



LOWER COLUMBIA REGION
HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE

Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, March 11, 2026 | 1330-1405hrs
Portland Spirit & Virtual Meeting via MS Teams**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair: Larry Landgraver, <i>Port of Longview</i> (27) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vice Chair: Ross McDonald, <i>Sause Bros.</i> (26) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Secretary: Carl Bertapelle, <i>Merchants Exchange</i> (26) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Captain Steve Ackerman, <i>Columbia River Bar Pilots</i> (27) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Richard Vincent, <i>Port of Portland</i> (27) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steve Gunn, <i>Shaver Transportation</i> (27) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kenny Davais, <i>Port of Vancouver USA</i> (26) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (Virtual)	Vanessa Green, <i>Clean Rivers Cooperative</i> (27) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kate Mickelson, <i>Columbia River Steamship Operators' Assn.</i> (27) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dena Horton, <i>Pacific Northwest Waterways Assn.</i> (27) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Captain Jeremy Nielsen, <i>Columbia River Pilots</i> (26) Represented by Alternate Captain Nick Ritter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elliot Levin, <i>Port of Columbia County</i> (26) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Neal Feustel, <i>Foss Maritime</i> (26) <input type="checkbox"/>	Carl Obermeier, <i>Maritime Fire & Safety Assn.</i> (26) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Randy Cooper, <i>EGT, LLC</i> (26) <input type="checkbox"/>	Earl Dixon, <i>United Grain Corporation</i> (27) <input type="checkbox"/>

EX OFFICIO

Brian Kirk, <i>WA Dept. of Ecology</i> (ex officio) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Josh Emerson, <i>OR DEQ</i> (ex officio) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sean Kuschel <i>WA Dept. of Ecology</i> (ex officio) <input type="checkbox"/>
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1. Meeting Called to Order, Welcome & Determine Quorum—*Presiding Officer*

Chair Landgraver called the meeting to order at 1330 hours. Roll call was conducted and a quorum was confirmed.

2. Safety Moment – Portland Spirit



LOWER COLUMBIA REGION
HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE

Cody Peck from Portland Spirit provided the safety moment and presented the emergency response plan, outlining key procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.

3. Agenda Additions/Corrections

There were no proposed additions or corrections to the agenda.

4. *Action Item*: Review of Meeting Minutes of January 14, 2026 (*attached*)

The meeting minutes of January 14, 2026, were presented for review.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes from the January 14, 2026, Board Meeting were approved as presented.

5. Financial Report/Administrative Update — *Presiding Officer & Staff*

Brianna Derham directed the Board's attention to the financial reports for January and February 2026, which were included in the meeting packet and distributed in advance.

a. *Action Item*: Financial Reports – January 2026

Brianna Derham provided an overview of the financials for the period ending January 31, 2026. As of that date, LCRHSC had \$20,116.46 in Operating Cash. Revenue projections were \$1,000 over the budgeted amounts for 2026, and year-to-date expenses remained within budget. Line Item 33 – Travel which included payment for the LCRHSC's Chair to attend the National Harbor Safety Conference was highlighted for review.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Financial Reports for January 2026 were approved as presented.

b. *Action Item*: Financial Reports – February 2026

Brianna Derham provided an overview of the financials for the period ending February 28, 2026. As of that date, LCRHSC had \$23,049.41 in Operating Cash. Revenue projections



LOWER COLUMBIA REGION
HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE

were \$1,500 above budgeted amounts for 2026, and year-to-date expenses were in line with the 2026 budgeted amount. No line items were highlighted for review.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Financial Reports for February 2026 were approved as presented.

6. Standing Subcommittee Assignments & Discussions:

a. Membership Outreach Subcommittee -- *(Carl Bertapelle)*

i. New Members

Secretary Bertapelle announced the addition of one new member, Portland Spirit, who joined the LCRHSC since the last Board Meeting. The new member was welcomed by the board.

b. Navigation Subcommittee -- *(Capt. Steve Ackerman & Captain Jeremy Nielsen)*

Captain Ackerman presented the Navigation Subcommittee report which included the following updates:

- **Navigation Lights on Fishing Vessels:** The committee briefly revisited the ongoing topic regarding navigation lights and deck-lighting compliance on fishing vessels. It was noted that the Coast Guard had previously hired staff to support this effort, but progress has slowed due to the partial government shutdown and the end of the peak fishing season. The issue remains open but is currently lower priority.
- **Derelict Vessels and Debris Concerns:** Members discussed recent challenges in the lower river related to derelict vessels and debris, particularly following recent severe weather. Several vessels and floating structures have broken free, including an older log-float style dock section that drifted into the vicinity of the pilot boats. While the immediate hazard was mitigated by relocating a vessel, debris remains in the area.



LOWER COLUMBIA REGION
HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE

- Jurisdictional responsibility for removal remains unclear. Multiple agencies have indicated the issue does not fall under their authority, creating an impasse. The debris has since drifted further downstream but continues to pose a potential hazard.
- DSL reported that it maintains an internal, non-public interactive map of derelict vessels statewide. The map is not publicly released to avoid unintended misuse of information about unoccupied vessels.
- It was noted that derelict vessel management is slated as a discussion topic at the upcoming Regional Conference in July.
- A recent ruling related to derelict vessel removal and wage-rate requirements has been fully reversed, which is expected to ease some of the administrative challenges associated with removal efforts. Additional details will be shared with the committee.

Captain Ackerman concluded his report with no further updates.

c. Harbor Safety Plan Subcommittee – *(Ross McDonald)*

Vice Chair McDonald reported that updates had been requested and made to a few areas of the Harbor Safety Plan, including Aids to Navigation Guidelines, Anchorage Guidelines, and Required Charts and Publications Guidelines. Vice Chair McDonald noted the specific updates and opened the floor to further discussion.

Action Item: Approval of the Harbor Safety Plan Updates Presented

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the March 2026 updates to the Harbor Safety Plan were approved as presented.

7. Old Business

a. 2026 Regional Conference



LOWER COLUMBIA REGION
HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE

Secretary Bertapelle provided an update on the planning for the annual Regional Conference, scheduled for July 8, 2026, at the Hatfield Marine Center in Newport, OR. The Executive Committee highlighted the no-host happy hour planned for the evening prior, July 7, 2026, at The Wilds Taphouse & BBQ. Chair Landgraver added that a Board of Directors meeting will be held this year prior to the start of the Regional Conference, in the same building but in a separate room.

b. 2026 National Conference

Vice Chair McDonald provided an update on the 2026 National Conference, scheduled for March 24–25, 2026, in Seattle, WA. He noted that U.S. Coast Guard participation has not yet been confirmed due to the partial government shutdown. Confirmation is anticipated by March 19, 2026.

c. 2026 Upcoming Board Meeting Schedule & Locations

The upcoming board meeting dates and locations were reviewed and confirmed. It was noted that the November 11, 2026 meeting will be rescheduled to November 18, 2026 due to the Veterans Day holiday.

8. New Business

a. Welch Island Anchorage Request

Captain Nick Ritter reported that a joint letter was submitted on behalf of the River Pilots, CRSOA, and the LCRHSC requesting that the U.S. Coast Guard review the proposed anchorage layout at Welch Island and consider identifying a location for an additional anchorage area. Captain Ritter noted that the availability of the Swift (high-speed launch boat) has significantly improved operational flexibility in the area. As a result, six vessels were able to anchor at Welch Island last month; capacity that was not previously achievable before the Swift was in service. Discussion followed.



LOWER COLUMBIA REGION
HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE

b. Distinguished Harbor Safety Committee Award Application

Brianna Derham informed the board that the Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee submitted its application for the Distinguished Harbor Safety Committee Award on March 4. The award will be presented at the National Harbor Safety Conference. She also thanked the Merchants Exchange and the Clean Rivers Cooperative for submitting letters of support on behalf of the LCRHSC.

c. Next Board & General Meeting is – May 13, 2026, at Port of Vancouver

Chair Landgraver confirmed that the next board and general meeting is on March 13, 2026, at the Port of Vancouver.

d. Fish & Wildlife Tabletop (Added New Business)

Josh Emerson (OR DEQ) provided an update on the upcoming Fish & Wildlife tabletop exercise. He noted that the exercise will address scenarios involving vessels requiring berthing for invasive species removal and the potential operational impacts on ports. Josh highlighted the need for clearer guidance on when ports may be required to accept such vessels, particularly when a vessel has transited multiple jurisdictions. Brief discussion followed.

9. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was duly made, seconded, and approved by unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned at 1400 hours.