

There is plenty of activity on the Port's agenda for 2009

By Chris Keuss, Executive Director, the Port of Edmonds

- A stylish new building for the Edmonds Yacht Club.
- A possible new aquatic center at Harbor Square.
- Phase II of the Port's re-landscaping project.
- A new look at the visions and plans for the Port.
- A new executive director to oversee it all.

These are some of the things the Commission and staff of the Port of Edmonds will be focusing on in 2009. And—if all goes smoothly—they all represent positive changes that the community could look forward to this year and in the years to come.

You may already be aware that I have announced my intention to retire as executive director at the end of May. Which means that for five months this year, I will be involved in these major undertakings and for the remaining seven months—and beyond—it will be someone new. Finding that person among dozens of qualified candidates is a top priority right now.

A new aquatic center? What is that all about? Discussions are presently underway with representatives from the City, the Port, the school district and the owners of Harbor Square Athletic Club to create an expanded swimming facility at Harbor Square. The Port owns the land, the City and school district each have several swimming programs and Harbor Square is planning to expand its own aquatic capability. The groups are exploring the possibility of some sort of a public-private venture to serve the interests of all. Right now things are only at the talking stage and other sites are being considered. Everyone agrees that, if such an arrangement can be put together, it would be a significant benefit to the community.

The Edmonds Yacht Club has outgrown its present facility on the water side of the Anthony's building. After long but friendly talks with the Port, the City building department and local bankers, the Yacht Club is preparing to break ground on a new two-story facility just south of

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Arnie's. Their time schedule calls for the building to be complete and ready to welcome 2010 by year's end.

Last October the Port began the first phase of a re-landscaping project aimed mainly at replacing trees that have grown too large and are threatening to break up sidewalks and blacktop surfaces. The area just south of the Port administration building was replanted in late fall and phase two will replace the trees and shrubs in the Port's north parking lot this spring and summer. Disruption will be minimized because some of the work will be done at the same time that the Yacht Club is constructing their new building in the same general location.

With all this going on, and with the Port's acquisition of most of the buildings in the Harbor Square business complex, it is time to take a fresh look at the Port's long range Master Plan and more detailed Strategic Plan. These need to be reviewed and updated periodically and 2009 is the time. There will be more said about this in future columns and plenty of opportunity for the public to offer their thoughts as well.

As you can see, 2009 is going to be an active year and, by all accounts, an exciting one here at the Port. I think you can look forward to seeing our already impressive waterfront become even better this year.

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