

THE MANIFEST

SUPREME COURT TO HEAR CRITICAL EXECUTIVE SESSION CASE

WPPA is participating in a case before the state Supreme Court which could have profound implications for port districts who lease real property. The case - *Columbia Riverkeeper v. Port of Vancouver USA* – involves when a port commission can meet in Executive Session to discuss the terms of a pending lease.

The plaintiffs in this case assert that when the state's Open Public Meetings Act allows an Executive Session exemption for real estate negotiations, the term "price" must be read in its narrowest sense, and cannot include key factors relating to the overall consideration that the port will receive from the tenant in return for the use of the public's land.

The Open Public Meetings Act and its sister the Public Records Act both exist in order to promote transparency in government. They are both very important statutes. But they both contain important caveats that are also designed to protect the public's interest. One of these

caveats relates to the ability of a local government such as a port district to ensure that the public gets the best overall deal for its real estate assets.

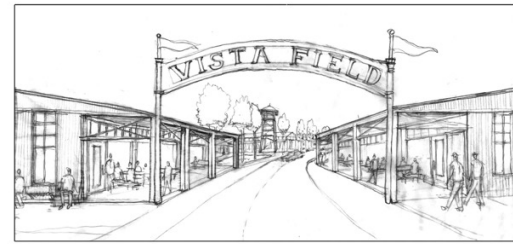
When a port commission meets in Executive Session they need to be able to discuss more than simply a per-foot lease rate in order to collectively assess whether a private sector developer is giving the taxpayers a good deal. For this reason, WPPA is participating in the case with a "friend of the court" brief, in order to make the argument for all ports that this lawsuit could have important implications for all ports – not just the one port defending this case. The public's interest will not be served if the Court agrees with plaintiffs in this case.

Arguments will be presented to the Court early in 2017, and we will keep all of our members apprised of developments. If you have questions or would like to talk about the case, please contact Eric Johnson at the WPPA office.

PORT SPOTLIGHT

A NEW VISION IN KENNEWICK

The Port of Kennewick is in the process of re-developing the former airport known as Vista Field. The port commission recently made the decision to retain the name for the property, in deference to both the history of the site, and because it is well known locally.



GATEWAY THROUGH SIDEWALK ARCADES WITH CAFE SEATING IN RENOVATED HANGARS (WITH VISTA FIELD SIGN)

Working with planners and architects, the Port is now developing guidelines and concepts that will apply to the 103 acre site. It is planned to be a mixed-use development, including commercial and residential properties. Concepts such as wider sidewalks, pedestrian and cycling friendly streets, a water feature and a central pavilion or arcade are all being studied. The goal is to create a unique 'sense of place,' tying all of the elements of the community together.

The port is also committed to honoring the history of the airfield, including the role it played as a training facility for Naval pilots in World War II.

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FROM ERIC JOHNSON

FAST BALLS, CURVE BALLS & CHANGE UPS



"We stand on guard for thee." That is the most memorable line for me from "Oh, Canada" – national anthem of our allies and neighbors to the North. But from a port perspective, they are not just allies and neighbors; they are business competitors as well.

For that reason, I accompanied a delegation of port and political leaders last week on a short visit to the Pacific Northwest's other Vancouver. I had not been there in several years, and had never visited directly with staff and officials from the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority. I commend our own Northwest Seaport Alliance for their efforts organizing this learning opportunity.

While I marveled at the continued huge national investments that the Canadian government is pouring into Vancouver's port infrastructure, I also learned something amazing. Their port has status as a 'crown corporation.' This means that they do not have to coordinate, ask permission of, or even abide by the zoning requirements of their cities or even the province of British Columbia.

The concerns of local citizens or native peoples are listened to, and the port would argue perhaps even acted upon, but at the end of the day the port up there gets to develop as it pleases, with direction and lots of money from Ottawa. The theme is that there is a 'social interest' in their trade gateway, and the interests of all Canadians must necessarily outweigh concerns from local citizens.

I must admit I did allow myself some brief fantasizing over this. The thought of having the power to dismiss neighbors and regulators with a breezy thank-you made me woozy with joy. But once that passed, I realized that if we are to compete with that system, we are going to have to be better at the things we can control—like customer service, workforce training, and smart investments. Our federal government has never had a centralized job-creating investment strategy, and isn't likely to begin one now.

We have a system that is full of process and we have many cooks in the kitchen. We are competing with a region that has neither. That is just a fastball that we have to learn to hit.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Port Day

January 31, 2017, Port Day, Olympia

Ports **will not** be asked to showcase their booths this year; booth presentations only occur in odd-numbered years. If you would like to meet with your legislator on this day, contact his or her office directly and **make your appointment as soon as possible**; their schedules fill up quickly. See you in a few weeks!

PORT SPOTLIGHT

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The next steps are working with the City of Kennewick on developing a master plan and the infrastructure that will support it. The port and city are creating a developer's agreement that will guide development of the site for a decade, providing a binding vision between the port and city. Next year the port will focus on infrastructure financing, construction design and recruiting developers.

"We are essentially building a city from scratch," said Port CEO Tim Arntzen. "This is a complex project, and the port and city are busy working diligently to make sure that we deliver a quality development to our community."

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Finance Director
Port of Pasco

**Business Manager,
Westport Marina District**
Port of Grays Harbor

**Business and Operations
Assistant - Satsop Business
Park**
Port of Grays Harbor

**Business Development
Assistant**
Port of Port Angeles

Executive Director
Port of St. Helens, Oregon

Finance Manager
Port of St. Helens, Oregon

Marina Office Assistant
Port of Bremerton

Port Attorney
Port of Walla Walla

Director, Engineering
Port of Tacoma

**Senior Real Estate
Manager**
Port of Tacoma

**Assistant Director,
Facilities**
Port of Tacoma

**Records Officer/
Administrative Assistant**
Port of Longview

Communications Associate
Port of Longview

**ERO TCP Section Manager
(WMS Band 2)**
Department of Ecology,
Spokane

If you would like information on any of these positions, visit www.washingtonports.org/employmentopportunities