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## **Port seeks to refurbish Rogue seawall next year**

With an engineering report in hand outlining the need to repair or replace the seawall that supports Rogue World Headquarters in Newport, officials from the Port of Newport are examining all options for funding the project.

Built in 1979 and owned by the Port of Newport, the 540-foot seawall “is considered to have exceeded its useful design life,” according to a report by PBS Engineering. “If repairs are not made to the corroded steel piles, eventually one of the piles will fail,” the assessment continues. Although the failure of a pile would likely jeopardize a portion of the wall, the assessment suggested slow degradation.

“The likelihood of a massive sudden failure with widespread damage across the entire seawall is low. However, continued corrosion will ultimately require ongoing major repairs,” it noted.

Port General Manager Paula Miranda presented the report and options to Port Commissions at their October meeting.

“Bottom line was that the seawall is in pretty bad shape as we expected,” she noted. “Refurbishing is probably the best option at this point. To replace, we probably would gain about 40 years, but to refurbish we would get 20 and we won’t have those issues of having to move the tenant and so forth.”

After reviewing some of the options, Miranda recommended an option outlined by engineers expected to cost approximately \$1.4 million in exchange for 20 more years of useful life of the seawall.

Director of Finance Mark Brown said the Port’s 2022/23 budget could cover the seawall repairs while still allowing for some of the other ongoing projects, which include the planning stages of a Port Dock 7 repair, possible changes to the RV Park, and a new administration building.

“We would be fine doing this now, and moving forward,” he explained.

Miranda has already started the ball rolling, meeting with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to discuss financing options and working with a grant writer to see if some grant support can be found.

“The port has the ability to secure a loan with USDA for very low interest but before applying for the loan, we are looking for a possible grant, since this project has a major economic impact in terms of jobs and opportunities in the Newport area,” the general manager said after the meeting.

As to timeline, Miranda said she would continue to pursue grants up until July 2022, the beginning of the Port’s next fiscal year. In the event that none can be secured, she would seek approval for a USDA loan.

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