

# Boatyard: Facility's needs discussed during meeting

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- Kurt Englund, president of Englund Marine & Industrial Supply.

- Bill Hunsinger, a Port commissioner and commercial fisherman.

- Steve Fick, owner of Fishhawk Fisheries.

- Mark Covell, a boat owner and former diver and marine surveyor.

- Liz McMaster, whose family owns and operates a commercial fishing vessel.

- Tom Brownson, a boat owner and representative from the Astoria Yacht Club.

- Mark Meade, a boat owner, engineer, former Port Commission candidate and owner of Cascade Yacht Works and Meade Engineering.

- Tim Hill, owner of J&H Boatworks at North Tongue Point.

- Kevin Eaton, a J&H welder.

- Pat O'Grady, owner of Warrenton Auto & Marine Repair.

Notable exceptions to the committee membership brought up at the meeting included Astoria Forest Products' (AFP) Yard Manager Dave Daggett, who in August said the log yard would eventually need all of Pier 3, and Bill Cook, the former deputy director of the Port who helped create the Pier 3 boatyard and the Port's 2001 Central Waterfront Master Plan.

Cook tried to join the committee but was told it was full. He came to the Pier 1 offices Wednesday for the meeting, but said later that he was told his presence would be disruptive. In a later interview, Knight said Cook could provide some important information to the committee, but that has a controversial past with the Port. He didn't elaborate.

## Best boatyard

Wednesday, the committee discussed what the boatyard needs in terms of space, equipment, fees and best management practices. They discussed how to cover storage and boat removal costs by using time limits, advance payments, bonding and using boat owners' insurance.

Knight said improving the operation might come down to stricter enforcement, warn-



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

The Astoria boatyard opened in 2004. By 2006, businesses like Englund Marine & Industrial Supply, Columbia Pacific Marine Works and Bornstein Seafoods spent millions to move nearer to it.

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— Jim Knight

executive director of the Port of Astoria

ings and eventually fines.

"Your biggest issue seems to be paint," Fick said, adding that better practices and the central waterfront stormwater filtration system the Port is working on should be enough to take care of the copper pollution issues the Port has with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Ameliorating the DEQ issues arose as a short-term goal at the meeting.

DEQ notified the Port in August it would have to plan and submit a stormwater treatment plan to reduce the amount of copper making it into the Columbia River by Dec. 30. Knight, who started in late October as director, said the Port had two weeks

to develop the plan, which has been accepted and must be operational by June 30, 2016.

The plan involves pumping stormwater runoff off the central waterfront to a centralized biofiltration system. The Port planned to put the system on land it leases from the Oregon Department of State Lands. Knight said the Port is still negotiating with DSL. Knight added that AFP has been working on its own stormwater system for more than a year.

## Sharing Pier 3

While the original boatyard plans of the past might have been good, Knight said, the Port now leases Pier 3 to

Astoria Forest Products. In 2001, the Port finished its Central Waterfront Master Plan, in which all of Pier 3 was a boatyard.

The boatyard now occupies about 10 acres, including about 40 worksites, bounded on the north and west by logs. Log trucks, with little room for turning around after picking up logs, have been using the boatyard as part of a one-way road in and out of Pier 3.

Green, echoing the concerns of others, said Boatyard Manager Steve Barkemeyer

told him that the boatyard would eventually be reduced to 12 worksites to help the log operation.

Knight said he didn't know why that was getting around. He added the Port is only looking at moving five to six derelict boats from the boatyard to the space near Best Western Lincoln Inn, in order to compact the boatyard and stop log trucks from going through.

## Next steps

"It seems like the short-

term goal is to improve the operation of the existing boatyard," Knight said.

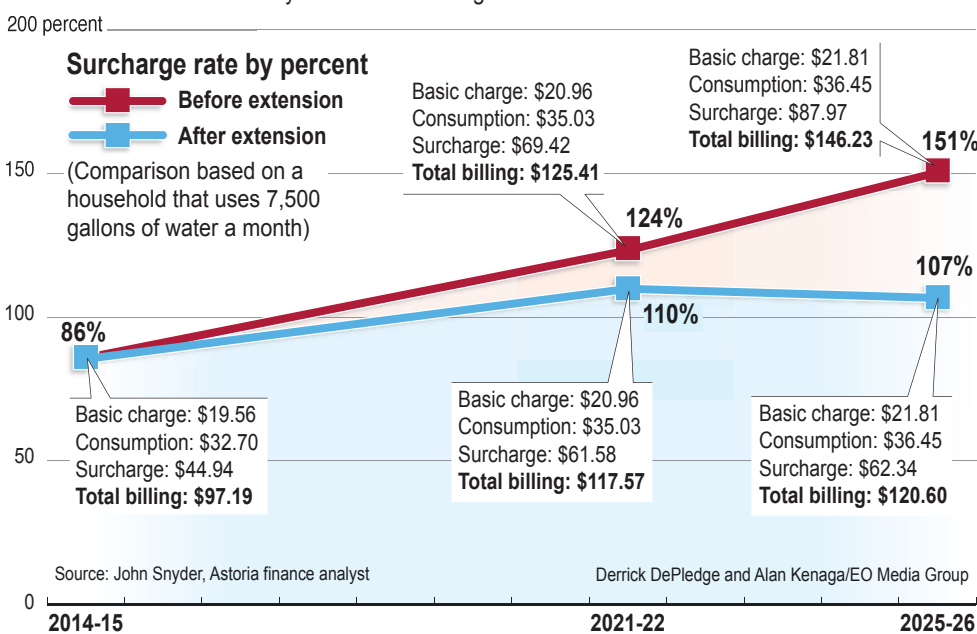
Various committee members volunteered to research other boatyards, their best practices and the usage rate of the Pier 3 boatyard.

They recommended additions to the committee, including Cook; Greg Morrill, president and co-owner of Bergerson Construction; and Willie Toristoja, who helps run WCT Marine and Construction Inc. at North Tongue Point.

Knight scheduled the committee to reconvene April 15, adding that he'd bring a photo of Pier 3 to show the breakout of land between the log yard and the boatyard.

## Softening the blow

Water ratepayers might not have to absorb such steep increases in a surcharge used to help finance Astoria's sewer improvement project. A six-year extension to complete the project by 2028 could enable the city to contain surcharge rate hikes.



## Sewer: City must pay debt service on loans used to finance the project

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The bad news for water ratepayers, however, is that they likely will have to endure a new round of rate increases as soon as next fiscal year.

John Snyder, a city financial analyst, told the Astoria City Council at a work session in March of the "agony" in balancing the charge for water and sewer and the surcharge to help keep the \$40 million sewer project on financial track.

The city must pay debt service on the loans used to finance the project and maintain a cash reserve. A surcharge will be imposed on ratepayers until the loans are paid off, which could be a few decades after the Combined Sewer Overflow project is completed.

## A better way

Astoria used to discharge wastewater into the Columbia River before a treatment plant was built in 1975, three years after the Clean Water Act, one of the nation's environmental milestones, became federal law in 1972.

The city's sewer system can handle wastewater and stormwater during sunny weather or light rain, Moore told the City Council. But in heavy rains, stormwater from streets and roof drains combines with wastewater and overwhelms the system, sending wastewater into the river.

Moore estimates the city has contained about 90 percent — or about 300 million gallons a year — of what used to flow into the river.

Unlike decades past, most of the wastewater that now reaches the river is diluted. "So we're

spending a lot of money for a little bit of gain," City Councilor Russ Warr observed.

The city has sought to satisfy the requirements of the Clean Water Act while not overburdening ratepayers. The construction that remains over the next decade — after the 16th Street phase this year — is among the most difficult and costly, including outfalls near the Port of Astoria and in Uppertown, where stormwater runs off hillsides, rather than streets.

Even when the project is completed in 2028, the city will not fully separate wastewater and stormwater and some wastewater will still find the river after heavy downpours.

"Keep in mind, the low-hanging fruit — or the easiest projects — have been done," Ken Cook, the city's Public Works director, cautioned the council.

**Paul John Hayner, MD**  
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Columbia Memorial Hospital would like to welcome Dr. PJ Hayner back to Astoria! Dr. Hayner, who specializes in internal medicine, has opened a new primary care clinic, Renaissance Health, at 1406 Marine Drive, Astoria.

Dr. Hayner previously practiced in Astoria from 2003-2010. Then he and his wife have worked and lived in California for five years, but the Columbia-Pacific region stayed in their hearts. We are happy he chose to return to Astoria.

At Renaissance Health, Dr. Hayner cares for adult patients with a focus on preventative care. To contact Renaissance Health, call 503-325-0505.

**Dr. Paul John Hayner**  
Internal Medicine

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