS) 100% City
 - NJUS/CRW Awarded – Utilities
 - PND Awarded – all other LSF features
- Arctic Port Expansion Onshore Development – Identify Support Facilities
 - Create Working Group to Sketch Draft Layout

Discussion:

- There was group discussion on Cape Nome ownership and maintenance and that the City of Nome does not received revenues on rock shipped out of that facility.
- The group discussed dates to have a work session on future facility infrastructure for shoreside development and how that will match up with our future port expansion.
- West asked about maintenance planned for the Causeway Bridge; PD Baker responded that the USACE is planning to solicit for maintenance on the bridge and we should know more in the next month or two.

OLD BUSINESS

- FY2022 Port & Harbor Operating and Capital Budget – Adopted 6/14/21

Discussion:

- PD Baker briefly noted that this was just for the commission to see since it had already gone to the Council.

NEW BUSINESS

- Consideration of Contractor Request to Negotiate Volume Discount for Large Tonnage Export Quantity (gravel/sand materials)

Discussion:

- Chair West stated that he would need to remove himself from the vote as his company BOT is the one requesting a discounted wharfage rate on material they are under contract to load/deliver.
- Smithhisler stated that he would need to abstain as well as Bering Straits is the owner of the land the sand for the project is coming from.
- CM Steckman provided some background to the request and stated that he had received the request this spring but no action had been taken at that time for a variety of reasons. CM Steckman stated that;
 - He feels it would be in the best interest of the Port and local businesses if we incentivized large volumes of gravel to be shipped out of our facility by offering additional rate discounts at certain breaking points.
 - He feels there should be a new tier added to the Tariff, giving a discount to BOT due to the large volume of material being shipped in one season.
 - The CM wanted to personally negotiate a rate discount for BOT but the attorney had advised the CM cannot do so based on Tariff language,
 - That the Port Commission group has the authority to suggest new rates in the Tariff and forward those on to the City Council.
- There was group discussion with some noting that a Tariff rate change mid-season was not appropriate as other businesses that bid and planned their work based on the current Tariff rates did not have an opportunity to negotiate specific rates.

Motion:

The following motion was moved by Rowe and seconded by McLarty; the Port Commission supports the City Manager and Mayor meet with the Board of Trade, Inc., regarding a rate reduction on gravel being shipped out of Nome in the 2021 season.

Discussion:

West, Henderson and Smithhisler all abstained from the vote due to conflicts of interest.

At the Roll Call:

Ayes: Rowe; Sheffield; Lean;

Nays: McLarty

Abstain: Henderson; Smithhisler; West

The motion **CARRIED**.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

None

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Sheffield commented that we have adult seabirds, multi-species, that are washing up dead across the region. One commonality is emaciation. That combined with the salmon runs shows our marine ecosystem is in some trouble at this time. If anyone see birds like this, please take a picture.

McLarty commented that the PC body needs to revisit this during our annual Tariff discussion.

Rowe had no comments.

Henderson had no comments.

Smithhisler commented that he liked the idea of having Cape Nome looked at again in the future and the City making improvements at that facility for use as a backup for Nome's docks.

Lean commented that the Chum and King runs are about the worse even on record. The Pink salmon was mediocre and he feels it was overpopulation and outcompeting the Chum and Kings. The Coho's seem to follow the Pinks so it's looking like a poor to medium run. Hopefully we get back into the odd/even cycle where the forage fish have time to recover. Also, noted that no larval fish going by equals hungry birds.

West commented that he has been on this board for a long time and each person on the PC body has their own expertise and he likes that. That the Tariff states that all rates can be negotiated and he brought it to the Port Director and City Manager and other companies could have done the same. Due to the large quantity of material being hauled this season he feels that a rate discount is warranted and additional tiers are needed to be added for gravel rates.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by for adjournment 7:48pm.

APPROVED and **SIGNED** this 19th day of August 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JW' followed by a flourish, with the word 'for' written in smaller letters to the right.

Jim West, Chairman

AT 

Joy Baker, Port Director