

PORTAGE PORT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 10, 2022
5:00P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jeff Fleming. Present were:

Steve Nelson
Carl Simpson
Barb Lusco
Allen Ekdahl
Al Bridges

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

MINUTES – J. Fleming

Mr. Fleming asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 10, 2022, meeting as they are a matter of public record and posted in the Marina Office. Mr. Bridges made a motion to approve the minutes from February 10, 2022. Ms. Lusco seconded the motion. Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT - C. Simpson

Mr. Simpson said that the treasurer's report is as of 3/3/2022:

Port Authority

Balance Year to Date \$83,085.87

Marina Operating Fund

Balance Year to Date \$434,506.54

Mr. Fleming asked if there was a motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented. Ms. Lusco made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. Mr. Ekdahl seconded the motion. Mr. Simpson said that he is confident in the balances reported as he was the month before. He said that as far as the appropriation reports the numbers have not been updated like in past years. Motion passed.

CLAIMS – J. Fleming

Mr. Fleming asked if everyone had a chance to review the claims and if there was a motion to pay them. Ms. Lusco made a motion to approve the claims for payment. Mr. Bridges seconded the motion. Mr. Simpson asked if they should hold off on the floatation dock systems bill. Ms. Lusco said that they shouldn't because they will reimburse any costs we incur for the steel, fabrication and labor. Mr. Ekdahl asked if they called for the drawings. Ms. Lusco informed them that they have. Mr. Ekdahl and Mr. Bridges said that they haven't seen them. Ms. Lusco said that Mr. Nelson needed to be in the conversation and that he was working on this. Mr. Ekdahl feels they should put the old docks back together for the time being. Ms. Lusco said that the 4X4's were taken. Mr. Ekdahl feels they need to be put back together that the new ones won't be done. Ms. Lusco said that she worries about the same. Mr. Bridges feels the floating part was going to be used for a fishing pier. Mr. Ekdahl feels they need to have a backup plan in place. Mr. Fleming asked if they were currently being used and if there were any concerns. Ms. Lusco said that they are being used and everyone likes them. Mr. Ekdahl said that they don't meet code. Mr. Fleming asked if the level was the issue. Mr. Ekdahl said that it was. Mr. Fleming asked if the NIPSCO bill was up. Ms. Lusco said that it is. Mr. Simpson said that he would be contacting the clerk-treasurer for a meeting. Motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

LEGAL

RESCUE ACTS FUNDS

Attorney Whitten informed the board that the city council would be discussing the rescue act fund. He said that they will be getting input from the public and that the criteria have changed. Attorney Whitten recommended that the board put a list of items together and present them to the council to get funds. He said that Thursday's meeting is promoting open space. Attorney Whitten said that they need to communicate with the council and more input is better than less. He said that there would be two meeting to create and appropriation ordinance to earmark the money. Mr. Alvarez recommended they present the top two projects of importance. Attorney Whitten said originally \$50,000.00 for fish cleaning station and \$50,000.00 for the kayak launch was discussed. He said maybe you want to request money for docks since they are 25 years old. Attorney Whitten informed the board that the meeting is next Wednesday at 6:30p.m.

ATTORNEY FEES

Attorney Whitten informed the board that he went over the various boards and attorney fees, and he feels the fees that he charges the board is fair. He said that he charges the same amount that Attorney Dogan charged in previous years. Attorney Whitten also said that when he does extra work for the board, he only charges half of his normal hourly rate. He also feels that he

worked with the board in the transition allowing Attorney Dogan to continue working on items that were already in process. Attorney Whitten said that Attorney Dogan bailed on the NIPSCO lease. Mr. Simpson said that it wasn't a concern that he wanted to make sure they were paying him fairly. He said that he was good with his input on the matter. Attorney Whitten said that any board member that has a question can call him. He rather they call and ask if something is okay, and he wouldn't charge anything extra for that. Ms. Lusco thanked Attorney Whitten for doing an excellent job. She said that he has been at nearly every meeting.

MARINA FACILITY

OPEN SLIPS

Ms. Lusco said that the warm weather is coming. She informed the board that there are a few open slips. Ms. Lusco said that there are a couple on D-Dock, and they are contacting people on the waiting list.

LATE PAYERS

Ms. Lusco said that they have 15 late payers and that they are being contacted. She said that it's not unusual, but they always pay.

BOUYS

Ms. Lusco said that she contacted Dave Zack and he doesn't have buoys. Mr. Ekdahl said that he uses to remove them but not sure he was still the one doing that. Ms. Lusco said that she was getting quotes on new buoys with solar lights.

FISH-ON

Ms. Lusco informed the board that the fish-on went well. She said that they were at the table in the front and had activity nonstop on Saturday and Sunday.

DOCK BOXES

Ms. Lusco informed the board that the new dock boxes were going to be installed since the weather is nicer. She asked if she should store the old ones and put them in the city auction. Attorney Whitten said that they should be sold at the city auction.

PAINTER

Ms. Lusco said that the person they use to have paint is asking to return. Mr. Nelson said that his helper was impressive, but he doesn't want to see him back at the marina. Mr. Ekdahl feels the kids can do the painting and said he would come show them how to do it if needed. Mr. Nelson feels that Garrett would do an excellent job doing the painting. He asked about the color. Ms. Lusco said that she would like to switch from red to gray. Mr. Ekdahl doesn't feel that

gray is appealing. He feels that they should keep it red and that once everything is painted, they can start over at the beginning if necessary. Mr. Nelson agrees that the employees should do the painting. Ms. Lusco said that she would need more employees and that it's hard to get people at this time. She said that the park is having issues getting employees as well.

SKID PIERS

Mr. Nelson asked if they were holding the payment for the skid piers. Ms. Lusco said that they weren't that floatation dock systems was going to reimburse for supplies and labor. Mr. Nelson doesn't want them paid until the work is done and we know the specifics. Ms. Perez will inform Diane in the clerk-treasurer's office not to issue the check until she's informed to send it. Mr. Nelson said that it's a big job and hopes to have it done next week.

ICE

Mr. Fleming asked if there was an update on the ice situation. Ms. Lusco said that they are looking into an ice vending machine. She said that it can be installed for \$5,000.00 and the ice would come in a bag out a shoot and the employees would not have to deal with it.

BEAVER ISSUE

Mr. Simpson mentioned there being an issue with a beaver putting trees and branches down on the ditch way. Ms. Lusco said that she can call the DNR. Mr. Ekdahl said that they are a nuisance. Mr. Nelson does not feel the DNR will do anything. He feels like there has been a lot of discussion on this matter.

RESCUE ACTS FUNDS

Mr. Simpson feels that there hasn't been adequate board discussion on what to request concerning the rescue act funds. Mr. Nelson feels this has been discussed and agreed upon for the last 3 months. Mr. Fleming said that it hasn't been as a board. Mr. Fleming said that he was supposed to have a meeting with A.J. Monroe, Mayor Lynch and Paul from the National Park concerning putting the kayak launch at the lake front by the old U.S. Steel property. He said that they said the marina is not a desirable spot for it. Mr. Ekdahl feels it would be done with the Core of Engineers funds. Mr. Nelson feels that it will be a 3-million-dollar project for Dunes Restoration. Mr. Bridges said that there are no more docks allowed on the water way. Mr. Ekdahl has concerns with it being abused. Attorney Whitten said that the mayor is concerned about the port authority not getting funds. Mr. Nelson said that we aren't in the process. Mr. Fleming said that was the purpose of the meeting next week. Mr. Ekdahl asked if there was going to be a presentation. Ms. Lusco said that Attorney Whitten feels the board should have a discussion. Mr. Fleming said that there were four points to the plan 1 being the fish cleaning station, 2 being the docks, 3 being the kayak launch and 4 being the parking lot master plan.

Mr. Simpson said that they loosened up the scope and feels the board should agree on priorities. Mr. Ekdahl feels they should ask for three docks out of K, A, B, C and D to be replaced. Attorney Whitten feels the board should get this together and give a brief presentation at the meeting. Mr. Nelson asked how much money was available. Attorney Whitten said that he was unsure. He said that there is 8 million and 20 million is asks. Mr. Nelson said that the electrical is not up to date for the new dock systems. He said that the master plan shows four million for dock replacement. Mr. Ekdahl asked if we could only get the \$100,000.00 discussed previously. Mr. Nelson said that they are not going to last 10 years. He feels that the port authority should be given the TIFF funds for the water way properties to help with that. Mr. Simpson feels new docks should be the number 1 priority. Mr. Ekdahl said that new roofs on the buildings and insulating the bathhouses should also be a priority. Mr. Simpson said that he has never agreed with prioritizing the fish cleaning station and public fishing pier over the dock replacement. Mr. Fleming asked if everyone agreed that docks should be the number 1 priority. Mr. Nelson doesn't understand why they aren't breaking ground on the fish cleaning station already. Attorney Whitten doesn't feel that they will give \$750,000.00 for docks at Wednesday's meetings. He feels other items are more likely. Mr. Nelson said that the fish cleaning station and the fishing pier has already been prioritized and doesn't understand why they aren't now. Ms. Lusco said that there are seven items that members have mentioned that they would like to see included. Mr. Simpson asked Ms. Lusco to email the list to each board member the list so that they can give what they feel should be top priority. He feels all board members should have their submission in by Monday so that they can figure out what is the top item in everyone's opinion so they can calculate and know what should be presented at Wednesday's meeting. Attorney Whitten agrees.

SAFETY

No report.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

No planning and development.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

PUBLIC INPUT

No public input.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the March 10, 2022, meeting was made by Mr. Nelson. Mr. Simpson seconded the motion. Motion Passed.