

# Great Ocean: ‘They’re kind of just going about what they’re doing without consultation’

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## The meeting that never came

Chen said he tried to set up a meeting earlier this month between the cities of Astoria, Warrenton, The Daily Astorian, Great Ocean and the Port, in an effort to gauge local support. But he was warned, he added, that the Port could abandon the proposal unless he went through them. Knight said the Port hasn’t been telling Chen who to talk to. Reasons for the cancellation range from Chen’s explanation to scheduling conflicts.

Chen said his counsel, Edward Chung of the Seattle-based Chung, Malhas, & Mantel, PLLC, specializing in immigration law, is trying to see how Great Ocean can speak to local politicians and gauge their support. “At the current stage, any discussion on a formalized offer is premature,” wrote Chung, who didn’t make himself available for an interview but responded by email. “At this juncture Great Ocean is conducting its own due diligence and seeking a definitive standpoint from the Port Authority.”

### Agreements, grants

Chen has said that if Great Ocean acquires the lease from the Port, it has an agreement in place to buy North Tongue Point from the Washington Development Company. The parties have all met in Missoula. “We have had talks with Great Ocean,” said Karl Swanson, a lawyer for Washington Corporations. “We do not have a definitive agreement with Great Ocean.” Chung wrote that the parties have no purchase agreement but are engaging in “due diligence and valuation analysis.”

When Washington Development Company bought the property from the Oregon Department of State Lands, Swanson said the company saw it as a possible foothold for one of the corporation’s Canadian companies. But it leased the property to the Port, he added, not wanting to be a long-distance landlord. Chen recently applied for two Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) grants with the Oregon Department of Transportation. Michael Rock, the interim manager of the TGM program, said Chen submitted two pre-

applications, a process meant to ferret out future grant possibilities. One was for \$2.1 million, related to intermodal transportation at North Tongue Point. The other was for \$12 million and concerned returning rail to South Tongue Point. Clatsop County Manger Scott Somers said his staff got a call from the ODOT in recent weeks saying the county and the Port were listed as co-applicants on a TGM grant. “I have never had any contact with Capt. Chen or his outfit,” said Somers, who Knight said he was tipped off by about the grant.

Rock said he’s still trying to figure out whether the Port and county were co-applicants or just jurisdictions for the project. And the pre-application amounts far outstrip the \$2.5 million a year the TGM program gives out for planning projects, he added, leading him to think that Chen’s proposals deal with construction. “It was kind of surprising on one hand, but not surprising on another hand,” Somers said about learning of the grant. “They’re kind of just going about what they’re doing without consultation.”

# Shelter: Each one includes a solar shower, smoke detector, food

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and it made my kicker start running quite hard. I had a little panic attack and it almost sent me to the emergency room.” With his idea formed into a nonprofit, Addams said, he plans to bring the portable shelters to more communities, including across the Columbia River to Astoria.

The nonprofit gave a shelter to a homeless man in Astoria earlier this month, but Addams had to come and take it back because the man kept setting it up where it is not allowed. Overnight camping is prohibited on all public rights-of-way, waterfront areas, public parks and public and private parking lots unless specifically permitted by the city, according to the city’s code. “We have told the recipient that he needs to move it from the waterfront where it is prohibited. It needs to be placed on private property,” Astoria Police Chief Brad Johnston said on his Facebook page at the time.

Ideally, Addams plans to acquire land where homeless people can bring their portable shelters. The land would be a safe haven to get people off of the streets and to a place with an address they could put on job applications, he said.

In the meantime, the nonprofit plans to still bring portable shelters over to Astoria. It will be up to the recipient to be lawful with them. “They are going to be there whether we give them a hut or not,” Addams said. “Huts are better than people’s belongings getting soaking wet.” In 2014, Clatsop County recorded 638 homeless families and 1,038 individuals, according to Clatsop Community Action. Astoria City Councilor Drew Herzig, who helped start a warming shelter in Astoria during the winter, said the council received a memo from Astoria Police about the portable shelters, but no discussions have happened yet about the possible impacts of the shelters in the city.

“I think it’s a good effort in general, but we have to be sure it is done in a way that is substantial,” Herzig said. Addams, with help from other volunteers, is putting the final touches on the sixth portable shelter. The shelters are built at



Mike Rodda, left, and Joseph Walker, right, both from Long Beach, Wash., fiberglass the outside of a rounded shelter. The rounded shelter is cheaper to build than previous models and takes less time to build.

Addams’ home in Ocean Park, Wash. A total of 39 people have helped with the project in one way or another. Long Beach resident Joseph Walker said he heard about the nonprofit through posts on Facebook. Walker has since helped build the shelters with Addams. “I caught some of what he was doing and thought it was a good thing,” Walker said. The first portable shelter Addams built took 40 days and cost about \$650. It was pieced together with spare parts from an old bed frame and bicycle. It weighed about 200 pounds. With funds raised through GoFundMe.com, the nonprofit has raised nearly \$9,000, which has gone toward supplies for the shelters. Now, the sixth shelter is being made with fiberglass and only weighs about 80 pounds. It costs about \$360 to make, nearly half the cost of the original. Each shelter includes amenities such as a solar shower,

smoke detector and food. “We tried to cover every possible angle we could to make them as safe as possible,” Addams said. The long-term goal for Hvgz Portable Homeless Shelters is to spread nationally. Addams said he is already being contacted by interested people in Portland, Maine, Detroit and cities in California. As the movement grows, Addams often thinks back to his time on the Big Island with his mother, who later died in 2010. He can relate to the people he is now helping. The look on the person’s face when Addams gives them a shelter makes his day. “That is the only payment we get from this,” Addams said.



Submitted photo — Huts for Hope Pvgz Addams, center, and Mike Rodda, right, drop off a portable shelter to a man in Astoria.

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