



Commission Meeting Minutes Monday, December 8, 2025

Call to Order – Special Meeting

Commission President Jasmine Vasavada called the Commission Special Meeting/Executive Session of December 8, 2025, to order at 4:30 p.m., at the Percival Plaza at 626 Columbia Street NW, Suite 1B, Olympics Room, in Olympia, Washington 98501.

Present

Commissioners: Jasmine Vasavada – President, Maggie Sanders – Vice President, Sarah Montano – Secretary, Amy Harding and Bob Iyall.

Executive Session

At 4:30 p.m., Commission President Jasmine Vasavada announced that the Commission would recess into a closed Executive Session until 5:15 p.m. to consider the minimum price at which real estate will be offered for sale or lease (RCW 42.30.110(1)(c)).

Commissioner Vasavada returned the meeting to order and stated that the Commission was in Executive Session until 5:15 p.m. No decisions were made, and no action was taken.

The Executive Session was then adjourned.

Call to Order – Commission Meeting

Commission President Jasmine Vasavada called a regular meeting of the Port of Olympia Board of Commissioners to order and open to the public at 5:30 p.m., Monday, December 8, 2025, at the Percival Plaza at 626 Columbia Street NW, Suite 1B, Olympics Room, in Olympia, Washington 98501.

Present

Commissioners: Jasmine Vasavada – President, Maggie Sanders – Vice President, Sarah Montano – Secretary, Amy Harding and Bob Iyall.

Staff: Alex Smith, Executive Director; Chris Pierce-Wright, General Counsel; Warren Hendrickson, Director of Operations; Mike Reid, Director of Community and Economic Development; Damien Egan, Harbor Senior Manager; James Sommer, Public Works Program Manager; Taber Lee, Marketing and Outreach Senior Manager; and Missy Goodell, Commission Coordinator.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Harding seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director Report

Executive Director Alex Smith reported that the Port recently welcomed visiting delegation from Shanghai Maritime University, Saint Martin University's longest standing global partner school. Another paper pulp cargo vessel arrived at the Port of Olympia; the Port of Olympia participated in the Thurston County Economic Development Council's Annual Regional Economic Forecast and Innovation Expo held at the Great Wolf Lodge. Later this week, staff and commissioners will visit Green Diamond Forestry in Shelton, Washington. This tour will give the Port an opportunity to learn more about the local timber industry, the people and jobs it supports, their responsible forest management practices and carbon initiatives, and how our Marine Terminal plays a role in getting their logs to market and supporting their viability.

Public Comment

Five individuals provided public comments, many thanking out-going Port Commissioners Iyall, Sanders and Harding for their service to the Port. Praise was given for moving the Harbor Patrol to the Thurston County Sheriff's Office. Comments regarding the marine terminal warehouse and an environmental impact statement were also shared.

Consent Calendar

Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the consent agenda as presented; Commissioner Harding seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Pending Issues or Business

Pending Issues Update. Alex Smith, Executive Director, reported that there was nothing new to report on pending issues.

Action Calendar

Harbor Patrol Organizational Transition. Damien Egan, Harbor Senior Manager, provided background on the Harbor Patrol program which has been operated by the Port of Olympia since 2015. A proposed transfer of the Harbor Patrol program to the Thurston County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) was presented.

The Port's oversight of the Harbor Patrol program over the last 10 years has ensured the continuation of a former City of Olympia program that has been an essential community asset. Increased costs associated with maintaining its two vessels, increased liability to the Port by providing these services – coupled with the lack of Port law enforcement authority – has placed a significant burden on continuing operations. Transferring the program to TCSO will reduce Port budget and staff obligations, will allow the program to have oversight from an entity more in line with the Harbor Patrol Mission, will add a needed law enforcement capability to Thurston County waterways, and will achieve expanded community benefits.

The Commission delegated the Port-TCSO interlocal agreement (ILA) approval and execution authority to Executive Director Alex Smith via this motion:

Motion: Commissioner Sanders moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute an interlocal agreement (ILA) between the Port and the Thurston County Sheriff's Office (TCSO), divesting the Port of

the Harbor Patrol organization and its Port-owned assets in favor of TCSO, contingent upon the following requirements having been met:

- Mutual agreement with TCSO as to ILA terms and conditions, and
- Approval of ILA terms by Port counsel

Commissioner Harding seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

Action/Other Calendar

Security Guard Services Contract Award. Damien Egan, Harbor Senior Manager, presented background information on the contract awarded to Pacific Security which will expire December 31, 2025. The Port seeks to establish a new two-year security guard services contract with a 1-year term. The bid process was shared with the lowest qualified responsive responsible bidder being Top Notch Security, Inc.

Purchased services contract will provide Marine Terminal gate guard, vessel guards, and roaming peninsula security patrols at the Marine Terminal, Swantown Marina and downtown Port properties.

Motion: Commissioner Harding moved to award the security guard services contract to Top Notch Security, Inc., with a not-to-exceed first year amount of \$318,540.00, and authorize the Executive Director to execute the contract pursuant to the bid award, as presented. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

Small City Economic Development Program. Mike Reid, Director of Community and Economic Development, shared that the Small City Economic Development Project (SCEDP) is defined by Port Resolution 2024-03. The SCEDP provides funding to small communities in Thurston County (population under 15,000) for economic development activities. Funds can be used for feasibility work, infrastructure readiness, business district improvements, recreation facilities, and other capital initiatives that support local economies.

Applications were distributed on October 15, 2025, with a response deadline of November 14, 2025. The SCEDP received five eligible applications by the deadline during the 2026 funding cycle—one from each qualifying jurisdiction: Bucoda, Rainier, Rochester, Tenino, and Yelm. Because the Port did not launch the 2025 program on schedule, the Commission supported the idea that the 2025 program funds be rolled into 2026, enabling the Port to provide larger awards of up to \$20,000 per applicant this cycle.

Staff screened the applications for eligibility under Resolution 2024-03 and now present them for Port Commission approval. The 2026 budget was approved by the Port Commission on November 24, 2025, and this budget reflected this \$100,000.00 dollar proposed award amount. Staff is requested that this been done as "action/other" to provide a more timely approval for the recipients to be able to initiate work and budget accordingly for 2026.

Motion: Commissioner Iyall moved to approve the 2025-2026 funding of \$100,000.00 for supporting the small city economic development projects consistent with the submitted applications. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

Advisory Calendar

None.

Commissioner Reports/Discussion

Commissioner Montano shared that she attended the Lacey Chamber of Commerce meeting.

Commissioner Vasavada communicated that she attended the recent Shanghai Maritime Delegation with Commissioner Harding.

Commissioner Iyall read a prepared statement: "I want to express my gratitude for the opportunity to help guide one of Thurston County's most important public institutions. Serving in this role has been an honor and it's been a responsibility that I have taken very seriously and an experience that I will always value. I want to recognize my fellow commissioners: each of you brings a unique perspective and a genuine commitment to serving our community. While we have not always agreed, I've always respected your intentions, your dedication, and your willingness to face difficult issues. Good governance depends on diversity of thoughts, and I'm grateful to have served with commissioners who care deeply about making the Port a stronger and more responsive institution." Commissioner Iyall extended a special thanks to our exceptional Port staff. "Over the past four years, you have rebuilt a positive, internal culture, strengthened community relationships, and taken on some of the most ambitious environmental and economic initiatives in the Port's history. You are dedicated professionals, you are smart, capable and committed, no matter what some critics might say. And the truth of the matter is that your work often goes unnoticed because excellence rarely makes headlines. I'd also like to thank the many community members and partners and stakeholders who actively support the Port and its important contributions to Thurston County. Your engagement matters. Whether you've shown up at meetings, conducted business with the Port, collaborated on projects, or just recognized the Port's environmental and economic responsibility, your voices have helped keep the Port focused on its mission. Public institutions work best when supported by those who keep an open mind, engage in good faith, and recognize that the Port exists to serve all of Thurston County. And to those who may disagree or challenge the Port's directions, I will offer only this: The Port's mission is solid. It holds up through challenges, changes in leadership, and political pressure. And it will continue to hold long after we have all left these seats. The Port's mission is more than a slogan, it's a charge, a promise, a standard. And the Port is at its best when it pursues that mission with clarity, courage and integrity. My hope for the future is that this commission continues to move forward with purpose, grounded in facts and transparency, and avoids allowing outside noise or political theatrics to derail the Port's long-term work. We are trustees of a public asset that outlive every one of us. We owe it to Thurston County to keep the mission at the center of every decision, even if it is not the easy or popular choice. It has been an honor to serve you, Thurston County, thank you."

Commissioner Harding shared that the Thurston Regional Planning Commission hired a new executive director, Alyssa Girtler. It was also reported that Experience Olympia & Beyond hired an interim executive director, Shauna Stewart.

Commissioner Harding read a statement: "Looking back on the last four years, there were some hard times. For months, community members would come to the podium and ask that I be removed from

office. My ethics and motives for serving on this commission were questioned. Following that, we faced very challenging HR issues here at the Port. Staff morale was at an all-time low. And then a couple of years later, slowly, when we all started rowing in the same direction, things started getting better. And this last year, I have loved serving on the Port Commission. One of my biggest lessons from public office has been that it's easy to advocate for 'No,' but it takes courage to get to 'Yes,' and nobody does their best work when they're getting yelled at. Being careful with public dollars does not mean paralysis or endless process. It means finding the responsible path to Yes and then getting it done. The community laid out a clear direction and plan for the Port of Olympia with Vision 2050. Alex Smith, our new Executive Director, has stabilized our team and we have staff ready to execute on the vision that is given to them by the Commission. I'm optimistic the incoming Port Commission will carry this momentum forward to deliver environmental cleanup that's supported by a working waterfront. Construction of planned tourist amenities, allowing for construction of sustainable public access to the waterfront and industrial development on industrial lands while creating habitat restoration. It's a both and. Ports were created because the legislature recognized private consolidation of the waterfront threatened public access and public benefit. That founding purpose matters now more than ever. Ports are uniquely positioned to turn community vision into action. Cleaning up legacy pollution, creating jobs and supporting industry, hosting community events, catalyzing tourism, and serving as innovative partners in energy production and storage. I'm grateful to my family who supported me through this roller coaster of public office. Maybe my parents can start reading the local newspaper again because I will not be in it. Or date nights with my husband. I'm really grateful to my fellow Commissioners. You know that collaboration beats gridlock. Each of the Commissioners did the courageous work of true governance and I now consider you my respected friends. I'm grateful to our staff, who, as Bob said, do the hardest work with the least recognition. And I'm grateful to the public, including those who oppose me, because they push me to clarify my values and find the freedom that comes from doing hard things. So thank you for the opportunity to serve, and I can't wait to see all of the ways that the Port of Olympia gets to Yes. For my last quote, I made a little pin for our Port and some of our stakeholders and I asked a friend of mine who speaks Latin, because I thought if you are going to make a pin, you should put some Latin on it, right? I asked him how to say "get to Yes," or "start with Yes," in Latin and he said there is no word in Latin for 'yes.' So this is *Coepere Affirmatione*, and it loosely means "Begin with Yes." I hope that is what the Commission and the Port continue to do because that's how we best serve our community."

Commissioner Sanders shared her statement: "It has been an extraordinary privilege to serve as your Port of Olympia Commissioner, District 4. As my tenure ends, I reaffirm the principles that guided my service, shaping a truly representative democracy, grounded in my great-grandfather, Chief Hishka's legacy and my grandfather Jerry McCardi, who built the foundation of the original signer of the Macau Constitution. It has been my journey to showcase the transformative power of indigenous voices in politics. With this support of Thurston County and the dedicated staff of the Port of Olympia and my fellow Commissioners who have been dedicated to the collaboration, this has enabled me along with our Commission to drive meaningful change, championing environmental stewardship, community trust and collaborative governance. Our collective efforts have been strengthened by prioritizing transparency, accountability, and driving the economy in Thurston County and across the country. Let us continue to ignite the positive change, investing in the next seven generations. Together, we have crafted a democracy that authentically reflects the vibrant communities that we are elected to serve. I

appreciate and thank you, every one of you, the staff and of the Commission for the opportunity to serve Thurston County. To our dedicated Port staff, I want to express my sincere gratitude for your hard work and commitment to serving our community. Your efforts are essential to the Port's mission, fostering a sustainable local economy while investing in protecting our environment. Your expertise and dedication are truly appreciated as we work together on important initiatives such as the Budd Inlet cleanup, and modernizing our facilities, ensuring that the Port remains a vital asset for Thurston County for generations to come. Thank you for your valuable service and ongoing collaboration. Respectfully, Maggie Sanders, Vice President of the Port of Olympia. At this time, I would like to formally present this paddle, that I crafted to the Port of Olympia to be accepted as a gift to the Port, a permanent reminder of our shared commitment to paddling together and forging a brighter future for all communities that we serve."

At that time, Commissioner Sanders presented Alex Smith with a wooden paddle that she hand-crafted.

Other Business

Debby Pattin, seven-year member of the Port of Olympia Citizens Advisory Committee, said a few words of thanks for Commissioner Amy Harding: "We thank Amy Harding not only for her accomplishments, but Washington Public Ports Association (WPPA) recently presented her with a Life Member award for her work on their Finance Committee even though she was only a member of that association for four years. It shows the quality of her work and how much it is appreciated. She has been a real benefit to the Port of Olympia because of her real estate expertise and her commitment to industrial land, because we know that industrial land is where jobs are created and maintained and how we get to economic opportunities. We appreciate her positive attitude and inspirational quotes."

Commissioner Vasavada said a few words in honor of Commissioner Sanders. "'Keeper of the Beach,' you chaired the Sea Level Rise Committee with me and lead the way. Legacy of Chief Hishka, even today bringing dignity and ceremony to our shared government. Warrior for transparency. Your journey that led you here, your leadership here, and the road in front of you. Ambassador for the stars and lands beyond property. Literally a NASA ambassador, but so much more in your elected capacity. Master of administration, who never missed a word of our readings, steward of prosperity as you represented the 4th District of Thurston County, and most of all, fellow paddler. Your steady friendship and true companionship to each of us has helped us grow together. Thank you, Commissioner Sanders."

Alex Smith, Executive Director, commended Commissioner Iyall for his term served: "Commissioner Iyall was elected to a three-member Port Commission in 2021. That was right after the world was shut down during the COVID pandemic. He was the first Native American Port Commissioner in Washington State, giving us an incredible amount of experience and diversity and perspective. He came to the Port as the CEO of Medicine Creek Enterprises, where he oversaw a portfolio of businesses owned by the Nisqually Tribe. All of which generated hundreds of jobs, significant revenues, and long-term economic growth for the tribe in the region. And what luck for the Port of Olympia that he brought all that expertise to us to help in our economic development mission. He's also a native of the South Sound. He attended high school in Tumwater at Tumwater High, where he apparently was a bit of a football stud. He also went to college at Washington State and got both his undergraduate and graduate degrees. He's been

a steadfast advocate for labor throughout his tenure. He's a member of the brick layers and allied crafts workers union, and he's advocated for fair labor practices and corporate responsibility in all the work that he does. He cared very deeply about us getting a fair contract with ILWU 47B and was instrumental in the Port adopting a policy that requires the use of apprentices on larger Port projects. During his four years here, the Port increased to five commissioners. We reduced debt. We invested in environmental stewardship. We strengthened relationships with labor and tribes among other relationships. And we are so grateful for his leadership, guiding the port with a sense of partnership, financial stewardship, and a sense of purpose."

Alex Smith, Executive Director, gave each out-going Commissioner a token of appreciation, a framed photo of the Port of Olympia.

Meeting Announcements

A list of upcoming events was displayed on the screen for viewers to see upcoming Commission and POCAC meetings. The next Commission meeting will be held on Monday, January 12, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Port of Olympia Board of Commissioners, the Monday, December 8, 2025, regular meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

PORT OF OLYMPIA COMMISSION

Jasmine Vasavada, President

Sarah Montano, Secretary