Commissioner Testifies at Senate Energy Natural Resources Hearing

Port of Port Angeles Commissioner Colleen McAleer was invited to testify on carbon fiber recycling and energy workforce development before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on Tuesday, June 9, in Washington, DC. The invitation was issued by the office of Senator Lisa Murkowski, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The Committee conducted this hearing to receive testimony on legislation concerning energy accountability and reform. The invitation was given at the request of Senator Maria Cantwell, ranking member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Of the 42 initiatives under consideration during this hearing, several focused on supporting advanced technology and improving productivity and energy efficiency in the manufacturing sector. Commissioner McAleer gave testimony specifically concerning Senate Bills 1304 and 1432. S.1304 addresses the development of a skilled 21st century energy workforce. S. 1432 would require the Secretary of Energy to conduct a study on the technology, potential life cycle energy savings and economic impact of recycled carbon fiber.

“The development of composite manufacturing in Clallam County under the auspices of the Port of Port Angeles has gained the attention of both federal and state agencies,” said Commissioner McAleer. “Our county is increasingly recognized as a leader in this industry sector, especially with the development of the Composites Recycling Technology Center (CRTC). I was delighted to have the opportunity to testify before the Senate energy committee as to the importance of recycled composite fiber and let them know that we are well on the way to providing this crucial service to the advanced manufacturing industry.”

Some of the points Commissioner McAleer touched on included the importance of manufacturing, recycling and innovation in carbon fiber composites, partnerships and tech transfers that the Port has been engaged in, the need for partnerships in education and investments in developing a skilled workforce, international markets, and exports.

Upon her return, Commissioner McAleer gave a report of her experience at the Port Board of Commissioners meeting on June 15. An excerpt of her testimony appears on page 4. The news release issued by Senator’s Cantwell’s office is available at http://portofpa.com/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=77.
In 2015, the Port is seeing an unprecedented number of construction and maintenance projects go forward. The anticipated total capital expenditure is over $7.2 million as of this writing, with an expected additional $4 million for the Composites Recycling Technology Center. Funds for projects come from revenues generated from the Port’s business lines, outside grants and some property tax revenues. Here’s a progress report about some of the projects:

1. Remediation at the K-Ply site – This major undertaking is proceeding very well. The project will clean up soil contamination and could occur in one of two ways. The soil can be physically removed and sent to a landfill, or it can be treated on-site through a heating process. Bids were advertised on June 12 and on June 19 in the Peninsula Daily News and the Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce. The pre-bid meeting was held on June 24, and all bids will be opened in the Port’s office on July 8. The contract is expected to be awarded by July 13, when the bids will be presented to the Port’s Board of Commissioners for consideration. By law, the lowest qualified bid must be chosen.

2. Redevelopment of Terminal 1 – This is the oldest of the Port’s terminals and was the first infrastructure project undertaken by the Port. The pier was originally completed in 1927 and has been expanded, upgraded and maintained periodically since then. The current project will replace its deteriorating wooden piles with steel piles. Two mooring dolphins will be removed and replaced with a new steel pile dolphin with a concrete cap. After 15 months of going through a challenging permitting process, the permits came through in April 2015 from the US Army Corps of Engineers, National Marine Fisheries Service, US Fish and Wildlife Department, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington State Department of Ecology, and the City of Port Angeles. The project is funded through a grant from the federal Economic Development Administration under its Public Works Assistance Program. Bids for the Terminal 1 project were advertised on June 12 for four consecutive weeks in the Peninsula Daily News and the Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce. Again, the bid must go to the lowest qualified bidder. The pre-bid walk-through was held on June 30.

3. Replacement of Heat Pumps in Building 1010 – This maintenance project will put in new ducting and VAV boxes (variable air volume) in the 1010 building where Westport Interior Plant is located at the Composite Manufacturing Campus. The heat pump is a 40-ton unit that replaces the previous 30-ton unit that has been in constant use for thirty years. This upgrade is part of a larger program of upgrades to existing Port facilities within the capital budget. Other projects include roof assessments and upgrades to HVACs and other aging infrastructure and equipment.

“Implementing innovative solutions to maximize long-term value of the Port’s infrastructure is the goal,” says Chris Hartman, Director of Engineering. “We’re looking forward to having a greatly enhanced industrial waterfront that will support economic development far into the future.”

**News Shorts**

- Launch ramp floats are in at the Port Angeles Boat Haven for the summer. They will come out for the winter in late October/early November 2015.
- The MV Statendam came to the Port at Terminal 1 for the day on May 16th, carrying 954 passengers. The MV Statendam is a Holland America cruise ship.
- Eight new leases have been signed in the last few months, bringing new tenants to the Port and new business to the Port District.
- The Wings of Freedom presented by the Collings Foundation was held at the William R. Fairchild International Airport from June 24th to 26th, showcasing iconic WWII aircraft. Citizens toured the aircraft and some purchased flights in the P-51 Mustang and the B-25 Mitchell.
- The Port Angeles Halibut Derby took place May 23rd and 24th at the Port Angeles Boat Haven. The first place prize of $5,000 was taken by a 143 lb. halibut!
How Ports and the Port of Port Angeles Were Created

Public ports came into being in Washington State in the early 20th century. They were created as a response to the growing control of harbors and waterfronts by privately-owned companies such as railroads and steamship companies. The value of access to port facilities and infrastructure increased with the expansion of trade during the Industrial Revolution. Public sentiment gradually turned in favor of publicly available harbors and waterfronts, especially in Washington State, which is more dependent on external trade than other states, and where most of the principal cities are water-based ports.

It also became apparent that infrastructure coordination and economies of scale were nearly impossible when waterfronts were divided into competing narrowly-focused interests uninterested with promoting trade for the benefit of the whole community.

The creation of public ports was advocated largely by civil engineers and planners who asserted that necessary development and modernization would only go forward if harbor areas were in public ownership. The railroads resisted the loss of their control, but in 1911, Washington’s Port District Act was signed into law.

Through directly elected commissioners, ports were given the power to “acquire, construct and operate waterways, docks, wharves and other harbor improvements.”

Ports were designated as independent of other governing bodies, such as counties, and could levy taxes, issue bonds, acquire property, set rates and lease port-owned property. This basic structure is still in place today.

Ports are designed to function both as governments and as entrepreneurial bodies. They are able to put public money to use for the public good by creating the infrastructure that businesses need to survive and grow, but could not afford to build using only their own resources.

Through direct election of commissioners, port district voters have the ability to help set the direction and policies of their ports.

The Port of Port Angeles, which is all of Clallam County, was created by county voters in 1922 by a nearly two-to-one margin. It is one of Washington’s eleven deep-water ports, out of a total of 75 ports statewide, and is the only one on the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Like all Washington ports, it is charged with promoting and enhancing a healthy economy in its district through business development and job creation.

From the Port's website: “The port engages in four lines of business: marine facilities, marinas, airports, and industrial properties. These businesses include four marine terminals, two airports, two marinas, three industrial business parks, and several other industrial and commercial properties. In addition to its business responsibilities, the port also plays an important role in the redevelopment of industrial properties county-wide.

“Historically, the port provided facilities for handling logs transported from the Olympic Peninsula to Puget Sound, along the West Coast and for export to Pacific Rim countries. In recent years, the port has modernized its facilities and expanded its marine terminal services to handle a broad mix of bulk, break-bulk and containerized cargoes.”

Today, the Port of Port Angeles continues its mission to build the county’s economy through “strategic investments in its facilities, partnering with public and private entities to reposition and revitalize key properties, and identifying emerging-markets and new business opportunities that create community value and facilitate new job development.”

The Port Angeles waterfront in earlier days

Highlights on the Port Web

Community Voices: This is a special section of the Port’s website where the public can share ideas and concerns, ask questions and see what others have to say. Access it here: http://wa-portofportangeles.civicplus.com/CommunityVoice

Draft Strategic Plan: The Port Board, staff and members of the public have been hard at work on the next iteration of the Port’s Strategic Plan. To read the draft go here: http://portofpa.com/Index.aspx?NID=297 Please share your thoughts and feedback either online or at one of the upcoming public meetings (see article on page 4).

Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements: This is a pdf document that details the current 2015 plan for capital spending for the harbor as required by state law. View it here: http://wa-portofportangeles.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/429

Dan Bower is celebrating 30 years at the Port of Port Angeles as a member of the Port’s Facility Maintenance Crew. Dan got his start after high school working in area shake mills as a splitterman. Dan was initially hired full time at the Port in May of 1985 by Jerry Bryant as part of the boom crew working on log rafts in the harbor, after having been employed seasonally.

In the late 1980s, Gunnar Johanssen, facilities crew lead, had a helper who wanted to work in the log yard. Gunnar arranged to have him and Dan trade positions and Dan has been on the facilities crew ever since. He has performed nearly every function related to Port maintenance. Dan did a lot of carpentry and cabinet work under Gunnar, who held him to high standards. “Gunnar taught me a lot,” says Dan, “He would get pretty crusty from time to time, but he’d also give you the shirt off his back.”

These days, Dan wears many hats on the facilities crew. He drives trucks, helps set up for incoming ships, performs some terminal maintenance, fills in at the log yard and helps other Port staff on the docks. “I really enjoy the variety – every day is different,” says Dan. He reports to crew lead Russ Felton and also to Chris Hartman, the Port’s Director of Engineering.

Dan is part of the third generation of a long-time Port Angeles family. His grandparents built family homes at Lake Crescent that he and his relatives still enjoy today. Dan is a graduate of Port Angeles High School. He has been married to Laurie for 34 years and they have two daughters, Angela and Nicole. They also have two granddaughters, Taylor (8 years old) and Cooper (11 months). All have or will attend Port Angeles schools. “This community is a wonderful place to live,” says Dan. “We’re on our fifth generation as Port Angeles natives.”

In his leisure time, Dan likes to take care of his family’s properties, keeping them tidy and in good repair. He also enjoys taking his boats out on Lake Crescent. His dogs especially love to go for boat rides. At Christmas time, Dan goes all out and transforms his front yard in a holiday display that has become legendary and much appreciated by his neighbors and the community.

Dan looks forward to several more years at the Port. “I have always felt very blessed to have this job. The work is interesting and the people are great. The Port took very good care of me when I was out with a health issue a few years ago. I am grateful to have such good fortune.” When you see Dan driving by in a Port truck, be sure to wave hi!

McAleer Senate Testimony Excerpt

“Our Port has headed an effort to recycle the production scrap of carbon fiber manufacturing processes, a first-of-its-kind recycling center. There are research efforts in the U.S. and Europe addressing so-called end-of-life carbon fiber recycling—a more complex and energy-intensive process—but we will first focus on the low hanging fruit of recycling and repurposing production scrap.

“Carbon fiber products already reduce energy consumption by reducing weight in industries from transportation to sporting goods. Recycling carbon fiber composites will drastically reduce the energy required for manufacturing. The recycled carbon composite in the CRTC approach will use only 6% of the energy required to produce virgin carbon fiber fabrics.

“In my rural, economically-distressed county, we have several manufacturers that use advanced composites and are dealing with this very issue. They make yachts, cutters, snowboards, aerospace parts and more. Also located in our county is the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory’s (PNNL) Marine Science Lab; it has permitted in-water facilities to test carbon fiber wave and tidal energy technologies . . .

“The 25,000 square foot facility will be a shared equipment center that serves four functions. It will accept uncured scrap carbon fiber fabric and remake it into a usable form. It will manufacture and sell secondary repurposed products. It will serve as a workforce training space for local colleges. Most importantly, it will serve as an industrial-scale shared equipment space for entrepreneurs and universities.”