



Commission Meeting Minutes Monday, July 27, 2026

Call to Order

Commission Vice President Sarah Montano 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, July 27, 2026, at the Percival Plaza at 626 Columbia Street NW, Suite 1B, Olympics Room, in Olympia, Washington 98501.

Present

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

Attended Virtually: Commissioner Jasmine Vasavada – President.

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; and Missy Goodell, Commission Coordinator.

Guests: Bob Wubbena, Port of Olympia Community Advisory Committee (POCAC) Member and POCAC Budd Inlet Subcommittee Chair; Elissa Gertler, Executive Director, Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC); and POCAC Members: Sue Patnude and Jim Thornton.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Hansen moved to approve the agenda; Commissioner Unsoeld seconded the motion. Executive Director Alex Smith called for a Point of Order, requesting to amend the agenda, removing agenda item H.4. BT-OH LLC (United Parcel Service) lease Amendment #3 from the Consent Calendar; it requires further discussion and will be moved to a future Commission meeting. Commissioner Unsoeld seconded the motion. Amended motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director Report

Alex Smith, Executive Director, reported on recent Port activities. She announced that the Thurston County Rescue Dive Team, a multi-agency unit specializing in underwater search, rescue, and recovery, recently used the Port's Marine Terminal as a training site. Last week, the Port hosted 16 students from Tumwater School District's Forest and Stream Ecology CTE summer course for an educational tour of the Port Peninsula.

The Port hosted the first of two Summer Nights at the Port concerts, and it was a success. Our own Marine Terminal maintenance team member, Fank Boss, kicked off the evening with his local bend, Going For Bronze. Over Lakefair weekend, Port Commissioners participated in the annual parade, where they were recognized for their service to the community. Commissioner Hansen was joined by his son, who rode alongside him, to see firsthand his father's role at the Port and his commitment to public service.

Last week, the City Heritage Commission approved the delisting of the tugboat Sand Man and endorsed the Port's plan to carefully dismantle and preserve it in partnership with the Historic Maritime Foundation. For organizations interested in participating, the criteria, artifact inventory, and application materials are available on the Port's website. The POCAC recruitment period closes this Friday, July 31. All details on where, when, and how to apply are available on the Port's website.

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

One individual provided public comment regarding environmental stewardship.

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

None.

Partner Spotlight

Port of Olympia Community Advisory Committee (POCAC) Story Map. Bob Wubbena, POCAC Member and POCAC Budd Inlet Subcommittee Chair (recently renamed to Environmental Stewardship Subcommittee), presented five story maps that were created by Port staff and Subcommittee members, that tell the Port of Olympia story in a positive, constructive way and show the good work that has been completed over the years. The five maps include 1) History of the Port of Olympia and Budd Inlet; 2) Cascade Pole Site Remediation, 3) Stormwater on the Port Peninsula, 4) Sea Level Rise, and 5) Budd Inlet Cleanup.

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

Freight Planning Strategy Update. Elissa Gertler, Executive Director, Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC), gave a presentation on freight mobility, why it matters, how it underpins daily life and the regional economy; how its reliability affects businesses, emergency response and access; how freight movement shares space with communities and local streets; and how decisions involve tradeoffs across mobility, safety, and livability. TRPC's specialty is ensuring that a connected, regional system that crosses jurisdictional lines is studied.

It was shared that TRPC is the regional transportation planning organization. They coordinate transportation planning for all of Thurston County's transportation systems and they distribute federal transportation funds and perform analysis (transportation modeling, population and employment forecasting).

Their current project is to examine the freight system at a statewide level. The purpose of this project is to 1) develop a clear picture of freight movement in the region; 2) identify key system constraints and pressure points; 3) assess future freight conditions and trends; 4) define where regional coordination can improve outcomes; and 5) inform planning and investment that supports freights and economic vitality. This examination should result in informed decisions related to planning and investments.

It was stressed that this project is not primarily a project list or near-term capital program. Nor is it a replacement for work led by WSDOT or local jurisdictions; or an evaluation of specific facilities or their long-term role in the region. To date, work completed includes an initial review of freight flows and system conditions; a peer MPO research; initial stakeholder conversations; project introduction to Council; and drafting of project goals.

Their five goals are: 1) to understand current and future freight demand; 2) to ensure reliable and resilient regional freight movement; 3) to ensure a safe freight system for all users; 4) to be part of a connected and coordinated regional freight network; and 5) to create and maintain strategic and implementable freight investments. Next steps were also shared.

Commissioner Reports/Discussion

Commissioner Unsoeld reported that he attended the July POCAC meeting.

Commissioner Toompas reported that he attended and provided opening comments at the Port's Summer Nights at the Port event. He also attended the Yelm Chamber of Commerce Forum.

Commissioner Vasavada requested an update on the recently-attended WPPA Commissioner Seminar and she would like to revisit Commissioner assignments to ensure adequate coverage.

Commissioner Montano attended the WPPA 2026 Commissioner Seminar.

Commissioner Hansen reported that he attended the Tenino Chamber of Commerce Forum, the Lakefair Parade, and attended an event at the Evergreen State College Longhouse, hosted by Maritime Blue, showcasing the Squaxin Tribal Maritime History project.

Additional Public Comment

Two individuals provided comments regarding transportation and climate change issues.

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

Commissioner Hansen provided information related to public comment.

Other Business

None.

Meeting Announcements

A list of 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, August 10, at 4:00 p.m. at Tenino City Hall in their Council Chambers.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Port of Olympia Board of Commissioners, the Monday, July 27, 2026, regular meeting was adjourned at 5:41 p.m.

PORT OF OLYMPIA COMMISSION

Jasmine Vasavada, President

Joel Hansen, Secretary