

Friday Harbor Port District

Port Commission Meeting
San Juan Island Yacht Club
Friday January 23rd at 10:00 AM
Regular Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Graham Black (Zoom)
Barbara Marrett
Richard Goodhart

Port Staff Present: Todd Nicholson, Executive Director (Zoom)
Kyle Groppe, Deputy Director
Phyllis Johnson, Port Auditor
Mike Roling, IT Administrator
Megan Workman, Staff Accountant
Jan Gresseth, Marina Manager

Public Present: Jill Belcovson, LWVSJ
Pete Kilpatrick, Citizen

Citizen comments/requests: Citizens can make a brief comment or may ask the Commission to schedule a topic for further discussion at a future meeting.

Pete Kilpatrick wanted to bring attention to Airport Center Road needing maintenance and suggests that the Town of Friday Harbor should take over the road. Traffic on the road has increased with Amazon utilizing the parking lot. He also mentioned that with no water main following the road, fire protection in the area is limited. Executive Director Nicholson said that it is a topic that can be brought up with the Town again, there would also be potential for a chip-seal project with a cost share.

Pete Kilpatrick as a San Juan County Planning Commissioner, they will be addressing the Town's UGA requests soon and suggested that could also be a topic for the upcoming joint meeting with the town.

Consent Agenda:

- A.** Approval of Payroll and Vouchers
- B.** Approval of Minutes: January 9, 2026, Meeting

Commissioner Goodhart moved to approve the consent agenda as a whole, Commissioner Marrett seconded the motion. Commissioner Marrett asked about two environmental testing charges. Port Auditor Johnson explained those are tests required before crushing boats, and we do get reimbursed. Commissioner Marrett then asked about the phone bill, Port Auditor Johnson explained it was covering two months this time rather than the normal one.

Commissioner Black asked about the \$8000 to the County for the Election Fees. Port Auditor Johnson said that whenever we have a commissioner up for election we get charged a prorated amount.

Consent Agenda approved unanimously.

Action Items:

A. Updated Rules and Regs

Marina Manager Gresseth explained in addition to the reservation changes shown prior, some changes to the Group Reservations were also incorporated. Mainly allowing July or August groups with a 3-month advance notice. Commissioner Marrett felt there were some redundant parts that could be cleaned up. Executive Director Nicholson suggested that the commission pass the current version and staff would review the document, possibly incorporating some changes stemming from a recent boat fire at Jensen's Marina.

Commissioner Marrett moved to approve the updated Rules and Regs, Commissioner Goodhart seconded. Commissioner Marrett asked about the Cancellation Policy for the Groups. Marina Manager Gresseth said they must cancel two weeks ahead of time. She is confident that during the summer the blocked slips can be filled in that time.

Motion approved unanimously.

B. Skytrails Condominium Association to Grand Aero, LLC Consent to Sublease

Commissioner Goodhart moved to approve the Consent to Sublease, Commissioner Black seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

C. Grand Aero, LLC to Spitfire Realty LLC Consent to Sublease

This item was struck from the agenda.

D. Precision Approach Engineering Contract Number 26-001, Barge Traffic Access Road Design in an amount not to exceed \$75,000.

Deputy Director Groppe explained that this is related to the Congressional cutout from Congressman Larsen for the pavement overlay for the barge landing road through Shipyard Cove and Jensen's, this is for the design work. Commissioner Marrett moved to approve contract 26-001, Commissioner Goodhart seconded.

Commissioner Goodhart asked about how this project worked with the other project to cap the boatyard. Executive Director Nicholson explained that this was originally going to be part of the boatyard cap, but due to the scope of the work, the boatyard cap would have delayed this project beyond the timeframe required. The Jensen's Boatyard cap will take place later as part of the clean-up.

Contract 26-001 approved unanimously.

Discussion Items:

A. Artwork siting options and review of potential RFP elements

Commissioner Marrett said that she had walked around with Kyle to look at potential sites for art. The place they felt worked best was on the wall outside of the showers, on front of the marina office building. She feels that it simplifies the RFP process if it is for a single location.

Commissioner Goodhart worries about the structural integrity and longer-term maintenance of the artwork when it is outside from his talks with a tile worker. Outside a ceramic art piece should utilize an epoxy grout to affix the tile to a concrete backer board. Eventually moisture will get behind the tiles and when the temperature gets cold enough, it will freeze and potentially damage the work. Additionally, he worries that maintenance requirements, if any of the art is painted, will be significant.

Commissioner Black suggested that the RFP should be worked out first and factor maintenance in the selection. Commissioner Marrett noted that the draft RFP already notes that the Commission would be considering the durability of the proposed piece. So, she is in favor of keeping the RFP simple and to a specific spot.

Commissioner Marrett continued that a budget also needs to be set for how much the Port is going to contribute. Additionally, she asked if it should be scoped so the art reflects the marine environment or left open.

Commissioner Black wanted to make sure that there were no plans for a remodel of the showers that would be complicated by having the art on the exterior wall. Port Auditor Johnson confirmed that there are no plans that would be affected by the art. Commissioner Marrett mentioned that to her it makes the most sense for the piece to be on removable panels. Deputy Director Groppe also noted that the Port maintains the right to move or remove the art in the future.

It was decided to work on a potential RFP for the wall outside of the showers on the front of the marina office utilizing one or more of the segmented sections of the wall. Commissioner Marrett warned that one potential issue is that the area is used for dock cart storage and they could potentially damage the art so we likely want to keep the benches and possibly add additional benches to protect it.

Executive Director Nicholson suggested that the RFP can identify the concerns and leave it up to the artist to address them. The RFP will attempt to identify concerns around durability, permanency, removability, and protection from damage and let the artist address those concerns in their submission.

Commissioner Black asked about the budget, Port Auditor Johnson mentioned that it isn't in the 2026 budget. Executive Director Nicholson said the Commission controls the budget to adjust as they see fit, but the Port can also work with others to do fundraising.

B. Floating Sauna Considerations

Commissioner Black thanked Todd for the write-up included in the meeting packet and indicated that the plan will be to develop an RFP for a floating sauna type of business if the rest of the commission wants to move forward.

Commissioner Marrett said her initial thoughts would be for something like this at Jackson Beach but she sees the appeal of it in the Marina, however the cold plunge into the Marina would be dangerous.

Commissioner Goodhart noted that some on Lake Union use a bucket dump rather than jumping into the water. He questioned if insurance would be possible for any version that allowed a plunge into the marina. Commissioner Black does see the safety issue but would like to see what designs the proposals would come with.

Commissioner Goodhart then mentioned that many of the saunas he has seen utilize wood fired stoves for heating. He cannot imagine that the Port would want to allow the smoke and risk from that, so the source of energy is also a consideration.

Commissioner Goodhart continued that the current rules and regulations limit the businesses in the main marina and questioned if the Port would be doing a carve out for one business of this type or if it will cause the marina to open to additional businesses.

Commissioner Marrett asked if there was any space available, so it wasn't floating, potentially taking up a slip. Commissioner Goodhart noted that one of the suggested areas near the floating restrooms is currently not really utilized presently.

Commissioner Black said that the first thing would be to figure out if the Port is going to allow one, none, or multiple businesses. Executive Director Nicholson noted that the best example of the Port allowing a business to operate in the Marina is the fish shack.

Commissioner Marrett does not want to open the marina up to all businesses but is ok with a very specific RFP for a single operator. She questioned if there were multiple if any of them would have enough business to be successful.

Commissioner Goodhart noted that if the business isn't classified as water dependent, then DNR collects most of the lease. Deputy Director Groppe confirmed that DNR takes 85% of any non-water dependent use lease over the water. Additional research in this area would be required to develop a proper lease rate or profit share model to make sure Port isn't in a position of subsidizing private business.

Commissioner Marrett wondered if it could be treated as a water dependent business. Executive Director Nicholson he thinks the only way for it to be treated as water dependent would be for it to be a registered vessel with a WN number.

Deputy Director Groppe suggested that we can develop the RFP then reach out to DNR to get their thoughts and additional guidance. Executive Director Nicholson noted that DNR has probably gone through this before.

Commissioner Marrett wondered if it would need all the vessel requirements like navigation lights, noting that there are many requirements vessels must meet. Commissioner Goodhart added that there would be additional ones for a commercial vessel as well.

Commissioner Black would like to get DNR feedback to help inform the Commission and the parties interested in running a sauna business. Commissioner Marrett warned that the process must be fair without any appearance of a conflict of interest. Commissioner Black agreed, stating that once an RFP is developed, he would recuse himself for the rest of the process.

Commissioner Goodhart wanted to discuss if this would set a precedent, and whether we were going to be entertaining other groups looking for different types of businesses. Commissioner Marrett feels opening things up would involve lots of staff time and headaches. She is in favor of being very specific for this one RFP.

Locations were discussed including near the floating restrooms in the Marina and potential slips on the SSL Dock. The commission would like to explore the possibility of a single floating sauna with locations 2, 3 or 4 being preferred.

C. May 21st Joint Meeting with Town of Friday Harbor
There are no significant conflicts with this date at this time, staff will work on getting a specific time set with the Town.

D. Schedule Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements workshop in February.
Deputy Director Groppe explained that the Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements is the document that covers all Port properties. The current version of the document is ready for Commission input. He'd like to schedule a special meeting on February 20th.

The Commission was in consensus on scheduling the workshop for February 20th at the normal meeting time and place.

Staff Reports:

Deputy Director Groppe reported that he did follow up with the paper asking for the old auction listing to be removed but it is still on their page. Commissioner Goodhart offered to talk to Heather to see if she can help get it removed.

Deputy Director Groppe then reported that he went to Lacey to present for the CERB Grant. The CERB board approved the grant for \$750,000 for the haul-out pier.

Executive Director Report:

Executive Director Nicholson reported that the Port is going to be getting the permit for the solar canopy project on February 6th with construction commencing later in February. The C-E-F dock land use permits have been approved as well. Commissioner Marrett asked about the permitting for the haul-out pier. Executive Director Nicholson said that the State and Federal permits are moving forward and he is working with the County on the conditional use permit.

Port Commissioner and Committee Reports:

Commissioner Marrett reported that the chamber was having their quarterly lunch on the 28th at Brickworks. She thinks it would be good to have a Port representative there. Deputy Director Groppe offered to attend.

She reported that the Friend of the San Juans wrote a piece in the local paper congratulating the Port on the solar canopy and for putting it over an already impervious surface. She noted that the climate element of the county comprehensive plan has been adopted.

Next, she asked about ideas for the annual newsletter. Executive Director Nicholson suggested that the schedule for workshops on the Cannery can be published as part of the newsletter. Deputy Director Groppe suggested that solar canopy project would also be able to be featured. Executive Director Nicholson will do an update around the Port article. Commissioner Marrett suggested an article for the Pilot Honor Wall and the digital display at the Airport. She noted that she has two articles from a prior newsletter that were never published.

Executive Director Nicholson, Deputy Director Groppe and Commissioner Marrett will work to divide up the article ideas and writing. Commissioner Goodhart offered to take on the Pilot Honor Wall article.

New Business: Commissioners may share information or introduce topics for discussion at future meetings.

Commissioner Goodhart looked at the existing history panels in the terminal and felt that the existing panel was still current and there haven't been enough changes to produce a new panel. Commissioner Marrett would like to see the existing panel updated with new pictures. Commissioner Goodhart can look for something new for the vacant spot.

Citizen comments/requests: Citizens can make a brief comment or may ask the Commission to schedule a topic for further discussion at a future meeting.

None

Adjourn: 12:00p



Barbara Marrett, Commissioner



Graham Black, Commissioner



Rich Goodhart, Commissioner