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## **Storm impacts take center stage at Port meeting**

The fallout from stormy weather that occurred during king tides kept Port of Newport officials busy and provided several points of discussion at Tuesday's regular Port Commission meeting.

Earlier this month, rough waters and high winds resulted in the loss of 66 feet of Port Dock 7, according to Port Manager Paula Miranda. Already high on the maintenance list, Miranda explained that grant seeking efforts are underway to help fund the \$200,000 or so needed to do the planning and engineering for a new dock. The actual construction will be a multi-million dollar undertaking, she said, noting that it will be impossible without major grant support.

The storm and the loss of dock footage ratchets up the need for a new dock, since a temporary or makeshift repair to add the footage back to dock 7 isn't practical. Using a hypothetical question, the general manager explained why. "Are you going to replace that 66 feet and attach it to an old dock that's falling apart?"

Port Dock 7 wasn't the only thing to take a hit during the January king tides. A boat basin marker that warns mariners of a submerged jetty at the entrance to the commercial marina also came down and must be replaced.

"We were able to get an emergency permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and also the DSL (Oregon Department of State Lands) and all the permits are good," Director of Operations Aaron Bretz explained. Port Commissioners approved the removal of the old piling and replacement with a new piling for a price not to exceed \$21,650.

Still dealing with storm damage, the Commission was also updated on some worrisome pilings that support a structure near Port Dock 1. A building owned by the Port and leased to a charter fishing company is of particular worry, prompting officials to bring in inspectors and foreshadow the likelihood of some major developments in the very near future.

"Chances are we may have to remove the building and condemn the property," Miranda said, noting that engineers were making that evaluation now.

The meeting wasn't all stormy weather. Port Commissioners were presented with an audit report that had no findings. The general manager praised Director of Finance Mark Brown for his work.

"Mark and his team have done a phenomenal job in getting our finances in order. That's the reason why we have a nice, clean audit," Miranda said.

Also on the financial front, Port Commissions reviewed a potential new rate and fee schedule for 2021, but ultimately did not take action on it. Instead, they asked Port staff to review the financial impact of implementing a "senior discount" for users of the recreational marina. The issue will likely come back to the board at its February meeting.

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