

MINUTES

PORT OF SIUSLAW COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, 18 February 2015, 7:00pm

Port Office, 100 Harbor St, Florence OR 97439

ATTENDANCE:

Commission: Commissioner Ron Caputo (Caputo), Commissioner Nancy Rickard (Rickard), Commissioner Jay Cable (Cable), Commissioner Terry Duman (Duman),

Absent: Commissioner Bill Fleenor (Fleenor);

Staff: Port Manager Robert Forsythe (Forsythe); Recording Secretary Dina McClure (McClure); Audience: David Huntington, Harlen Springer, Jeff Hale, Jay Nefcy, Tim Sapp, Don and Johnette Wilbur, Megan Gerber

Media: Alan Campbell/Campbell Productions, Jack Davis/Siuslaw News

Commission President Caputo called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: There were no changes to the agenda.

PRESENTATION: Megan Gerber, Wilbur Island Wetland Mitigation Bank.

Gerber said the Wilbur Island Mitigation Bank is located on 300 acres, 1 ½ mile upriver from Port across from Cushman. A Mitigation Bank is an area that has been restored, enhanced, and/or preserved to compensate for wetland impacts in other comparable areas. Gerber explained when a developer has a project that impacts wetlands, there are laws that wetlands need to be re-created in another location so there is no net loss. The COE and DSL require Removal Fill permits that give the option of 1) reducing wetland impacts, 2) mitigate on site, 3) buy credits from a mitigation bank, or 4) pay in-lieu fees. Gerber said years ago a portion of Wilbur Island was diked and drained to create grazing and pasture land, then around the year 2000, the Wilburs started to restore the property to its natural habitat, thus creating the first estuarine mitigation bank in Oregon. Wildlife, seabirds, fish and native vegetation have returned to the area. Gerber said the Wilburs are ready to pass on the stewardship of the mitigation bank to another entity, preferably local. The responsibilities include protection, monitoring, and reporting, as well as controlling noxious weeds. Gerber said a big threat to the Wilbur Island Wetland Mitigation Bank is the overpopulation of cormorants that are killing the trees and eating mass quantities of salmonids. Don Wilbur requested help from the Port Commission to find a way to reduce the cormorant population, saying all the old growth spruce trees will be dead within ten years if nothing is done. Cable said STEP had permission to haze the birds two years ago but their efforts didn't work. Cable agreed the problem is serious and said the cormorants are reducing fish populations and destroying the estuary. Wilbur said the Mitigation Bank efforts are working but the cormorants are taking over. Forsythe said he would take the issue to Washington DC when he attends the Pacific Northwest Waterways Convention next week.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: On the Motion, made by Cable, and seconded by Rickard, the board voted unanimously to approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting on 21 January 2015.

REMARKS FROM CITIZENS: Ann Wilson, owner of Franks Restaurant in Mapleton, spoke in support of keeping the Mapleton property under Port ownership. Wilson said having a parking lot, restrooms, and dock brings recreation and business to the Mapleton community. Wilson said that the business owners would be willing to help with maintenance.

FINANCIALS: On the Motion, made by Rickard, and seconded by Cable, the board voted unanimously to ratify bills paid in the amount of \$76,164.77.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Discuss Future of the Mapleton Property: Caputo asked the board for their input regarding the Mapleton property. Rickard said she went to the Siuslaw Watershed Council meeting but forgot to ask for input. Rickard said, in her opinion, it is important for the port to retain ownership for the benefit of the Mapleton community. Duman said his wife was against the idea of the port transferring ownership. Cable said there is opportunity to build a partnership with the Mapleton community. Ann Wilson said she would get names of people interested in meeting with the port. Caputo said he called the County to find out if they are interested in expanding the Knowles Creek facility to include the Mapleton property but they haven't called back. Caputo said there might be a Mapleton organization needs a fund raiser that would exchange maintenance for payment. Caputo concluded that the port would retain ownership of the Mapleton property and pursue assistance with the Mapleton community.
2. Other Old Business: Caputo said there will be another hearing for a conditional use permit for the Floating Restroom on March 10. Caputo said STEP will be there to show support for the project. Rickard asked how the project was funded. Forsythe said OSMB will pay for the restroom and the port will pay for maintenance. Forsythe said OSMB will help with maintenance costs by adding stipend money to the annual grant money the port receives. Cable said forms are available for public comment. Duman asked what happens to it in the off season. Forsythe said it gets taken out and put in storage. Duman asked if it could be tied to the marina for use and Forsythe said he'd look into it.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss Raising Campground Rates: McClure encouraged the board to discuss the proposal so a resolution can be presented at the March meeting. Forsythe said maintenance and utility rates have increased and rates have not changed in four years. Forsythe said staff compared our rates to other campgrounds and he is proposing a five dollar increase on the daily rate. McClure said the proposed moorage and campground rate increases are posted on the web site. Cable reminded the board that our campground price should not be compared to Salmon Harbor or Newport since we don't have the amenities they do.

REPORTS

Forsythe reported:

- Traveling to Pacific Northwest Waterways (PNWA) conference in Washington DC next week.

Rickard reported:

- Going to Siuslaw Watershed Council (SWC) meeting

Caputo reported:

- Went to the Special Districts Assoc. of Oregon (SDAO) annual conference. He attended classes and the Port Caucus meeting. Caputo stressed the importance of Forsythe going to Washington DC because talking to senators and congressmen helps get dredging money and money to fix our jetties.

President Caputo adjourned the meeting at 7:40pm.

President