Port divide bubbles up over Knight award

Fulton accuses chairman of malfeasance

By EDWARD STRATTON The Daily Astorian

The divide on the Port of Astoria Commission was on full display Tuesday during a tiff over an award nomination last month for Jim Knight, the Port's executive director.

During a discussion of the minutes from last month's meeting, Commissioner Stephen Fulton accused Commission Chairman Robert Mushen of malfeasance for unilaterally nominating Knight for the Special Districts Association of Oregon's Outstanding Manager of the Year Award.

Knight didn't win, but received a certificate of recognition, along with other nominees.

Fulton, who with Commissioner Bill Hunsinger has been a critic of both Mushen and Knight, said he contacted the association and received a letter stating the nomination for of directors. "Since the application and nomination was submitted by one commissioner from his home email, it appears that this was a fraudulent application," Fulton said.

the award comes from a board

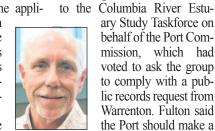
Mushen said he apologized if he made a mistake, adding it

wasn't and that the mailer he received from the association didn't say he needed the commission's approval to nominate Knight. "I certainly don't think it rises to the level of malfeasance," he said.

Fulton asked what the Port Commission should do about Mushen's actions.

"What difference does it make?" asked Commissioner James Campbell. "It's an honorary thing. It's not official policy. You have nothing better to do than sit around and scramble through things like this, when we've got important issues in front of us?"

Fulton said Mushen's nomination isn't the first time Port bylaws haven't been followed,



Stephen Fulton purposeful,

to comply with a public records request from Warrenton. Fulton said the Port should make a

criticizing a letter Mushen sent

formal apology to the Special Districts Association of Oregon over Knight's nomination and follow the agency's bylaws, including his signature as commission secretary on all official documents from the governing body.

Divide on display

"How would you feel if commissioner Hunsinger or commissioner Fulton ... did this?" Ful- a lone-wolf operation." ton asked. "You'd be up in arms."

Fulton acknowledged the divide in voting on many Port issues, with commissioners Mushen, Campbell and John Raichl often voting against he and Hunsinger.

"The bylaws are Robert the only protection the minority has," Fulton Mushen said. "We continue to have these 3-2 votes."

Hunsinger said the letter in support of Knight's nomination also contained numerous falsehoods about his accomplishments.

unacceptable," "It's Hunsinger said. "We can't have

Hunsinger attempted to call

a private executive session to discuss Mushen's actions. Knight called Peter Moore, an attorney with Port counsel Jordan Ramis PC. Moore said that a general matter regarding an award or recognition did not qualify for an executive

'A couple of kids'

session.

During commissioner reports, Hunsinger continued needling Mushen over supposed falsehoods in his nomination letter for Knight, and for not getting the Port Commission's

approval or Fulton's signature on the letter.

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"I can't believe you're so mean-spirited you'd come back on me for nominating the Port director for an award," Mushen said.

"This is crazy," Camp-bell said later of Fulton and Hunsinger's criticisms. "You guys are sitting around acting like a couple of kids."

Mushen, apparently fed up with the criticisms, ended the meeting before the end of commission reports and a second public comment period, saying he needed to get home. Hunsinger and Campbell continued trading barbs after the meeting adjourned, as attendees filed out into the stormy night.



Seaside man in standoff charged with violations

By JACK HEFFERNAN The Daily Astorian

The Seaside man involved in a standoff with police last week was arraigned Tuesday on multiple counts of unlawful use of a weapon and one charge of aggravated animal abuse.

Brian Wallin, 49, locked himself inside his home on Whispering Pines Drive for nearly 64 hours between Wednesday and Saturday. He fired a number of shots before he surrendered to police. While searching the house, police found the family dog dead.

Wallin was taken to Providence Seaside Hospital on Saturday morning. He remained there for evaluation until Sunday night, when he was taken to Clatsop County Jail.



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