



DOCKS & HARBORS OPERATIONS & PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 20, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Port Office Conference Room/Zoom Webinar

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Orr called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

B. ROLL CALL:

Present: James Becker, Matthew Leither, Mark Ridgway, Shem Sooter and Nick Orr (Chair)

Absent: Tyler Emerson, Clayton Hamilton, Robert Horchover, Annette Smith

Also in Attendance: Port Director Carl Uchtyl, Harbormaster Matthew Creswell, and Port Engineer Matthew Sill.

Presenters/Consultants: Brandon Ivanowicz, PND Engineers; Brian Myers, Morris Engineering

C. PORT DIRECTOR REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES: None

1. MOTION: TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED OR AMENDED:

Mr. Ridgway moved to approve the agenda with unanimous consent.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: None

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

2. April 22, 2026 Minutes:

Mr. Ridgway moved to approve minutes. The Chair requested unanimous consent.
Minutes approved.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

G. NEW BUSINESS:

3. 2027 ADOT Harbor Facility Grant Application

Presentation by Port Director:

Port Director Uchtyl presented information on the 2027 ADOT Harbor Facility Grant Application. He stated the Notice of Funding Opportunity had not yet been issued by DOT, but applications are typically due in early August. He reviewed eligible project types, including approach docks, floating breakwaters, and launch ramps, and noted that dredging, fixed breakwaters, boathouses, and buildings are generally ineligible.

Port Director Uchtyl stated Docks & Harbors has received approximately \$20 million from the program since its inception in 2006 and currently has approximately \$1.4 million in grant match funding for the Aurora Drive Down Float. He stated the grant program is

generally a 50/50 match program and asked the Committee for direction on which projects, if any, staff should prepare for application.

a. Committee Questions:

Committee members discussed whether Echo Cove would be an eligible project. Port Director Uchytel stated Echo Cove appeared to be a viable project and could potentially be coordinated with the Pittman-Robertson Hunter Access grant.

The Committee discussed possible Statter Harbor projects, including zinc anodes and replacement of the older horseshoe float. Port Director Uchytel stated the horseshoe replacement and zinc anodes could potentially be combined as one project, but noted that a larger project request may affect competitiveness depending on available funding.

Harbormaster Creswell discussed recent photographs showing significant deterioration in the Statter Harbor horseshoe piling. Staff noted that visible infrastructure deterioration could strengthen a grant application because grant scoring considers project need and condition.

The Committee also discussed the age and condition of Statter Harbor infrastructure, the useful life of anodes, potential project timing, and whether the horseshoe replacement would conflict with future breakwater work. Port Director Uchytel stated the horseshoe replacement likely could proceed without conflicting with the breakwater project.

b. Public Comment: None

c. Committee Discussion/Action:

The Committee discussed possible direction of staff. Members generally supported staff further evaluating a combined Statter Harbor horseshoe replacement and zinc anode project, while also continuing to consider an Echo Cove project.

Committee members discussed whether combining the horseshoe replacement and zinc anodes would create a stronger application by presenting a clearer infrastructure-preservation need. Members also recognized the potential risk of requesting a larger project amount.

Port Director Uchytel stated staff could continue developing the concept, work toward a 35% design, and bring the item back to the Committee. He also noted that an existing zinc anode grant application could be updated and resubmitted if the Board later preferred that direction.

MOTION: No motion was made.

H. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION:

4. Aurora Drive Down Float - 65% Review Package:

Presentation by PND Engineers:

For the record, Mr. Horchover joined the meeting online at the beginning of this item. Brandon Ivanowicz, Civil Engineer with PND Engineers, presented the 65% review package for the Aurora Drive Down Float project. He stated PND previously presented the 35% design in September 2025, held a public review meeting in October 2025, and began final design work in February 2026. The project received approximately \$12.5 million in PIDP and State Harbor Matching Grant funds in 2024.

Mr. Ivanowicz reviewed the major project components, including a 60-foot by 70-foot widened dock section, a 17-foot by 140-foot transfer bridge, and a 48-foot by 120-foot drive-down float. He also reviewed Additive Alternate A, which includes a 16-foot widened approach dock intended to improve access for larger truck and trailer combinations.

Mr. Ivanowicz stated key permitting items are progressing, with Section 106 review, Clean Water Act Section 401 certification, and Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation complete. He stated MARAD is expected to issue the final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact within approximately two months. He also stated a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers navigation-channel comment had been addressed and that the project remains within harbor entrance channel standards.

Mr. Ivanowicz reviewed proposed float features, including two cranes, high-mast lighting, heat-traced water pedestals, safety equipment, fire suppression standpipes, and an 8-foot by 10-foot utility shed. Brian Myers with Morris Engineering reviewed the electrical plan, including 480-volt service, shore power pedestals, crane power, card-swipe access controls, and a revised lighting layout reduced from 13 poles to 9 poles.

Mr. Ivanowicz reviewed the project schedule and budget. He stated 90% design is anticipated by the end of July 2026, advertisement is planned around August 15, 2026, contract award is anticipated by October 1, 2026, and construction is scheduled from February 2027 through July 2027. The base bid estimate is approximately \$13.2 million, Additive Alternate A is approximately \$1.1 million, and the total estimated project cost is approximately \$14.4 million, with approximately \$15.3 million in available funding.

a. Committee Discussion:

Committee members asked questions regarding the design load, vehicle traction, lighting, market analysis, maintenance planning, contractor availability, and the 16-foot widened approach dock included as Additive Alternate A.

PND stated the ramp is designed for highway loading, including HL-93/HS-20 loading. Staff and PND discussed traction on the steel deck and noted the deck material is intended to provide substantial grip. Committee members also asked

whether light poles would interfere with vehicle maneuvering. PND stated the light poles would be mounted outside the handrail area, and Morris Engineering stated the lighting design can use shielding and directed light patterns to reduce glare for nearby users and liveaboards.

Committee members asked whether MARAD requires a market analysis before the grant agreement is finalized. PND stated MARAD had accepted the project risk register and that no separate market analysis requirement was identified. Port Director Uchytel stated the MARAD small port/small project award is capped at approximately \$11.25 million, and any bid amount above the available grant funding would be the sponsor's responsibility.

Committee members also discussed future operations and maintenance needs for the cranes, electrical systems, and other added infrastructure. PND stated the contractor would provide O&M manuals with manufacturer maintenance requirements, and staff could use those documents to develop project-specific maintenance schedules.

The Committee discussed contractor availability and constructability. Port Director Uchytel stated Western Marine Construction may have limited availability due to other work, but Trucano, Turnagain Marine, Pacific Pile & Marine, and other contractors may be potential bidders. A committee member noted the project may be attractive to contractors because it is a sizable project, estimated in the \$12 million to \$15 million range, with favorable constructability.

Committee members discussed the widened approach dock and vehicle maneuvering. Several members indicated the additional width appeared beneficial because it would provide more room for typical users, reduce wear on bull rails and fencing, and improve comfort and safety for drivers and pedestrians. PND stated the design provides generous maneuvering space for common truck and trailer combinations.

Port Director Uchytel reminded the Committee that support for Additive items is not necessarily unanimous among all Board members and that the Board will need to have a clear discussion when it is time to award the project. No formal action was taken.

b. Public Comment: None

5. USACE - Tentative Selection Plan (TSP) Breakwater Replacement:

Presentation by Port Director:

Port Director Uchytel presented the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Tentative Selected Plan for the Statter Harbor breakwater replacement. He explained that the General Navigation

Feature is the federal navigation component of the project and that the Army Corps has provided its Tentative Selected Plan, or TSP, for review.

Port Director Uchytel stated the Army Corps is working under its “3x3x3” study model, with a three-year study, \$3 million budget, and three levels of review. He stated the Corps is expected to provide a draft report in October 2026, including geotechnical information and a more developed estimate. He noted the Corps’ rough order of magnitude estimate is approximately \$94 million, consistent with prior discussion of the project as roughly a \$100 million project.

Port Director Uchytel stated the proposed breakwater would be moved approximately 600 to 700 feet offshore from the existing breakwater and would be approximately 1,800 feet long. He said the proposed location appears to provide substantial room for future expansion of the Statter Harbor facility.

Port Director Uchytel stated it may be desirable to connect the breakwater to the Auke Bay Marine Station, but he was not certain how much additional benefit that connection would provide. He also discussed the potential for future government-vessel moorage or seasonal moorage opportunities inside the breakwater, but noted the Army Corps is not currently willing to design moorage into the breakwater.

Port Director Uchytel stated the recent geotechnical work helped validate the early design approach. He said the project remains in an early stage and described the TSP as the Corps’ first formal proposal. He stated the study is expected to continue toward completion in September 2027, with the final report anticipated in 2027.

a. Committee Questions:

Committee members discussed whether the TSP addressed future Statter Harbor expansion needs and how it compared with possible North Douglas improvements. Port Director Uchytel stated the North Douglas work currently being discussed is related to launch ramp parking and geotechnical work, while the breakwater project is a federal project intended to support future moorage expansion at Statter Harbor. He noted the federal project would require a 20% local match.

Committee members discussed the prior concept of connecting the breakwater to the Auke Bay Marine Station. Port Director Uchytel stated the proposed breakwater has moved significantly farther offshore, making a direct walkway or connection less practical. He stated the Army Corps does not appear to have a mechanism for the local sponsor to pay additional funds for the Corps to add work outside the current scope, though the Corps is expected to include renderings of a potential expanded harbor in the October report.

The Committee discussed whether Docks & Harbors should use its term contract with PND Engineers to review the Corps’ proposed design. Port Director Uchytel stated staff

may consider hiring PND to review whether the breakwater would provide the intended protection, including for the Auke Bay Marine Station area, and to help evaluate whether low-cost modifications could increase future utility. Committee members expressed support for having an independent engineering review of the proposed orientation and possible future moorage options.

Committee members expressed concern that the proposed breakwater is not connected to the main floats and may not directly relieve inner harbor congestion unless future moorage is added. Members discussed whether the project should include fingers, moorage, or other features now rather than requiring a separate future project. Port Director Uchytel stated the project would still provide a replacement breakwater and create future opportunity, but that any request to expand the Corps' scope should be specific, reasonable, and mindful of the Corps' budget and process constraints.

Committee members also discussed anchoring, anchor-stay systems, impacts on vessels anchoring near the breakwater, and whether technologies such as elastic anchor systems could be considered. Port Director Uchytel stated staff has asked the Corps to review whether that type of technology could be appropriate for the site. Port Director Uchytel stated staff would check with the Army Corps on timing and whether the October draft report is the appropriate point for Docks & Harbors to identify any essential changes or concerns. The Committee agreed the item does not require an immediate answer and can continue to be reviewed as more information becomes available.

b. Public Comment: None

6. Douglas Harbor Launch Ramp Improvements:

Presentation by Port Engineer:

Port Engineer Sill presented an update on South Douglas Harbor launch ramp improvements based on prior Committee direction. He stated the concerns included worn fiberglass traction plate on the boarding float, lack of lighting for winter use, and the depth/drop-off at the end of the launch ramp.

Port Engineer Sill stated Docks & Harbors has replacement traction plate in inventory and plans to begin installing new traction plate on the Douglas boarding floats soon. He stated staff is looking at placing new traction plate over the worn existing plate because removing the existing plate entirely would be difficult due to the bull rails.

Port Engineer Sill also stated staff has ordered a solar-powered lighting assembly to test at the launch ramp. He said staff understands the limitations of solar lighting in Juneau during winter, but the test is a lower-cost option compared to running power to the floats, installing aerial power, or building a more substantial lighting system.

Regarding the end of the launch ramp, Port Engineer Sill stated the existing concrete planks were originally built to approximately minus 6 feet, but due to approximately 25 years of glacial rebound, the ramp is likely closer to minus 5 feet today. Staff plans to use an ROV to inspect the ramp end and determine the condition of the rock beyond the concrete planks before considering further improvements.

a. Committee Discussion:

Committee members discussed the ramp depth, the possibility of using D1 gravel or other lower-cost improvements if permitting allows, and whether one additional light pole or mast near the lower ramp area could provide enough lighting if the solar light test is not successful. The Committee generally supported testing the lower-cost solar lighting option first before considering more expensive electrical improvements.

b. Public Comment: None

7. North Douglas Launch Ramp Expansion - Geotechnical Investigation:

Presentation by Port Engineer:

Port Engineer Sill presented an update on the North Douglas Launch Ramp Expansion geotechnical investigation. He stated the project resulted from the opportunity to use a mobilized drilling contractor that was already in Juneau for Statter Harbor geotechnical work.

Port Engineer Sill explained that the original Statter Harbor geotechnical project was expected to cost a little over \$1.4 million, with a base bid of nearly \$600,000 and several additive items. After the Army Corps reduced its requested scope to two penetrometer tests, Docks & Harbors used the opportunity to redirect part of the mobilization effort to North Douglas.

Port Engineer Sill stated the Statter Harbor work was completed in approximately a day and a half, after which the contractor moved to North Douglas and drilled six boreholes at locations identified with assistance from PND Engineers. He stated the final cost for the Statter Harbor breakwater geotechnical work was a little over \$200,000, and the North Douglas launch ramp geotechnical work was approximately \$385,000 to \$386,000 for six boreholes. He stated the work provided useful subsurface information at a cost well below the original anticipated project amount.

Port Engineer Sill stated the samples collected at North Douglas can be evaluated later by PND or another firm. He said the preliminary observations suggest the site has difficult subsurface conditions, including soft and steep material, with bedrock and large boulders in some locations. He stated a formal geotechnical report has not yet been completed.

a. Committee Discussion:

Committee members discussed whether the geotechnical work supports the future launch ramp and parking lot expansion concept. Port Engineer Sill stated the geotechnical information would support future parking lot expansion and preliminary design evaluation.

Committee members discussed the mobilization cost and how costs were split between Statter Harbor and North Douglas. Staff explained the contractor's mobilization was part of a fixed competitive bid and included both the drilling equipment and barge/support tug costs. Port Director Uchtyl stated the original intent had been for the Army Corps work to carry more of the mobilization cost, but after the Corps changed direction, staff pivoted to preserve value for Docks & Harbors.

b. Public Comment: None

8. Insurance Requirements - Uninsured Vessel Surcharge:

Presentation by Harbormaster:

Harbormaster Creswell presented information on insurance requirements and the uninsured vessel surcharge. He first addressed the annual adjustment to the surcharge. He stated the current uninsured vessel surcharge is \$1.50 per foot, adjusted annually after January 1 for the following fiscal year, with a minimum of \$1 per foot and a maximum of \$3 per foot.

Harbormaster Creswell stated Docks & Harbors collected approximately \$114,107.94 in surcharge revenue during calendar year 2025 and spent approximately \$77,082.97 on vessel disposal. Based on the regulation, he stated the surcharge should decrease to \$1 per foot for the next fiscal year. He said staff intends to bring the rate adjustment forward as an action item at the next Board meeting so the required 30-day period is met before the July 1 effective date.

Harbormaster Creswell then reviewed broader insurance policy options. He stated Juneau currently allows vessels to remain in the harbor without insurance if they pay the uninsured vessel surcharge, while daily-rate vessels are not subject to the surcharge. He reviewed insurance approaches used by other Alaska harbors, including Homer, Seward, Whittier, Kodiak, Petersburg, Ketchikan, and Sitka. He noted that some harbors require insurance, some require the harbor to be listed as additionally insured, and others have more limited or discretionary requirements.

Harbormaster Creswell stated a consistent statewide approach would be helpful, but different harbors currently use different models.

a. Committee Questions:

The Committee discussed whether Docks & Harbors should continue the current surcharge model or move toward mandatory insurance for vessels in the harbors. Committee members discussed costs associated with sunken vessels, vessel fires, uninsured vessels, reimbursement uncertainty, and the concern that Docks & Harbors may effectively be carrying risk that should be covered by insurance.

Committee members also discussed whether any future insurance requirement should apply only to new vessels entering the harbors, whether existing vessels should be grandfathered, and how float houses or other potentially difficult-to-insure vessels should be handled. Port Director Uchtyl noted that Docks & Harbors had received concerns from at least one Douglas float house owner regarding the fairness of the surcharge if certain structures cannot obtain insurance.

Harbormaster Creswell stated Juneau is unique compared with many other Alaska harbors because of its float houses and liveaboard community. Committee members asked staff to research how similar communities handle insurance requirements, including examples outside Alaska if useful.

The Committee discussed whether bonding could be considered as an alternative for vessels that cannot obtain insurance. Harbormaster Creswell asked whether the Committee wanted staff to research bonding in lieu of insurance, and members indicated support for that research.

Harbormaster Creswell stated approximately 12 vessels had sunk since late December, most of which had been raised and disposed of, with a few remaining to be disposed of. Port Director Uchtyl stated a future step could include inviting insurance brokers to discuss what insurance options are realistically available for different types of vessels and float houses.

The Committee generally directed staff to continue researching options and return with a recommendation, including analysis of customer impacts, surcharge revenue, vessel disposal costs, reimbursement uncertainty, mandatory insurance models, possible bonding alternatives, and whether any phase-in or grandfathering approach should be considered. No formal action was taken.

b. Public Comment: None.

9. Board Member Attributes:

Presentation by Port Director:

Port Director Uchtyl stated the City Clerk is seeking applications for three Board positions that are expiring. He stated the packet included draft attributes the Board may wish to share with the Assembly for consideration during the next round of applications and interviews.

Port Director Uchytel stated applications are due May 31 and that interview dates had not yet been scheduled. He noted that the expiring seats are those held by Tyler Emerson, Clayton Hamilton, and Shem Sooter.

a. Committee Questions:

Committee members stated the draft attributes looked acceptable. One member noted support for the reference to social media restraint. No formal changes were directed.

b. Public Comment: None

I. STAFF, COMMITTEE, AND MEMBER REPORTS:

10. Assembly Liaison: None

11. Visitor Industry Task Force Liaison:

Mr. Sooter reported that the Visitor Industry Task Force discussed long-term planning, including charges and future considerations beyond five years. He stated the cruise industry presentation is still pending. He also reported that the Visitor Industry Task Force timeline has been extended beyond July.

12. Harbormaster:

Harbormaster Creswell stated there was nothing major to add beyond the written report. He stated summer operations are getting underway, operations staff are wrapping up seasonal preparations, and the fishing fleet will be arriving soon.

13. Port Engineer:

Port Engineer Sill stated he had nothing additional to report beyond the projects already presented and would present again the following week.

14. Port Director:

Port Director Uchytel reminded Board members that they are required to complete the related-party disclosure form and stated he would provide a scanned cheat sheet. He asked members to complete and return the forms the following week.

Port Director Uchytel stated the vacant administrative assistant position had been filled and that Nate Block would begin June 1. He also noted an upcoming Tourism Industry Task Force presentation regarding Goldbelt and West Juneau, scheduled for the following day at 5:30 p.m. in Assembly Chambers.

Port Director Uchytel thanked Board members who attended recent ribbon cuttings and noted an Aurora Harbor ribbon cutting was scheduled for Friday.

J. COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

15. Next Operations/Planning Committee Meeting - Wednesday, June 17th, 2026:

Under committee administrative matters, Mr. Sooter suggested a future agenda item to review passenger-for-hire fees at Statter Harbor, particularly after completion of uplands improvements. He stated he would like to evaluate the current fee charged for passengers crossing the dock and indicated he believes the current amount may be too low. No formal action was taken.

K. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Ridgway moved to adjourn. Hearing no objection, the meeting adjourned.

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