

## Fort Worden Coordinating Committee

### ***DRAFT Meeting Minutes***

February 22, 2021 | 1 p.m.

Remote Public Meeting (by ZOOM) per State Proclamation 20.28

#### **I. Call to Order: 1:04 p.m.**

#### **II. Committee Roll Call & Introductions**

Thatcher Bailey (at-large committee member), Aislinn Diamanti (FWPDA interim Operations Director), David Timmons (FWPDA interim Executive Director), Gee Heckscher (FWPDA Board Member), Darrel Hopkins (WA State Parks Southwest Region Manager), Brian Hageman (WA State Parks Olympic View Area Manager)

#### **III. Consent Agenda**

**Action:** Motion to approve the February 28, 2020 Fort Worden Coordinating Committee meeting minutes. **Unanimously approved**

#### **IV. WA State Parks Capital Projects Update**

WA State Parks Olympic View Area Manager Brian Hageman said the Operations Work Group submitted a capital projects list last year, and the list is compiled every other year. He summarized the seven WA State Parks projects that have taken place at some stage during 2020 either on the Fort Worden campus or the surrounding Fort Worden State Park area (see agenda packet for project details):

- Fort Worden Pier & Marine Learning Center and Elevated Boat Launch
- Replace Upper Failing Electrical Switch at West Gate
- Replace Failing Sewer Lines (Phase Three)
- Replace Water Lines (Phase Two)
- Replace Upper Campground Comfort Station
- Historic Areas Exterior Repairs (on Officers Row)
- Historic Building Roof Replacement (slate roofing for Coast Artillery Museum roof)

Hageman and Gee Heckscher reviewed the locations and logistics for the phased water and sewer line work. Hageman and Aislinn Diamanti discussed the timing for the boat launch work, which has to take into consideration timing for salmon protection. State Parks may need to do the pier work in one long window rather than in pieces, Hageman said.

#### **V. Review FWPDA 2020/2021 Annual Maintenance Plan Report (Master Lease, Section 8.5)**

Diamanti said that the FWPDA Maintenance Plan report was presented to the committee in 2020 and at that time it was largely unfunded. She noted that shortly after that meeting the Fort shut down for a few months due to the pandemic, which delayed progress on the plan.

The report identifies progress staff were able to make in 2020. Diamanti added that none of the projects are funded in the FWPDA's 2021 budget, which is shaped by the impacts of the pandemic and reduced revenue and staffing, but that does not mean they won't happen. As recovery and reorganization work progresses and plans are reviewed in late 2021 for the next biennium, a more actionable plan will develop, she said. Interim Executive Director David Timmons added that the FWPDA's deficit situation and recovery and reorganization work mean it may take a couple of years before the FWPDA is able to address maintenance needs more aggressively. Timmons talked about the challenge of maintenance needs becoming equipment replacement needs. He said the FWPDA's recovery and reorganization work involves creating a new asset management strategy. Hageman added that State Parks is considering ways that it can help with the list despite its own budget reduction. Timmons said that State Parks is providing tremendous help by deferring a maintenance sharing provision that is in the master lease and was set to begin. Timmons said the FWPDA lost more than 80% of its expected revenue due to the pandemic and related closure, and that also has exposed other issues that are being addressed.

#### **VI. Partner Communications/Update**

Centrum Operations Director Lisa Werner referred the committee to a four-page publication that campus programming partners created called "2020: A Year of Resilience, Creativity and Innovation" (see agenda packet). Warner said the general purpose was to share with the general public the good news coming out of Fort Worden and how partners collaborated to help each other during the pandemic.

Regarding maintenance issues, Werner said Centrum has a capital maintenance fund and that it is hoping that a long-term lease can go forward soon so that Centrum can more conscientiously use that money. The overall message is that Centrum is ready to help and do its part, she said. Bailey said he was very happy to see the publication and how it demonstrated a manifestation of the original idea for the campus as well as the partners' optimism and collaboration.

#### **VII. FWPDA Communications/Update**

Timmons provided an overview of the FWPDA's recovery and reorganization plan and referred the committee to a "Frequently Asked Questions" handout in the packet. He said he has been compartmentalizing the multiple issues that need attention and developing a strategy for each. If the FWPDA was a private business, it would probably be in a Chapter 11 reorganization, and that is the approach he has been taking, Timmons said. He said the FWPDA board has adopted the reorganization strategy, and he summarized the priorities: 1) focusing on capital and maintenance needs for the campus and partners, 2) creating a non-government structure for a nimbler hospitality operation that can meet both community and partner needs, 3) creating a public-private partnership approach to the asset

management needs, and 4) refinancing and reallocating the FWPDA's debt. Timmons said all efforts are designed to help the FWPDA meet the goals of the lifelong learning center mission. He noted that the hospitality nonprofit's mission statement also demonstrates its commitment to supporting the lifelong learning center. Timmons said the reorganization and recovery work is underway with minimal staffing levels, and operations can't be suspended for a different kind of public process; the plans are discussed regularly in public board meetings where public input is welcome and materials are posted to the FWPDA's website.

Bailey thanked Timmons for his leadership on the complicated recovery and reorganization work. He asked where revenue will come from for the FWPDA's maintenance responsibilities under the new plan. Timmons said a service agreement will be developed with the hospitality nonprofit, and the reorganization will lead to the FWPDA becoming a much smaller administrative unit that will live off lease and contract income. The asset management needs are the big nut that he is working on, Timmons said. Bailey and Timmons briefly discussed financing strategies for addressing the \$100+ million maintenance backlog.

**VIII. Public Comment**

Public comment was invited throughout the meeting and at its conclusion, and no comments were given.

**IX. The meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.**