

PORT OF SEATTLE
MEMORANDUM

COMMISSION AGENDA
STAFF BRIEFING

Item No. 7a

Date of Meeting February 5, 2013

DATE: January 31, 2013
TO: Tay Yoshitani, Chief Executive Officer
FROM: Mike Merritt, Manager, Puget Sound Government Relations
Clare Gallagher, Manager, State Government Relations
Beth Osborne, Manager, Federal Government Relations
SUBJECT: Implementation of New Bylaw: Potentially Significant Legislative Issues

SYNOPSIS:

The Port of Seattle is a public agency that creates jobs by advancing trade and commerce, promoting industrial growth, and stimulating economic development. Public policy advocated by Port representatives reflects this mission and the goals of the Century Agenda to:

- Position the Puget Sound region as a premier international logistics hub
- Advance the region as a leading tourism destination and business gateway
- Promote small business growth and workforce development
- Be the greenest and most energy efficient port in North America

The following is a summary of potentially significant public policy legislation for the Commission's consideration to begin implementation of an amendment to the bylaws. Government Relations is also working on suggested Guiding Principles for public policy and will update the Commission on those efforts at a future time.

BACKGROUND:

Potentially significant legislative issues – ongoing areas and port interest

- The port supports efforts to improve freight mobility and will advocate for effective freight routes.
 - Will work to secure a heavy-haul truck corridor in area near container terminals to attract additional cargo and improve the port's competitive position in the marketplace.

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- Will support efforts to create a national and state freight strategy that benefits our region.
 - Will work to ensure that PSRC transportation policies reflect regional freight-mobility needs and ports receive funding for critical projects of regional significance.
- The port supports transportation infrastructure investment.
 - The port supports transportation infrastructure investments and equitable benefit for freight mobility projects.
 - The port opposes funding for projects which disproportionately tax freight conveyors and impact the gateway's competitiveness.
- The port opposes tax policy proposals that adversely affect port competitiveness.
 - The port opposes taxes that would harm port competitiveness in maintaining and increasing trade through the Puget Sound gateway.
- The port supports efforts to increase economic development through tourism and business growth.
- The port supports local, state, and federal investments in air quality improvements, congestion relief, and habitat restoration.

Potentially significant state legislative issues – ongoing areas and port interest

- The port supports Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) funding for clean-up of contaminated sites and preservation of funding.
 - The port supports the dedication of MTCA funds first and foremost to clean-ups of contaminated lands, as originally envisioned by the citizens' initiative.
 - The port will watch the impact on port clean-ups and future obligations of the Port from any broadening of the uses for MTCA funds.

Potentially significant local legislative issues – ongoing areas and port interest

- The port advocates for port interests in Seattle City Council and King County Council review of proposed basketball and hockey arena in the city's Stadium District.
 - Will work with business and community stakeholders in developing strategies to ensure a proper site is chosen and that mitigation for impacts to port operations is included in any future deal to build an arena.
 - Will work with City of Seattle on effective land-use and economic development policies to encourage maritime and industrial job growth and to protect the industrial areas from commercial encroachment.

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- The port works with WSDOT, City of Seattle and stakeholders on design of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Program and Central Waterfront public space to ensure freight mobility, connectivity between industrial areas, and access to cruise facilities; and that these projects minimize impacts to port operations and waterfront businesses.
- The port supports tolling as a potential solution to transportation management and funding for major projects that benefit the port and regional economy; however tolling revenues should be used for system improvements in the areas collected, should not cause additional congestion in terminal areas, result in disproportionate costs to freight, or harm to the port's competitive or economic position.
- The port will watch local legislation affecting port competitiveness and business climate of the region.

Potentially significant federal legislative issues – ongoing areas and port interest

- The port advocates reforms to the Harbor Maintenance Tax (HMT) that create a level playing field for U.S. container ports.
- The port supports sustainable security and infrastructure funding for airports that improve economic development and passenger safety.
 - One example is the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC), which provides local governments with flexibility to charge a user fee on passengers to fund limited types of infrastructure investments that benefit passengers such as airport capacity, safety, security, and improve the environment. While the decision whether to levy the fee is determined by local elected governments, the U.S. Congress has capped the fee at \$4.50 since 2000 (currently worth roughly half of its intended value). On October 28, 1997, the Port Commission passed a resolution 3253 in favor of PFCs; and, later in 2001, the Port Commission used their local authority to collect the maximum amount allowed by Congress, which has helped build Concourse A, noise mitigation projects and reconstruct the satellite transit system at Sea-Tac.
 - The port supports trade legislation that increases international commerce.
 - The port supports immigration reform legislation that improves the visa waiver process, or that otherwise facilitates the process of obtaining visas for business and tourist travel to the U.S.
 - The port supports legislation that streamlines passenger and cargo screening, while improving security at the airport or seaport that also protects personal privacy.

Potentially significant legislative issues – policy areas in 2013-14:

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- Creating business and employment opportunities at Port facilities.
 - The port will watch proposals regarding business growth and workforce issues that directly affect port facilities.
- The port is watching legislation that addresses the fiscal cliff and deficit reduction and is opposed to provisions that adversely impact port operations.

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS:

- November 27, 2012.
- January 8, 2012 (freight policy roundtable).