

Port Powers Training Module:

The Background

The Washington Public Ports Association has offered our membership two optional training sessions that can be added to your WPPA Spring Meeting registration. With the release of the [Port Governance and Management Guide](#) in 2022, WPPA will be working with our associate members as well as port and association staff to update and align our training modules, resources and other training programs and when appropriate, rethink them. We look forward to hearing from you about what's working and what training opportunities you would like to see from your association in the future.

The Port Powers Training Module is one of these updated modules. Since the 1911 Ports Act, port powers have been evolving to meet the specific needs of communities across Washington State. This session has been developed to explore existing powers and detail specific ways ports use the powers they have. The discussion will include how ports interpret or manage the powers they have through delegation of authority and other mechanisms designed to ensure the ports mission remains central. Panelists will explore specific port examples where and evaluation of expansion of powers was explored. Finally, a discussion of the avenue to seek expanded authority along with the risks associated with doing so.

Presenters:



Frank Chmelik, Attorney

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Frank Chmelik represents businesses and governments throughout Washington State. As a long-time municipal lawyer, he routinely provides advice on municipal law including litigation, public contracting, public records and governance issues. As an experienced business lawyer, he is the general counsel to many northwest Washington businesses, construction companies, and cooperatives providing a broad range of business and litigation advice. As a well-respected environmental lawyer, he advises business and governments on regulatory compliance issues including stormwater and operational permits; on remediation of complex former industrial sites and sediment sites; and on recovery of remedial costs from other liable parties and historic insurance carriers. Blending business, municipal, and environmental law, Frank has worked with businesses and governments throughout the State on redevelopment or repurposing of historically contaminated industrial Brownfield sites. Frank was a legal member of the consulting team for the Department of Ecology that authored a report on Brownfield redevelopment. Frank is the general counsel for the Washington Public Ports Association in Olympia, Washington where he authors a monthly column on municipal legal issues.

Frank Chmelik started his legal career as a U.S. Army JAG Corps officer where he served as a prosecutor and defense counsel at Fort Lewis. He then worked for the Seattle law firm, Karr Tuttle Campbell. In 1987, he moved to Bellingham where he co-founded the firm.

Each year, since 1999, when the selection began, Frank has been chosen by Washington Law & Politics Magazine as a "Super Lawyer®" representing the top 5% of the lawyers in Washington. Frank has served as a member of the American Bar Association's House of Delegates and as a member of the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Military Law and in 2014, he was elected a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation.

Jim Kuntz, CEO



Chelan Douglas Regional Port Authority
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Jim Kuntz is the Chief Executive Officer for the Chelan Douglas Regional Port Authority. Jim has been passionate about economic development and held port district leadership positions for over thirty-five years. Jim has a Bachelor of Economics from Eastern Washington University and a Master of Public Administration from Evergreen State College.

Sara Young, Executive Director



Port of Skagit
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Sara Young has been with the Port of Skagit for 16 years, serving in a variety of roles including Planning & Environmental Manager, Airport Manager and Director of Planning and Facilities. Sara holds a Master's degree in Soil Science from the University of Idaho, and earned her MBA from Washington State University. Her experience and education will certainly help her lead the diverse work of the Port of Skagit, which includes the operations and advancement of Skagit Regional Airport, Bayview Business Park, La Conner Marina, the SWIFT Center, Watershed Business Park, the Port's property in Conway, as well as opportunities in rural broadband and value-added agriculture.

Rob Fix, Executive Director



Port of Bellingham
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Rob Fix has lived in Bellingham since 1999. He came to the Port of Bellingham in 2008 first serving as Chief Financial Officer, Real Estate Division Manager, Deputy Director and appointed the Port's Executive Director in 2012. Before joining the Port, Fix was a partner and Chief Financial Officer for MTM Luxury Lodging & FST Asset Management. He also served as the CFO for Trillium. Rob Fix is a graduate of Washington State University, with a Bachelor's Degree in Hotel and Restaurant Administration.