

Dana Point Harbor Oversight Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

MINUTES

Robert Langan, DPHOAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. Committee members not in attendance; Wendy Leavell, Shala O'Keefe, Darcie Harris

PRESENTATIONS/UPDATES:

-Orange County Supervisor Foley Update: Supervisor Foley updated the Committee on the bi-weekly calls between her office, Dana Point Harbor Partners (DPHP), and CEO Real Estate (CEO RE), held since the February DPHOAC meeting. She reported that the new parking structure is nearly complete with an anticipated May/June completion. The draft EIR for the proposed hotels is scheduled to be submitted to the Dana Point Planning Commission by March 7th. Phase 8 of the marina construction is scheduled for April 1st occupancy. A meeting has been scheduled for March 17th, between DPHP, the Dana Point Yacht Club (DPYC) and the Supervisor's office to discuss the future options and timeline for the yacht club.

Supervisor Foley then reported that the County is waiting for the estimates that will hopefully confirm that having Bellingham Marine construct the redesigned OCSEC docks will be the most cost effective and timely way to proceed. She also reported that her office is working with Congressmen Levin and Min to secure funding for improvements to the Harbor Patrol docks as well as a redesign and construction of the OC Sailing & Events Center (OCSEC) buildings. The Supervisor advised the Committee that her annual Flag Day celebration on June 13, 14 and 15 will be situated at Baby Beach again.

- County of Orange CEO Real Estate Update: Christian Gagne, the Dana Point Harbor Oversight Manager for the County of Orange, reiterated general development updates, added that DPHP is in the process of working on Phase 7.1 of the marina, and layering in the landscaping adjacent to the new parking structure with mature trees at Golden Lantern/DPH Drive. He then asked that Katie Sorensen, DPHP Director of Marketing, to provide additional details on the Festival of Whales details. Ms. Sorensen confirmed that there would be no parade this year and detailed the shuttle options that will be available for the public to access the harbor. Mr. Gagne advised the Committee that John Laurain of R.P. Laurain & Associates will be conducting their site visit in connection with their market study report on March 7th to get the lay of the harbor and to meet with DPHP, etc.

- Presentation regarding the Dana Point Fisheries Enhancement Program (DPFEP) by John Riordan and Bob Denault. Mr. Riordan and Mr. Denault, founding members with 30 years of involvement with the White Seabass grow program, briefed the Committee on the program's origins, its contribution to the local fish ecosystem, and the need for alternative pen locations. They highlighted that the program, currently situated within DPHP's lease premises, will need to be relocated as Phase 9 construction (adjacent to the Harbor Patrol office and commercial docks) is set to commence this summer. They advised the Committee that they identified 4 possible options and indicated that staying in their current location while Phase 9 separates itself from the Harbor Patrol docks, is their preferred outcome. Other potential options are being explored such as the area adjacent to the commercial fishing docks (Dock BFD1 / G42), as well as exploring the area near the Ocean Institute's existing aquaculture grow program at their facility. Lastly, the OCSEC East dock was posed as a potential location, but water quality would need to be further analyzed in the area.

Supervisor Foley requested that OC Environmental Health conduct an analysis of the water quality within the harbor at locations to be determined. The committee was supportive of the OCSEC location option, as the program volunteer base could be supplemented by OCSEC affiliated youth programs. Regardless of any temporary location provided, DPFEP would ultimately like to return to a location at or near the Harbor Patrol docks based on known water quality and ease of access for their volunteer base. Interim location options and long-term solution discussions will be on-going. Supervisor Foley assured Mr. Riordan and Mr. Denault that an acceptable solution to all parties will be identified.

-O.C. Parks Update: Sean Bengtson, OC Parks' South Coast Operations Manager, advised the Committee about the ongoing upgrade projects to the OCSEC including the Cove Room roof replacement project, which includes installation of a new skylight, the installation of water fountains and bottle filling stations along with general maintenance to include updates to the lighting system and OCSEC structure cosmetics. In connection with the roof replacement project, a small portion of the Baby Beach parking lot will be coned off to provide a staging location for construction materials and equipment.

-Committee Member Updates:

Diane Wenzel advised the Committee that she had met with many OCSEC users to discuss the IDS plan for the short-term space reconfiguration. In the interim plan, the Boat House's primary designation is set up for watercraft storage, users have suggested reversing the storage, placing equipment in the Boat House and watercraft on the docks. The users also asked that any containers that are used for storage have roll-up doors versus hinged doors for better access. The Outrigger Club also asked for some storage allocation in the OCSEC for spare equipment storage. The club also asked that the ramp to access their proposed storage location on the grass near Baby Beach be redesigned to accommodate the movement in and out of the enclosure of the 40' hulls.

Colin Harris advised the Committee that the maritime training courses for public safety personnel proposed for the DPH have been approved and will be held at the Ocean Institute in July and September. The sponsoring agency is California Safety Training Institute, better known as CSTI, which is the training arm of the California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES). More details will follow, but in the meantime, interested parties can contact Colin Harris at Colin.Harris@longbeach.gov with questions.

Bob Langan adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m. after a motion, a second and a committee vote for the adjournment passed. The next meeting is scheduled for 4/2/25.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. OPEN - Resolution of construction contract for OCSEC docks.
2. OPEN - Public benefit Analysis by DPHP and the County of Orange.