

**League of Women Voters of Tacoma-Pierce County
Observer Corps**

Port of Tacoma Commission Regular Monthly Meeting, September 17, 2020

Rosemary Powers reporting.

Meeting conducted remotely by ZOOM beginning at 12:00 pm noon following earlier executive session (at which no votes were taken). Meeting adjourned at 2:22 pm.

Members present: President John McCarthy, John Meyer, Kristin Ang, Deanna Keller, Dick Marzano.

Absent: none

Others present: Eric Johnson, Executive Director and various staff and others presenting.

Special order of business: DEI Resolution

Request for approval of Resolution 2020-06-PT – Adoption of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as core values of the Port of Tacoma. Resolution empowers Port leaders and employees to implement Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. Document states that adopting these guiding principles will involve “undoing and understanding the history of racism, embracing differences, and developing leadership.” Commissioners noted the risk that this resolution as a general statement is more aspirational than actual, and urged adoption of specific plans for implementation. Executive Director Eric Johnson noted that the resolution is the beginning of that process, that the Port has not had any statement like this in the past, and that approval will empower Port leadership to develop specific initiatives. He noted that the Tacoma Chamber and the Economic Development Board both are currently engaged in deep discussion about ways to promote these values. The resolution passed unanimously.

Opportunity for community engagement:

Those interested in following the Port’s approach to implementing initiatives based on these DEI principles (and any other matters) are encouraged to take part in the Port’s 2020 Strategic Plan Online Open House. This Web portal encourages public input on the Port’s strategic planning process. Website includes historical context, description of current activities, and current framework of goals and timeline. Available at <http://www.portoftacoma.com>.

Consent agenda – Consent agenda approved unanimously

Public Testimony: None

Other Business:

1. Approved request for project authorization in the amount \$100,000 for a total authorized amount of \$2,363,000, for work associated with Parcel 1B Earley Business Center, Master Identification No. 095208 as well as a grant agreement with WA State Department of Ecology for \$1,548,000 for this project. This is a cleanup project dealing with past contamination attributed to former Port tenants (from whom compensation will be sought). Of interest is the fact that the Port had an agreement with Ecology for the original dedicated funds, and new Ecology leadership now requires additional work that necessitates the additional funds requested. No one was pleased with this change of requirement “in midstream”, but the Commission unanimously approved the request.
2. Approved unanimously Resolution 2020-07-PT which amends Resolution 2018-05-PT to address the Port’s Revised Port Management Structure. This resolution returns a number of administrative positions and accountabilities to the Executive of the Port of Tacoma that had been placed under the North West Seaport Alliance prior to the tenure of the current Executive. After a year, both John

Wolfe, Executive of NWSA and Eric Johnson jointly recommend a transition of human resources and finance and administration, information technology, communications, government affairs, and real estate functions. Purchase agreements for other services and direct staffing models will be established.

Committee Reports:

Eric Johnson noted that there is ongoing dialog and joint participation with the Puyallup Tribe especially around restoration projects, and that hoped for joint in-person meetings have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. Changes in tribal leadership require attention to developing new connections. Commissioner Keller noted that she hoped the newly drafted Public Comment Guidelines would help members of the public who may not know how to approach testifying. Commissioners noted that the role of commissioners during public comment is not to talk but to listen, and not take up that public space.

Issue Briefings:

There were two issue briefings, an update on transportation issues (mostly an overview of a variety of complex road and bridge projects that involve multiple jurisdictions depending on the particular route, land and access ownership, and oversight—can include the Port, City of Tacoma, City of Fife, Puyallup Tribe of Indians, State of Washington, and US Dept of Transportation. No actions were requested, but commissioners noted that they should schedule time to discuss project developments that are of highest priority for Port business so they have a clear sense of how to promote appropriate funding strategies and timelines.

The second briefing covered the Port’s investment portfolio and investment guidelines.

After a variety of comments by individual commission members, announcements of upcoming events, and final words from the Executive Director, the meeting adjourned at 2:22 pm.