

6-Week Update on Port of Newport's General Manager

On 5 March 2018 the Port of Newport Commissioners announced the selection of Doug Parsons as the new General Manager of the Port. Since his arrival in mid-March Doug has jumped right in tackling the many pressing issues and identifying and vetting future projects that have the potential to generate income for the Port of Newport.

One of his first assignments was to review the Port's rates, many of which have become outdated, so that the Port can increase facility maintenance and repairs; fund the most pressing infrastructure capital projects; keep up with its own increasing expenses; and maintain or increase customer services in the near future. Doug's background and experience provides the Port with additional bandwidth to improve management and operational efficiencies; seek and evaluate business opportunities for submittal to the Port Commission; begin implementing financial automation; and increase financial oversight.



Port Manager Doug Parsons at Newport's Port Dock 7

Doug has spent countless hours becoming familiar with the Port facilities and staff; listening to a wide variety of Port-related stakeholder issues; meeting with local, regional, and State sources of support; establishing working relationships with elected officials; etc. Outgoing Board President Patricia Patrick-Joling notes that "Information is flowing quickly from Doug to the Port Commissioners, and we're pleased with his management skills. The Port Commission is encouraged by his energy, enthusiasm, and objective feedback. In his first six weeks Doug has proven that he thrives on researching and solving difficult issues, and bringing creative solutions to the table. He's also getting the message out that the Port, including the International Terminal, is indeed open for business."

Upon his selection at the beginning of March, Doug stated that “I’m looking forward to leading the Port of Newport team, as well as working with and supporting the Port Commissioners. I am drawn to the General Manager position based on the diversity of the Port of Newport’s activities and the wide range of the job tasks and responsibilities. Additionally, the opportunity to concurrently help address the Port’s issues, capture new business opportunities, and increase community economic development are each exciting challenges.” After his first month he observed that “... the issues and opportunities are even more diverse and complicated than I had expected, so I haven’t been bored or disappointed with this multi-dimensional challenge!”

In his first monthly General Manager’s Report provided to the Port Commissioners and public at the regular monthly commission meeting held 24 April 2018, Doug itemized the tasks he’s accomplished since coming onboard and wrote that “I’ve been reflecting upon my first month at the Port and some key points come to mind.

[a] First and foremost is that after only one month I’m about a month ahead of my own planned schedule (i.e. I’m now where I had expected to be after working for two months at the Port). This is in large part due to the high quality, professionalism, and great attitudes of the entire PON staff!

[b] I’m beginning to better understand the differences and nuances between working with the Board of Directors of private and/or public corporations and working with the Board of Commissioners of public agencies, and am making an effort to adjust my management style accordingly so that we’re more effective as a team.

[c] I now clearly recognize that Commissioners of public agencies have the huge constraint of not being able to freely express their opinions, brainstorm ideas with their colleagues, and interactively discuss particular issues as a group before they meet in a quorum with the public and media to initially discuss the various motions, resolutions, etc.

[d] I now understand the need and usefulness of my providing each Port Commissioner with concise written rationales for each of my recommendations in advance of bringing them up at any Commission meetings.

[e] I apologize to the public for any confusion and/or dissension I may have contributed to in my enthusiasm to tackle this assignment, and thank them for their understanding as I try to learn the most efficient methods of helping the Port move forward and prosper!”

According to the Port’s attorney Pete Gintner “Doug has set the bar high and appears to be able to deliver, making all of us at the Port better attuned to a set of expectations necessary to make the Port the envy of the coast.”