

The Current

News for June 2023



Port of Coupeville News



*Gillespie's Meat Market
by: Island County Historical Museum, Coupeville*

New Windows Coming to 24 Front St Building

The Port of Coupeville received generous support from two organizations to upgrade this historic building. Thanks to the Coupeville Historic Waterfront Association and Ebey's Forever grant program. These donations will help recondition all four windows at our historic building at 24 Front St (next to the Coupeville Wharf).

This building is still often

referred to as the Meat Market.

Built in 1887, Meat Market owner Jim Gillespie bought it for \$80!

It's been many other things over the years: metal-antique-curio shop. The photo depicts then – and now!

This year, Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve awarded over \$62,000 of Ebey's Forever grants to fund preservation projects at 13 historic Central Whidbey properties. See more about other grantees on the National Park Service website: [Ebey Forever grants](#)

Invasive Weed Workshop: Tansy Ragwort



SOUND WATER STEWARDS PRESENTS

KNOW YOUR WEEDS
Tansy Ragwort
Workshop & Work Party
Seth Luginbill
Noxious Weed Coordinator

6-23-2023
Greenbank Farm
765 Wonn Rd, Whidbey Island
10:00 to 10:45
(Workshop)
11:00 - 1:00
(Work Party)

Tansy Ragwort is a widely invasive weed. It is toxic to animals & livestock!

WORKSHOP | LEARN
To identify & eradicate tansy ragwort. Why, when, & how it should be removed. Meet at Barn A at Greenbank Farm.

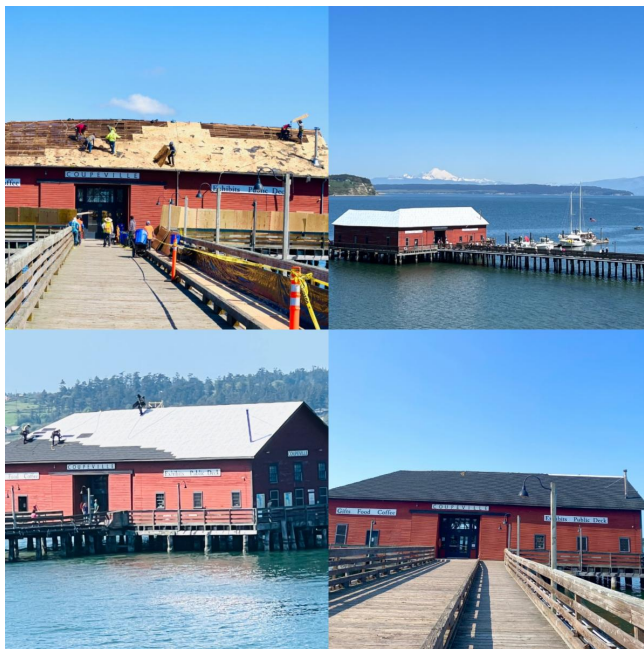
Friday, June 23
Greenbank Farm

Workshop – 10:00
Work Party – 11:00

This ongoing education series "Know Your Weeds" focuses in June on the invasive Tansy Ragwort, which is toxic to animals and livestock. The August workshop is about Thistles, save the date: August 11.

The work party helps remove Tansy Ragwort from the grounds at Greenbank Farm. Thanks to all volunteers for their ongoing help! You can learn more, and register here: [Tansy Ragwort Workshop](#)

New Coupeville Wharf Roof



We have a shiny brand-new roof on our historic wharf!

The new roofing material is metal and has an extended life of over 50 years! Its ability to weather extreme storms and flex with the building is a huge benefit.

We're grateful that contractor Olympic Roofing did the work with minimal interruptions. They did a great job pausing and cleaning up to accommodate the Penn Cove Water Festival, which

took place in the middle of the project. This work was made possible with support from two generous organizations.

The Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve, which is administered by the National Park Service, partnered with the WA state Dept of Archeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP). The DAHP's historic building program helps preserve and improve the state's registered historic buildings, which includes the historic wharf.

More wharf work to come:

Additional wharf rehab work is planned this year and into 2024. We will pause for the busy summer months, but this fall a Pile & Cap project will reinforce the wharf's foundation. Following that, there will be a seismic upgrade. We will keep you informed along this journey.

Oak Harbor Airport Public Hearing

Citizen Participation is Appreciated!

We would like to thank everyone who attended the public hearing about the AJ Eisenberg airport. The meeting drew over 50 community members, and the Port Commissioners are grateful to the 32 participants who spoke. Comments were very thoughtful and informed, and we are thankful for the public input!

Pretty much everyone agreed that our county needs a safe and efficient airport. We are the only county in the state of Washington that does not have a municipal airport. While there were differing opinions on who should own and manage the airport, and why – we are confident that a sustainable solution will be found.



To those who could not participate in the public hearing, we'd like to share some important points that the Port Commissioners would like the community to know. This is not the first time the island community has turned to the Port to help keep an important asset in public management. When the Port assumed ownership of Greenbank Farm, it was to prevent the sale to a private party that would have developed the land. When the port purchased the historic Coupeville Wharf, it preserved the last standing icon of the Mosquito Fleet era.

There is some misinformation that has circulated and was even presented during the hearing. First, the Port has express authority to own/operate an airport outside its boundaries under RCW 14.08.030. It was brought up that we would need a communication plan, as well as check other boxes. This is only required when the Port would begin developing land. If the Port was to purchase the airport and plan to develop it, we would be required to go through the communication plan of RCW 53.08.450.

Another misconception is that the Port would use its newly acquired Industrial Development District (IDD) funds to purchase the airport. The Port cannot utilize IDD funds to purchase property. Those funds are to be used for capital improvement projects only. Under public ownership, airport funding sources could include the FAA, the rural county economic development fund, WA Dept of Transportation, among others.

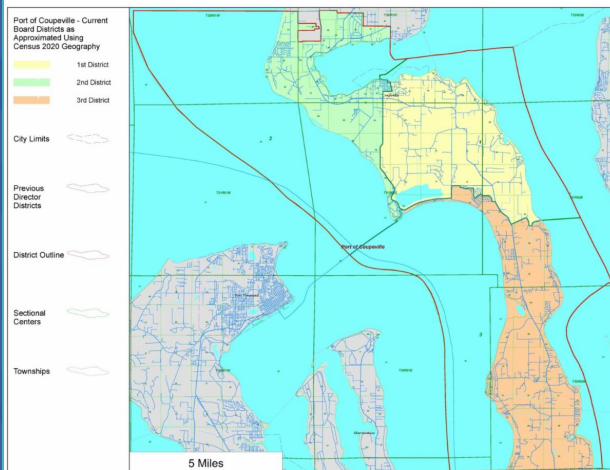
Several speakers expressed their concern that delays in improving the airport could threaten the long-term viability of Whidbey Island.

Some of the benefits citizens cited include:

- The airport helps address public safety issues and the challenge of rural medicine and emergency care
- In the event of a major natural disaster, the Deception Pass bridge will likely fail and the airport would be a crucial link to the mainland
- There are tourism benefits to local businesses, and also environmental benefits such as a reduction in automobile traffic with commuter flights
- There is an opportunity to create income from airport operations including airport hangar rentals and fuel sales
- There is an opportunity for public/private partnership(s) that can increase long-term sustainability and diversify management
- Private ownership of the airport has not led to sufficient management, and there is no certainty that promises made now by an interested party would actually materialize

The Port is currently assessing feasibility and we will continue to update the community on any future actions and/or decisions.

This video has some interesting history about the airport, and also informative interviews with community and government leaders about the benefits of public ownership: [*AJ Eisenberg Airport in Oak Harbor*](#)



Port Commissioner District 1 Position Open

The Port of Coupeville Board of Commissioners seeks a candidate for the District 1 seat, which covers an area east and south of the town of Coupeville (the yellow area on map).

Commissioner David Day will not seek re-election. No one filed in the recent filing period, so the county will hold another filing period in coming weeks. We will post information on this via the Port's social media.

Port Commissioner District 3 is also on the ballot. Two candidates filed their intent to run: incumbent Commissioner John Callahan and newcomer Angela Ewert.

We encourage those interested in our local maritime and farm heritage to consider becoming a Port Commissioner!

Upcoming Events

Port of Coupeville Board Meetings

Zoom Conference Call. For instructions on participating, visit the Port website here:

<https://portoc.org/commission-meetings/meeting-agendas/>

Sat, June 10 – Get Outdoors Day

WA State Parks Free Day

Sun, June 11 – Free Fishing Day

WA State Parks Free Day

Wed, June 14, 10 a.m.

Port of Coupeville Commission Meeting

To participate, see instructions above.

Wed, June 18, 1 p.m.

Port of Coupeville Commission Meeting

To participate, see instructions above.

Fri, June 23, Sound Water Stewards'

Tansy Ragwort Invasive Weeds

Workshop – 10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Work Party – 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Greenbank Farm

Sat, June 24, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Flea Market

Greenbank Farm

Wed, July 12, 10 a.m.

Port of Coupeville Commission Meeting

To participate, see instructions above.

Sat, July 15, 7:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Ragnar Relay

Greenbank Farm

Wed, July 26, 1 p.m.

Port of Coupeville Commission Meeting

To participate, see instructions above.

Stay updated on all of our upcoming events by checking our [events calendar](#).

Rent Greenbank Farm

Greenbank Farm is available for weddings

Roadside Farm Stands Guide

The 2023 guide to local farm stands is now available. Enjoy local food grown and raised right here on Whidbey Island!

The guide also includes farm stores and farmers markets.

Many farm stands operate on the honor system, so having cash and small change on hand is helpful.

More info is here:

[Whidbey Farmstands](#)



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and special events. Call us at 360.222.3558
or click on the link below for details on how
to rent the farm.

Find out
more



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