



Commission Meeting Minutes Monday, June 22, 2026

Call to Order

Commission President Jasmine Vasavada called a regular meeting of the Port of Olympia Board of Commissioners to order and open to the public at 4:00 p.m., Monday, June 22, 2026, at the Percival Plaza at 626 Columbia Street NW, Suite 1B, Olympics Room, in Olympia, Washington 98501.

Present

Commissioners: Jasmine Vasavada – President, Sarah Montano – Vice President, Joel Hansen – Secretary, Jerry Toompas and Krag Unsoeld.

Staff: Alex Smith, Executive Director, Chris Pierce-Wright, General Counsel; Warren Hendrickson, Director of Operations; Shawn Gilbertson, Director of Environmental Planning and Programs; Mike Reid, Director of Community and Economic Development; Chris Paolini, Airport Senior Manager; James Sommer, Public Works Program Manager; Taber Lee, Marketing and Outreach Senior Manager; Britt Hoglund, Lease Administrator; and Missy Goodell, Commission Coordinator.

Guest: Matt Ishler, Executive Director, New Market Vocational Skills Center.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Hansen moved to approve the agenda, Commissioner Unsoeld seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director Report

Alex Smith, Executive Director, reported on recent Port activities. She congratulated Swantown Marina Senior Manager, Damien Egan, as he recently graduated from the Leadership Thurston County program. A tour of the Marine Terminal was given to our downtown neighbors from Harbor Heights, a 55+ community. Two members of our environmental team, Barb Tope and Megan Folkers, were invited to speak to the Department of Ecology's regulatory team about how the Port of Olympia achieves compliance with the Industrial Stormwater Permit on the Marine Terminal.

The Olympia-Lacey FanZone kicked off on Juneteenth at the Port Plaza. The Shoestring Circus, located next to Swantown Marina, kicked off their three-week stay on the Port Peninsula. The annual Olympic Air Show, held Father's Day weekend at the Port's Olympia Regional Airport, was once again a great success. Port of Olympia Community Advisory Committee (POCAC) member recruitment is now open with information available on the Port's website with the recruitment period closing on July 31. From July 20 to 22, 2026, the WPPA will be hosting the 2026 Commissioner Seminar in Wenatchee, Washington; several Port of Olympia Commissioners will be attending this seminar.

In addition, Alex reminded everyone of the ways they can communicate with the Commission. She stated there is a great deal of information available on the Port's website and encouraged everyone to check it out.

Public Comment

Two individuals provided public comments regarding use of Port funds and the Marine Terminal warehouse.

Commission Response to Public Comment / Follow-Up to Public Comment

Commissioners provided input to public comments.

Partner Spotlight

New Market Vocational Skills Center. Matt Ishler, Executive Director of the New Market Vocational Skills Center, presented information on the New Market Vocational Skills Center, which opened in 1986 as an educational venture between local school districts and is a public school offering technical training for high school students. New Market is a consortium of 12 school districts including Adna, Centralia, Napavine, North Thurston, Oakville, Olympia, Rainier, Rochester, Shelton, Tenino, Tumwater, and Yelm. Their vision is to prepare students for post-secondary education, apprenticeships, or entrance into the workforce by offering the opportunity to be trained in technical career areas too expensive for a single district to fund. Students are transported to New Market from their home high schools. They spend half their day at the sending school and half at the Skills Center.

Information shared included the programs and credentialled classes that are offered at New Market Vocational Skills Center, their enrollment numbers, and the new aviation program that will start in the fall of 2026.

Consent Calendar

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

Action Calendar

None.

Action/Other Calendar

None.

Advisory Calendar

Contract Award: Building Tenant Improvements (Port HQ). James Sommer, Public Works Program Manager, briefed the Commission on a contract prepared to cover the costs of tenant improvement designs to the recently purchased building which will house the Port's administrative and maintenance staff and maintenance shop. The project history, scope, how it aligns with the Port's Vision 2050 plan, and the contract timeline was shared.

Next steps are to obtain Commission approval to award the building tenant improvements of the Port HQ contract to the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder at the July 13, 2026, Commission meeting.

Electric Aircraft Charging Station Grant Application. Chris Paolini, Airport Senior Manager, shared that at the direction of the Port Commission, staff prioritized exploring infrastructure projects that would support the aviation industry's transition to electric aircraft as a renewable energy alternative.

In 2026, the most feasible charging station site was identified and the Port partnered with an aviation tenant for a full-service solution. In mid-May 2026, WSDOT announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity under the Sustainable Aviation Grant program to fund projects during the 2027-2029 biennium. Following that announcement, Port airport staff, consultants, and the Director of WSDOT Aviation met with representatives from Beta Technologies during an airport site visit to discuss feasibility.

This project would consist of the following: 1) Increasing Puget Sound Energy (PSE) electrical power at the edge of airport property from 208-volt 3-phase power to 480-volt 3-phase power; 2) Installation of approximately 750 feet of electrical conduit from the PSE equipment to the new electric aircraft charging station site; and 3) Installation of a fully operational electric aircraft charging station.

The benefits of this project, along with funding and cost information, and the project timeline was shared. This project is in alignment with Vision 2050 goals. Environmental considerations were also discussed: The NEPA process for this project is in process and will be complete prior to the start of any construction activity. It is anticipated this project will be exempt under Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 1050-1G; B-2.4 (f) (n) and (o). The SEPA process for this project was complete shortly after the agenda packets for this meeting were completed. This project will be SEPA exempt under Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-800 (23) (c). It was also shared that this project aligns with the Port's desire to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as presented in the Port's Draft Sustainability Action Plan and Strategy.

Commission action will be requested at the July 13, 2026 meeting to adopt the proposed resolution and authorize the Executive Director to submit a WSDOT grant application due by July 17, 2026.

New Market Vocational Skills Center. Chris Paolini, Airport Senior Manager, briefed the Commission on a lease with New Market Vocational Skills Center (NMSC) which would create new airport revenue by occupying a portion of the airport's vacant terminal building. The proposed lease to NMSC would include exclusive use of approximately 1,610 square feet of office and classroom space and access to, and shared use of, approximately 1,396 square feet of common area. The airport administration office would occupy the remaining 1,564 square feet of office space on the north side of the building. As mentioned, this arrangement would also allow the airport to vacate its current office building, making it available for lease.

In addition to direct revenue benefits, this lease provides an important partnership opportunity for the Port to support NMSC, and the community, in offering a new high school aviation program that introduces students to various career paths available within the aviation industry.

Lease terms were shared; a lease agreement will be brought before the Commission at the July 13, 2026, Commission meeting.

This project aligns with the Port's Vision 2050 focus areas, goals and action items.

Commissioner Reports/Discussion

Commissioner Unsoeld attended a POCAC meeting and a Tumwater Chamber of Commerce meeting. He also attended the first Olympia-Lacey FIFA watch party held at the Port Plaza.

Commissioner Toompas reported that he attended a Port intranet training and found it informative.

Commissioner Montano attended the Thurston County Chamber Forum, who hosted the Leadership Tomorrow graduation. She reported that Experience Olympia and Beyond has a new CEO.

Commissioner Hansen reported that he attended a meeting with Port staff and representatives from Capitol Little League where they discussed how to move forward with utilizing the property at the Olympia Regional Airport and exploring the possibility of a state grant opportunity. Commissioner Hansen attended the June POCAC meeting, and an agricultural infrastructure summit at the Tenino Ag Park, where updates were provided on projects in the region. He attended the Olympia-Lacey FIFA FanZone viewing and the Olympic Air Show. He intends to attend the Industrial Symbiosis conference that will occur next week.

Commissioner Vasavada shared that she also attended the meeting with Capitol Little League, and she volunteered at the Port's water station set up at the Olympia-Lacey FIFA FanZone area.

Additional Public Comment

None.

Other Business

Commissioner Vasavada reminded her fellow Commissioners about the Executive Session to be held tomorrow, June 23 at 5:00 p.m., regarding the performance of a public employee.

Commissioner Hansen requested that staff provide a brief presentation regarding taxes collected and exactly what those funds can be spent on, as subsidizing port tenants is not an allowable resource.

Meeting Announcements

A list of upcoming events was displayed on the screen for viewers to see upcoming Commission and POCAC meetings. Executive Director Smith stated the next Commission meeting will be held on Monday, July 13, at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Port of Olympia Board of Commissioners, the Monday, June 22, 2026, regular meeting was adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

PORT OF OLYMPIA COMMISSION

Jasmine Vasavada, President

Joel Hansen, Secretary

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