PORT OF CENTRALIA
Established 1986

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Minutes
Regular Meeting of the
PORT OF CENTRALIA
February 4, 2026
Port of Centralia Administrative Office & Via Teleconference
3:00 PM

Attendees: Commissioners: Peter Lahmann, Kyle Markstrom, and Ally Pickard
Port Staff: Amy Graber, Interim Executive Director
Public: Jan Banevich; Eric Sonnenberg; Cynthia Mudge; Gary Odegaard; and Brian Dow
Teleconference: 15 unknown callers

1) **Pledge of Allegiance/Call Meeting to Order/Introductions:** Commissioner Lahmann called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2) **Approval of Agenda:** Commissioner Markstrom made a motion to approve the February 4, 2026, agenda. Commissioner Pickard seconded the motion. The motion carried.

3) **Good of the Order/Public Comment:** Commissioner Lahmann opened the meeting to public comment and stated the rules regarding public comment.

   Jan Banevich, of Centralia, suggested a citizen committee to address public complaints against Port Commissioners.

   Cynthia Mudge, executive director of the Centralia-Chehalis Chamber of Commerce, announced several upcoming events and encouraged the public to vote.

   Brian Dow, of Centralia, commented on online public comment and the executive director search.

   Scott Tennant, of Chehalis, asked how many people have applied for the executive director position. Commissioner Lahmann replied that the position was not open for applications yet.

4) **Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Markstrom made a motion to approve the January 21, 2026, regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Pickard seconded the motion. The motion carried.

5) **Approval of Warrants:** Commissioner Markstrom made a motion to approve warrants 24779 through 24803 with an aggregate amount of $183,432.85. Commissioner Pickard seconded the motion. The motion carried.

6) **Old Business:**

a) **Executive Director Search:** Commissioner Lahmann informed the public that a special meeting was scheduled for February 11, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. to discuss the executive director search.

b) **City of Centralia SEPA Appeal:** Amy Graber reported that the City of Centralia is officially withdrawing their SEPA MDNS for its 2025 Centralia municipal code and zoning map. The City of Centralia has also scheduled a closed-record hearing regarding the Norwegian Woods residential subdivision SEPA the Port appealed for March 2, 2026. She added that Ryan Barrett with Lewis County is working on scheduling mediation with the Port, Lewis County, and City of Centralia regarding the City's development moratorium.

Commissioner Markstrom made a motion to table the discussion to the next regular meeting.

Commissioner Pickard wanted to separate the issues as opposed to tabling all of them due to the timeline with Norwegian Woods.

Commissioner Markstrom stated that the Port's action had already been set on Norwegian Woods and the Port's counsel will be representing the Port at the hearing, unless there was going to be action to withdraw.

Commissioner Pickard said the Port has spent $44,835 in legal fees on Norwegian Woods and said the Port has wasted money. Commissioner Markstrom disagreed and the money spent on the SEPA appeals would protect the Harrison Avenue traffic corridor the Port has created capacity for. Commissioner Lahmann said there were three separate issues and thought the Port was not going to expend any additional money on the SEPA appeals until the hearing. Commissioner Pickard said the City said it will be charging mitigation fees after the building plans are finalized and the Port is not asking for anything beyond withdrawing the MDNS. Commissioner Markstrom said the City was not withdrawing the SEPA on the Norwegian Woods project. Commissioner Pickard said she did not expect the City to withdraw it because the City will be collecting traffic mitigation fees, so the SEPA approval included a carveout for the fees to be collected further down the road. Commissioner Markstrom replied that was not correct and the City has already approved the SEPA, issued an MDNS on the SEPA, and then is incorrectly now trying to go back and assert a traffic impact fee after the SEPA has closed. He said that Port counsel has given good guidance on the issue and he was confident with the Port's position, which is that the correct procedures are put in place going forward for all development in the future, to eliminate confusion, and to ensure the traffic corridors are dealt with accordingly. Commissioner Pickard thanked Commissioner Markstrom for "mansplaining" to her and asked him to settle down and listen to her. Commissioner Lahmann intervened for order. Commissioner Pickard said the City's Notice of Application and Designation outlined Norwegian Woods would be paying traffic mitigation fees. Commissioner Markstrom asked at what future date and what amount. Commissioner Pickard said that would be determined at the time of civil and construction plan review. Commissioner Markstrom replied there was a correct process in place for the City to follow that allow builders and developers to know up front what they are in for and the Port's legal counsel has provided clear guidance on it. Commissioner Pickard said the City has said it does not want to

continue with traffic mitigation fees, but the process to change it is expensive and not in its budget, so the fees are the best tool it has. She asked if it was working for everyone but the Port, why the Port is arguing against it and forcing the City to change its process. Commissioner Lahmann said there had been confusion if the City had a traffic plan and he wanted to see what the City's final determination was before the Port steps away from it because it impacts the Port.

Commissioner Markstrom reiterated a motion to table any further discussion or action regarding the SEPA appeals for Norwegian Woods and the City's development regulations pending Port counsel review. Commissioner Lahmann seconded the action. Commissioner Pickard opposed the motion. The motion carried.

Commissioner Pickard said she had been talking to the City to determine what it is willing to do versus what the Port is willing to do regarding and finding a middle ground. She said she did not see a future where the City was going to roll over on the 250,000-square-feet distribution center ban in city limits, but City staff has proposed an allowance of those same structures within the UGA on a conditional use permit.

Commissioner Pickard made a motion that the Port proceed with direct communication negotiations with the City to accept the ban on warehouses over 250,000 square feet in the city limits and an allowance of larger distribution centers in the UGA with a conditional use permit and to appoint a Commissioner to go forward with those negotiations. Commissioner Lahmann seconded the motion.

Commissioner Markstrom said the appropriate place for those discussions would be in mediation and asked why the City was discussing the issue with a single Commissioner. He said a conditional use permit is a narrowly defined tool what would not allow LPC to continue with its plans. Commissioner Lahmann said that he was opposed to the motion because it limited what the Port could do. He said the City's job was to stay out of the Port's way so the Commissioners can do their job, and the moratorium was going to hurt the Port well into the future with the message that the City is not interested in development by cutting LPC off.

Commissioner Pickard voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Lahmann and Commissioner Markstrom opposed the motion. The motion failed.

7) **Essential Updates:**

a) **Executive Director Report:** Amy Graber gave an update on ongoing Port projects. She said that Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad will prepare an easement for property between Kuper Road and Foron Road for track extensions to alleviate train congestion on Reynolds Road, which Port counsel will review before she presents it to the Commissioners. Commissioner Markstrom commented the project had been in the works for a couple of years.

Amy Graber gave a brief budget update and overviewed some budget cuts that were made.

Commissioner Reports: Commissioner Pickard read a brief statement about her vision for the Port. She reported that she attended the Washington State Department of Ecology open house regarding the TransAlta site cleanup and a Centralia City council meeting.

Commissioner Markstrom reported that he attended a Washington State Department of Ecology meeting discussing a potential water retention facility on the upper Chehalis River.

Commissioner Lahmann reported that he attended a Washington State Department of Ecology meeting discussing a potential water retention facility on the upper Chehalis River and stated he was in favor of the project. He also attended a meeting discussing the North County Industrial Access project.

Gary Odegaard commented on the funding for the North County Industrial Access project.

Commissioner Lahmann stated that Rogers Machinery Company had two director positions open. He said a constituent had asked about the accrual of the vacation payout for the previous executive director's termination agreement. Commissioner Markstrom deferred to Port counsel.

8) **Adjourn:** Commissioner Markstrom made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Pickard seconded the motion. The motion carried. Commissioner Lahmann adjourned the meeting at 3:49 p.m.

Peter Lahmann
COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER