

From: Linda Carlson <lindacarlson@earthlink.net>

Sent: Friday, June 28, 2019 8:04 AM

To: Colleen McAleer <colleenm@portofpa.com>; Steven Burke <stevenb@portofpa.com>; Connie Beauvais <connieb@portofpa.com>; Karen Goschen <kareng@portofpa.com>

Subject: The importance of keeping JWM public

I write to express my concern about the possibility of the John Wayne Marina being acquired or managed by a government entity other than the port district, Clallam County or the City of Sequim. Despite the Port's recent statement that any discussions regarding the marina's future will be "transparent," there is a strong perception by many of us in Sequim that our concerns are not being heard. Among the issues that I see are:

- * A bias against Port funds being spent in eastern Clallam County is being perpetuated. We in Sequim have repeatedly been told that those in the western end of the county (which per the 2010 census is only 18 per cent of the county population) do not want to "subsidize" facilities in the east, regardless of the fact that those who use the marina facilities generate funds that benefit the entire county. I haven't discussed this with people in Neah Bay, Forks and such locations, so I don't know if the port commissioners and staff have clarified to residents of the west end how the marina directly---and more importantly, indirectly---generates cash and tax revenue for the county.

Those who dine in the marina's restaurant, rent the marina meeting room, hire caterers for on-site events, and use the marina's transient docks all spend money in Clallam County. In addition, of course, there is the revenue from those who rent slips or pay to launch boats and from the Dockside Restaurant's and Sequim Bay Yacht Club's rental of space. Whether they live in Clallam and Jefferson counties, or come here seasonally, these people all support local businesses and contribute to local sales tax revenue.

- * A perception that the Marina only benefits those who rent the approximately 300 slips, and that these are wealthy people who don't deserve any benefit of taxpayer-owned facilities. This is inaccurate:
 - The marina functions as an admission-free, handicapped-accessible waterfront park, probably used by hundreds each day, and many more when events are scheduled. As early as dawn, there are people walking dogs and pausing on the point to watch boats come and go. There are people launching kayaks and in fair weather, children on the beach. It is much more protected, with more amenities, than Marlyn Nelson County Park at Port Williams.
 - Those who rent slips at the marina are no more likely to be affluent than those who own recreational vehicles, jet skis, snowmobiles and trailered boats.
- * The importance of conforming to the state Shoreline Management Act, which is explicit about the preservation of natural shorelines and the importance of increasing public access. As noted on <https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Shoreline-coastal-management/Shoreline-coastal-planning/Shoreline-Management-Act-SMA>:

As much as possible, shorelines should be reserved for "water-oriented" uses, including those that are "water-dependent," "water-related," and for "water-enjoyment."

Preferred uses for shorelines of statewide significance are designed to:

- *Recognize and protect statewide over local interests*
- *Preserve the natural character of the shoreline*
- *Result in long-term rather than short-term benefits*
- *Protect shoreline resources and environment*
- *Increase public access to publicly-owned shoreline areas*
- *Expand recreational shoreline opportunities for the public*

Finally, I am concerned that there is a lack of awareness of the importance of a publicly-owned marina to the Sequim Bay Yacht Club. The Club obviously benefits from a waterfront venue open to the public and uses the marina for its events. Like the majority of Club members, I am not a boat owner, but because the only local rowing group is offered by the yacht club, I have joined. This organization is open to anyone, and its dues are kept reasonable to make membership affordable. I have worked on the club's public Opening Day activities, its recent fundraising for a Port Angeles teenager's rowing program, and its annual fundraiser for Volunteer Hospice of Clallam County.

Most Clallam County residents are likely unaware that the Sequim Bay Yacht Club is the single-most important donor to the Port Angeles-based VHOCC. It is the one donor that makes huge donations every single year. In the past quarter century, the club has contributed more than \$360,000. Without access to a publicly-owned and managed marina for its fundraiser, it is questionable how the yacht club could make contributions such as that in 2018, which exceeded \$31,000. These funds are used for the hundreds of families the VHOCC serves each year—as far west as Joyce.

Most sincerely,

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Ms. Carlson-

Thank you for taking the time to share your concerns regarding the future of the John Wayne Marina in your recent correspondence (date 6/28/2019).

All of us at the Port fully agree with the importance of keeping and increasing public use and access of the waterfront. In fact, “public access” was the first item the Port listed in the criteria to evaluate any conceptual proposals that the Port may receive through its Request For Information (RFI) process. As published in the RFI, we specifically asked that any response address how the following objectives would be met:

- i. Retain or expand public access to marina facilities, beach, picnic areas and parking
- ii. Support a vibrant community yacht club
- iii. Support community events
- iv. Support tribal aquaculture
- v. Collaborate with John Wayne Enterprises
- vi. Collaborate with the City of Sequim
- vii. Collaborate with Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe
- viii. Support the ecological well-being of Sequim Bay and surrounding habitats

As it studies possible options for the marina’s future, the Port will carefully consider how the public’s use and access of the waterfront will be preserved and promoted.

As you mentioned, the Port has committed to a fully transparent process. As part of that process, how proposals address all of the criteria listed above will be discussed in open public meetings. The Port will engage all segments of Clallam County (East, Central, and West) and identifiable stakeholders (including users, the private sector, municipal corporations, tribal governments, and state agencies) as it explores possible ownership and/or management alternatives for the marina. In addition, all communication, presentations, and studies are available on the Port’s JWM public information page:

<https://portofpa.com/385/John-Wayne-Marina-Public-Information>

The Port invites you to study the materials at the aforementioned link, and participate in future public meetings on this important community issue.

Moreover, you mention the marina’s economic impact. The marina is part of the portfolio of public assets the Port manages to promote our county’s economic well-being, and each asset contributes in different ways. A critical consideration, which you did not mention, is that the marina’s revenues do not cover its capital long-term upkeep. The day is coming when the marina will require major infrastructure replacement that the Port can’t afford. The Port engineering staff has estimated the future costs at \$26 million, and an independent study that the City of Sequim had completed estimated the cost at \$30 million. The Board of

Commissioners appreciates hearing from all constituents as it tries to balance how best to steward the public assets to address our communities' greatest economic development needs.

Finally, your correspondence emphasized the importance of the yacht club to our community. "Supporting a vibrant community yacht club" is another consideration important to the Port, which is why the RFI identified such as an objective to be addressed in any conceptual proposal to be evaluated. Unfortunately, some misinformation has been circulated suggesting decisions have already been made, that public access would be reduced or eliminated, and that the yacht club will be compromised. These rumors are false. Once the monthly club meetings resume in September, I'm hoping to speak to the yacht club to assure them that their concerns are being listened to and considered.

I hope this helps clarify the Port's position on these important topics. Because we are allowing 9 months for any potential responders to complete their due diligence, we are going through a time period where there simply isn't any news to report or share. Unfortunately, having no news can lead to assumptions that something must be happening "behind the scenes," but that simply isn't the case. Like you, we're all anxiously awaiting December 10th to see if a concept is proposed that warrants further due diligence and community discussions. In the meantime, if you have any additional questions, please let me know and I'll do my best to provide answers.

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