

**A new executive director for the Port has been named, here's what's next**

By Chris Keuss, Executive Director, the Port of Edmonds

The Port Commission has named their choice for the new executive director of the Port of Edmonds.

If you haven't yet heard, their choice is Robert E. McChesney, the current executive director of the Port of Port Angeles. He has indicated that he wants the job and, on April 3, the Commissioners selected him for it. All that remains is agreement on contract terms.

The new executive director will take over upon my retirement at the end of May. During the remaining few weeks I hope to be able to work with him, bringing him up to speed on several projects and tasks that are currently in progress and that will spill over into his administration. For example, possible redevelopment of the Harbor Square Business Complex, construction of the new Edmonds Yacht Club building and Phase II of a major re-landscaping project at the marina, to name a few.

McChesney was one of 74 original applicants for the Port position. Through careful review of qualifications and, ultimately, a three-step interview process the finalists were narrowed down to three: McChesney, Grant Dull, Executive Director of the Lynnwood Public Facilities District and Steve Burkett, former city manager of the City of Shoreline. The Commissioners stated that they felt very comfortable with any of the three finalists.

I have known Bob McChesney for several years in his capacity as executive director at the Port of Port Angeles and, earlier, when he was director of properties and development at the Port of Everett. We have both been very active in our state trade group, the Washington Public Ports Association, where he was chair of the Trade and Economic Development committee.

Besides Port Angeles and Everett, McChesney was assistant to the executive director (the equivalent of our deputy director) at the Port of Longview. He holds a Master of Marine Affairs degree and a B.A. in political science from the University of Washington.

Besides his residence in Port Angeles, Bob has a home in Shoreline and has strong roots here in our area. During his final interview session, he spoke glowingly of the Port of Edmonds, in particular pointing out our selection as national marina of the year three years ago. He made it clear that this is the kind of legacy he would love to inherit and work to make even better.

The Commissioners felt that McChesney's experience in development and property management—and, incidentally, that of the other finalists as well—will serve Port District citizens well in turning the Harbor Square Business Complex into a strong financial asset.

The next step in the employment process is negotiation of the contract, including compensation. Once that is done, the Port Commission will formalize the contract and, on or about June 1, the new executive director will take over. If the contract negotiations with McChesney go smoothly, I know that I can feel comfortable leaving my long tenure at the Port knowing it will be in very competent, qualified hands.

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