



Meeting Agenda

Heritage Commission

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Heritage Commission
Contact: Brittany Gillia
(360) 753-8427

Wednesday, July 22, 2026

5:30 PM

Room 207

Register to attend online:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_muF0S1DNSxiXMYuewG9dUw

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.A ROLL CALL

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.A [26-0572](#) Approval of June 24, 2026 Heritage Commission Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [Heritage 6.24.2026 Minutes draft](#)

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

During this portion of the meeting, community members may address the Advisory Committee or Commission regarding items related to City business, including items on the Agenda. In order for the Committee or Commission to comply with Public Disclosure Law for political campaigns, speakers will not be permitted to make public comments before the Committee or Commission where the speaker promotes or opposes a candidate for public office or a ballot measure.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

6.A [26-0573](#) Sandman Tugboat Removal from Olympia Heritage Register- Public Hearing

Attachments: [Port Fact Sheet](#)

[Current Photos](#)

[Original Listing- Olympia Heritage Register Staff Report](#)

7. REPORTS

8. OTHER TOPICS

9. ADJOURNMENT

Upcoming

Accommodations

The City of Olympia is committed to the non-discriminatory treatment of all persons in employment and the delivery of services and resources. If you require accommodation for your attendance at the City Advisory Committee meeting, please contact the Advisory Committee staff liaison (contact number in the upper right corner of the agenda) at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. For hearing impaired, please contact us by dialing the Washington State Relay Service at 7-1-1 or 1.800.833.6384.



City Hall
601 4th Avenue E.
Olympia, WA 98501
360-753-8244

Heritage Commission

Approval of June 24, 2026 Heritage Commission Meeting Minutes

Agenda Date: 7/22/2026
Agenda Item Number: 3.A
File Number:26-0572

Type: minutes **Version:** 1 **Status:** In Committee

Title

Approval of June 24, 2026 Heritage Commission Meeting Minutes



Meeting Minutes

Heritage Commission

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Heritage Commission
Contact: Brittany Gillia
(360) 753-8427

Wednesday, June 24, 2026

5:30 PM

Hybrid- Room 207 and Zoom

Registration link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_PKShO4taSsaLxhwp0hKcUw

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cotter called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

1.A ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Commissioner Stephen Becker, Commissioner William Cotter, Commissioner Derek Foster, Commissioner Kyle Kimball, Commissioner Stephanie Nace, Commissioner Melissa Patrick and Commissioner Gary Stedman

Excused: 2 - Commissioner Michael Bowman and Commissioner Mark Shepard

1.B OTHERS PRESENT

Natalie Weiss
Janine Gates
Nora Yao
Greg Griffith
Dick Pust
Ty Vinson

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.A [26-0497](#) Approval of May 27, 2026 Heritage Commission Meeting Minutes

The minutes was approved.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS - None

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

6.A [26-0482](#) Sea Level Rise and Cultural Assets Briefing

Ms. Weiss provided a briefing.

The information was received.

6.B [26-0496](#) Author Presentation- Janine Gates, Saving the Nisqually Delta

Ms. Gates provided a presentation.

The information was received.

6.C [26-0495](#) University of Washington Student Presentations

Nora Yao provided a presentation.

The information was received.

Commissioner Becker moved, seconded by Chair Cotter, to send a memo with an endorsement of the student design to the Port. The motion passed unanimously.

7. REPORTS

Sandman Status:

- Public Hearing next month.
- Mitigation being worked on was outlined.

Heritage Review Committee:

- There are two projects that are in the process of being scheduled.

MORE Committee:

- A recap of the OHS/BHM meeting was provided.
- The Commission has expressed commitment to pursue trialing Trivia and picnic with OHS/BHM, and a one pager on the significance of being on the register.

POG Committee:

- CLG Grant Application status. An extended survey of the South Capitol neighborhood would cost roughly \$30,000. Commission is deliberating on the direction of the CLG grant application.

8. OTHER TOPICS - None

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.



Heritage Commission

Sandman Tugboat Removal from Olympia Heritage Register- Public Hearing

Agenda Date: 7/22/2026
Agenda Item Number: 6.A
File Number:26-0573

Type: public hearing **Version:** 1 **Status:** In Committee

Title

Sandman Tugboat Removal from Olympia Heritage Register- Public Hearing

Recommended Action

Move to approve the request to remove the Sandman Tugboat from the Olympia Heritage Register

Report

Issue:

Whether to conduct a public hearing and recommend approval of the request to have the Sandman Tugboat removed from the Olympia Heritage Register

Staff Contact:

Brittany Gillia, Historic Preservation Officer, Community Planning & Development, 360.753.8427

Presenter(s):

Aaron LaPointe, Executive Director, Historic Maritime Foundation

Background and Analysis:

The Sandman Tugboat is a local maritime heritage resource that is listed on the Olympia Heritage Register, Washington State Heritage Register and National Register of Historic Places. The vessel was constructed in 1910 and was first used to tow scows between Olympia and Steilacoom. In 1925, the vessel was sold to Delta Smyth, a local lumberman and the tug began to maneuver fuel oil scows, log booms and lumber tows.

The tug has always operated on the Olympia waterfront and has been host tugboat for Harbor Days in Olympia since the event began in 1975. The Sandman was nominated and listed on the Olympia Heritage Register in 1990 based on the cultural significance to Olympia's maritime history as a working tug for 80 years at that time. At the time of listing, the significant features noted to be

preserved and maintained are:

1. 60 foot long (49 feet government)
2. 14 foot beam with six and one-half foot draft
3. Fabricated of old growth Douglas fir
4. Net tonnage 19 tons
5. Ironbark stern
6. Fantail stern
7. Plumb bow
8. Rounded front superstructure with casement windows
9. Pilot house has mast and funnel atop structure

The vessel was brought out of the water in 2023 for repairs, and was found to be in worse condition than anticipated leading to the boat remaining parked on land and becoming impounded by the Port of Olympia following due process. The time out of water has caused severe structural degradation, posing a tipping hazard in the boat yard, which is a significant safety risk. An auction was held on July 23, 2025 and there were no successful bids resulting in ownership of the tug reverting to the Port.

On April 13, 2026 the Heritage Review Committee of the Olympia Heritage Commission met with representatives from the Port of Olympia and Historic Maritime Foundation to go over the damaged condition of the boat and appropriate course of action (File #26-0277). The Port informed the committee that due to the various factors at play the vessel may be dismantled and removed from Boatworks due to safety concerns. The structural wood shrinkage resulting from being out of the water for several years increases the risk of tipping, collapse, or failure if moved or left unattended-posing risks to nearby workers, equipment, and infrastructure. The committee found that the damaged state of the vessel has not maintained the architectural integrity of the significant features, and deconstruction of the boat would meet the criteria for register removal. In their deliberations, the Heritage Review Committee agreed that the decommissioning of the historic Sandman Tugboat would be a significant loss to maritime heritage and preservation methods are highly encouraged. The matter of removing the tug from the Heritage Register has been referred to the full Heritage Commission for a decision pending this public hearing.

On May 27, 2026 Aaron LaPointe, Executive Director of the Historic Maritime Foundation, shared a briefing with the Heritage Commission to report on the proposed mitigation measures that would take place to preserve the history of the vessel. Preservation measures may include capturing photos and 3D scans, a survey and inventory of the artifacts and features of the vessel, exploring

using the wheelhouse as a mobile interactive display for events and education, and distributing and repurposing artifacts from the vessel. As proposed, the working parts of the vessel would be transplanted to other active historic tugboats and other artifacts would be distributed via an application process to ensure the spirit and history of the vessel will remain accessible to the public.

Olympia Municipal Code 18.12.110-Removal of Designation states “In the event that any property is no longer deemed appropriate for designation to the Heritage Register, the Heritage Commission may remove such designation by the same procedure as provided for in establishing the designation [...]”. The purpose of this public hearing is to determine whether the degradation of architectural integrity and deconstruction of the vessel deems it no longer appropriate for designation to the Heritage Register.

Climate Analysis:

Removing the Sandman Tugboat from the Olympia Heritage Register will have no climate impact.

Although not related to the ‘listing or de-listing’ decision being made at the public hearing, part of the overall project proposal for deconstruction is reusing working parts of the Sandman tugboat on other working vessels still in operation. This would keep those active vessels in service longer, thereby reducing the potential need for new parts to be manufactured and acquired and/or reducing the potential degradation and deterioration of those vessels to be deconstructed and potentially ending up in a landfill.

Equity Analysis:

The Port of Olympia and the Historic Maritime Foundation understand the value of this historic resource and believe that it is paramount to do what they can to preserve the history of the vessel. As part of this, community engagement efforts are being planned to ensure that the history of the vessel is preserved and that potential artifacts have a plan to be appropriately considered and distributed throughout the Olympia community so that the Sandman can continue to be accessible and recognized as a highlight of our local maritime heritage.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

This project is of interest to the broader Olympia community, as well as those involved in Olympia’s maritime heritage. Since the April 13 Heritage Review Committee meeting, several comments from the public have been received by the City related to the Sandman and have been forwarded to the Port of Olympia.

Options:

1. Conduct the public hearing, deliberate, and develop a recommendation on removing the Sandman tugboat from the Olympia Heritage Register.
2. Conduct the public hearing and postpone deliberations until the following meeting.

3. Do not conduct the public hearing and reschedule it for a future meeting.

Financial Impact:

N/A

Attachments:

Port Fact Sheet

Current Photos

Original Listing- Olympia Heritage Register Staff Report

Sandman Tugboat Auction (As of July 2025)

Background & Context

- The Sandman is a historic 60-foot wooden tugboat, listed on national, state, and city historic registries.
- Owned by the Sandman Foundation, a nonprofit formed to preserve the vessel, it was hauled out at Swantown Boatworks in May 2023 for needed repairs.
- After haul-out, it was discovered that the vessel was in far worse condition than anticipated.
- Nearly two years out of water has caused severe structural degradation—dried-out planks and hull shrinkage—posing a tipping hazard and significant safety risk.

Financial & Safety Considerations

- The Sandman Foundation fell behind on payments, accruing \$28,966.66 in unpaid charges for storage and related services.
- Despite efforts by Port staff to resolve the issue collaboratively, no payment plan or preservation strategy materialized.
- The vessel has become a public liability, necessitating action to protect Port staff, tenants, and infrastructure.

Legal Process & Due Diligence

The Port followed a formal, legally mandated process under RCW 53.08.320, which outlines how ports may impound and dispose of derelict or abandoned vessels:

- October 2023 – April 2025: Multiple direct contacts with representatives from the Foundation.
- November 2023 – April 2025: Official notices issued, including:
 - 60-day delinquency notice
 - Certified 10-day pre-impound letter

- o Certified Impoundment Notice
- o Public notices in The Olympian newspaper
- o Online and onsite postings at Port facilities

All actions taken are in full compliance with Washington State law and Port policy.

Auction & Next Steps

- Auction Date: July 23, 2025 at 11:00 AM
- Location: Swantown Boatworks
- Starting Value: Estimated at \$10,000 (sold *as-is, where-is*)
- Auction Conditions:
 - o Buyer must have no outstanding debts to the Port.
 - o Vessel must be removed within 10 days or buyer must post a letter of credit for moorage.
 - o If unsold or buyer fails to meet conditions, ownership reverts to the Port after 10 days.

Commitment to Preservation

- The Port deeply values the cultural and historical significance of the Sandman.
- Staff have worked in good faith with stakeholders and community members to identify preservation options.
- The Port remains open to working with any qualified historic nonprofit or maritime preservation entity able to take responsibility for restoration and safe stewardship of the vessel.

Fact Sheet: Sandman Tugboat

Item	Details
Vessel Name	Sandman
Type	60-ft wooden tugboat
Historic Status	Listed on National, State, and City Historic Registers
Owner	Sandman Foundation (nonprofit)
Location	Swantown Boatworks, Port of Olympia
Date Hauled Out	May 11, 2023
Condition	Structurally compromised due to extended dry storage
Current Status	Impounded
Outstanding Account Balance	\$28,966.66
Auction Date	July 23, 2025 @ 11:00 AM
Auction Location	Swantown Boatworks
Next Steps if Unsold	Ownership reverts to Port; may transfer to nonprofit or proceed to demolition

Sandman Tugboat Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: Why didn't the Port waive the fees to help preserve the Sandman?

A: Public ports are required to treat all users fairly and cannot subsidize private organizations indefinitely with public funds. Fees must be applied consistently across all tenants.

Q2: Could the Port have done more to save the vessel?

A: The Port extended flexibility over two years, deferred enforcement actions, and proactively engaged multiple parties—including the Foundation, private individuals, and local preservation advocates. Unfortunately, no viable plan emerged.

Q3: Can a preservation group still step in?

A: Yes. Qualified nonprofits or maritime preservation entities are welcome to contact the Port prior to or even after the auction to explore options for transfer and restoration.

Q4: What happens if no one buys the vessel at auction?

A: Ownership reverts to the Port 10 days after the auction. A marine survey will be conducted (as required by the Department of Licensing). If no qualified party assumes responsibility, the vessel may be dismantled and removed due to safety concerns.

Q5: Why is the vessel considered a hazard?

A: The vessel has been out of the water for nearly two years, which has caused structural wood shrinkage. This increases the risk of tipping, collapse, or failure if moved or left unattended—posing risks to nearby workers, equipment, and infrastructure.





















STAFF REPORT

Tugboat Sand Man

Public Hearing: February 28, 1990

Thurston County Courthouse, Building #1, Room 152
2000 Lakeridge Drive S.W., Olympia, WA 98502

Staff Report Prepared by: Shanna Stevenson

Application Number: OHR-90-1

Name of Property: *Tugboat Sand Man*; Historic Name

Location of Property: West Bay Marina
Olympia, WA 98506

Owner: Robert D. Powell
c/o 117 N. Washington St.
Olympia, WA 98501

Date Built: 1910

A. Background and Historical Significance

The *Sand Man* was built in 1910 by Crawford and Reid shipyard in Tacoma, Washington for A. J. Weston, owner of Olympia Sand and Gravel. Weston had commissioned the tug after seeing a nickel-plated 50 h.p. Frisco Standard gasoline engine on display at the Alaska Yukon Exposition in Seattle in 1909. The tug came to Olympia late in 1910 without its superstructure. That was built by Olympia craftsmen including Jake Frisch who built the doors and windows. A new engine was installed in 1922. The tugboat towed scows between Olympia and Steilacoom. In 1925, Weston sold the *Sand Man* to Delta Smyth, a local lumberman and operator of a fleet of tug boats. The tug maneuvered fuel oil scows, log booms and lumber tows. The boat was sold to Fred W. Chadwick of Capital City Towing Company in 1955 and later to Franz Schlottman and then to the current owner. The tug has always operated on the Olympia waterfront and has been host tugboat for "Harbor Days" in Olympia since its inception in 1975. All of the boat above the waterline is now being restored using accurate designs and materials and now is operating with its third engine.

Maritime historian Gordon Newell during a telephone interview noted that no other vessel is as closely associated with Olympia's maritime history or as deserving of recognition.

Source:

Newell, Gordon "Tug *Sand Man*...an Olympia Waterfront Institution". Olympia News, July 6-12, 1977

Telephone conversation with Gordon Newell, February 13, 1990 and February 16, 1990

"The Longer "Sand Man"" Runs the Better She Gets," Pacific Motor Boat, 1930.

Watts, Alice, "This Sand Man Brings Dreams From the Past," Daily Olympian, September 1, 1968 pg. 1.

B. Significant Historical Characteristics

These are the features that contribute to the property's historical significance and which should be preserved and maintained as it is kept up over the years. Important lost features are also listed, because owners are encouraged to consider restoring these features when rehabilitation work is planned. Replacement either by exact restoration of the original or a modern, compatible design is acceptable. Non-historic additions are also listed. The Heritage Commission may make some recommendations regarding these additions.

1. 60 foot long (49 feet government).
2. 14 foot beam with six and one-half foot draft.
3. Fabricated of old growth Douglas Fir.
4. Net tonnage 19 tons.
5. Ironbark stern.
6. Fantail stern.
7. Plumb bow.
8. Rounded front superstructure with casement windows.
9. Pilot house has mast and funnel atop structure.

Non-historic additions:

None listed

C. Qualifications for the Local Register

An attachment to this staff report provides general background about the Olympia Heritage Register and requirements for placement on the register. A second attachment contains the section of the Olympia Historic Preservation Ordinance which gives the criteria for designation to the register.

There are six categories of eligibility as described in the enclosures. The Tugboat *Sand Man* relates to those eligibility requirements as follows:

1. **Significance:** The Tugboat *Sand Man* has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the county, state or nation.

The *Sand Man* is an important part of Olympia's maritime history as a working tug for 80 years on the waterfront. The distinctively designed tug represents the changes and evolution of waterfront activities from lumbering industry to the tug boat races of Harbor Days.

2. **Age:** The *Sand Man* is 80 years old and so meets the 50 year age criterion.
3. **Possesses at least two elements of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association:** The *Sand Man* possesses integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.
5. The *Sand Man* is well-maintained.
6. **Specific Criteria/Associations:** The *Sand Man* is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local history as an integral part of Olympia's maritime history and so meets criterion for determining designation to the Olympia Heritage Register.

D. Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends placement of the Tugboat *Sand Man* on the Olympia Heritage Register under criterion #1 at the Primary Level of Significance.

25:sdNOHCSROHR-90-1

Enclosures

STAFF REPORT ATTACHMENT

GENERAL BACKGROUND ABOUT OLYMPIA HERITAGE REGISTER

The Process for Designating Properties to the Register

The Olympia Historic Preservation Ordinance (#4438) in Section 5.B describes this process as follows: Owner approval is required for designation to the register. A public hearing must be held by the Heritage Commission with notice given to the public and the owner(s). Appeals to the Commission's designation decision may be made to City Council within 30 days.

Basis for Decision Making Regarding Designation to the Register

Criteria for determining eligibility to the Olympia Heritage Register is found in Section 5A of the Olympia Historic Preservation Ordinance. Properties may be designated if they are:

1. At least 50 years old (or lesser age if they are exceptionally important)
2. Associated with the heritage, culture and development of the City in at least one of several ways, such as:
 - a. Outstanding examples of earlier architectural styles or construction methods; or
 - b. Associated with important historical events or with persons significant in local history; or
 - c. Comprise a district representative of an earlier period.
 - d. Archaeological sites are also eligible.

THE FULL LIST OF DESIGNATION CRITERIA FROM ORDINANCE #4438 IS ENCLOSED.

Review of Changes to Heritage Register Properties

Properties designated to the Olympia Heritage Register are subject to an advisory review process by the City's Heritage Commission when any changes are proposed to exterior architectural features, identified historic interior features of public buildings, or to any proposed demolitions or new construction on the property. The purpose of the review is to try to prevent detrimental alterations to or destruction of significant historic features of the property. Standards guiding the review are the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation 1983." Copies are available at the Olympia Historic Preservation Office or Planning Department.

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING DESIGNATION TO THE OLYMPIA HERITAGE REGISTER

(Section 5.A. of Ordinance #4438)

Any building, structure, object, site or district may be designated for inclusion in the City Heritage Register if it has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state or nation; is at least 50 years old, or is of lesser age and has exceptional importance; possesses at least two elements of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association; is well-maintained; and if it falls into at least one of the following categories:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of national, state or local history.
2. Embodies the distinctive architectural characteristics of a type, period, style or method of design or construction, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
3. Is an outstanding work of a designer, builder or architect who has made a substantial contribution to the art.
4. Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering or architectural history.
5. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in national, state or local history.
6. Has yielded or may be likely to yield archaeological information important in pre-history or history.
7. Is a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance.
8. Is a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event.
9. Is a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
10. Is a cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events, or cultural patterns.

Those features which the Heritage Commission will be concerned about are listed in the staff report for each property and will become part of the official register designation action. Compliance with any advice on proposed changes to the historic property is voluntary on the part of the owner or person proposing the change. If, however, changes result in the loss of the building's historic character, the Heritage Commission may remove it from the Heritage Register after public hearing. The review process for proposed changes to historic properties on the Heritage Register is to take no more than 30 days and is tied to application for other existing City permits.

In addition, a recently enacted property tax exemption for historic renovations requires binding review and approval of the renovation before the tax exemption is granted. A separate meeting to review renovation plans must be arranged for any properties wishing to claim this exemption.

NOTES FOR OLYMPIA HERITAGE REGISTER HEARINGS

NOMINATIONS

I. PROCESS

- A. Public Hearing--Heritage Commission
- B. Appealable to City Council within 30 days

II. BASIS FOR PLACEMENT

- A. Must be 50 years old.
- B. Must fall into at least one of 12 categories. Key ones:

- #1 Association with historical events
- #2 Embodies distinctive historical architectural style, type, method of construction
- #3 Outstanding work of architect/builder
- #4 Reflects special elements of city's history
- #5 Association with person important in history

III. AFTER PLACEMENT ON REGISTER

- A. Changes are reviewed
- B. Advisory review--NOT ADDITIONAL NEW REGULATIONS

Purpose of Review--To aid in maintaining building's significant historic characteristics.

Significant historical features are listed at time of nomination:

- Extant . . . don't destroy
- Lost . . . bring back when can

IV. PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION WITH RENOVATION

- A. The review for this is done at a separate time.
- B. This review is NOT advisory.
- C. The list of significant features must not be destroyed if property tax exemption is to be granted.
- D. Also, buildings that have lost major features must restore them through exact

11. Is a reconstructed building that has been executed in a historically accurate manner, within a suitable environment and which is congruent with the City's history.
12. Is a creative and unique example of folk architecture and design created by persons not formally trained in the architectural or design professions, and which does not fit into formal architectural or historical categories.

restoration or modern adaptation in order to receive the tax exemption.

