

## **So ... Who Is the Humboldt Bay Harbor Working Group?**

Recently, the Humboldt Bay Harbor Working Group (HBHWG) has been in the local news. The Group has been praised for its efforts to bring our local agencies together to work toward creation of jobs. But there has been some insinuation that the Group's activities are being conducted in secret and in violation of the Brown Act.

HBHWG is neither a local government agency nor an appointed, ad hoc committee. It is not subject to the Brown Act, and has no obligation to be transparent to the public. It has no (as in zero, nada, zip) authority or powers over local government affairs ... other than being active in the public participation process.

Rather, HWG is a citizen activists group for collaborative action on job-creating harbor projects. Membership is open to all; meetings are once a month on the last Monday. Information and full disclosure about the group's mission and affairs are posted on a website: [humboldtworkingport.org](http://humboldtworkingport.org).

HWG's "Statement of Purpose" says this citizens' group "was organized to promote collaboration among local agencies and the community to create jobs by revitalizing the Humboldt Bay Harbor while protecting the environment."

To serve its purpose, HBHWG has taken on two major (or, as some believe, impossible) challenges: First, to promote collaboration among the local agencies and the community; and second, to keep the momentum going to create jobs through proactive projects that both revitalize the Humboldt Bay Harbor and protect the environment.

Obviously the first challenge must be met before we can tackle the second.

So at this point what does HBHWG wants to see happen? We want collaboration. We want real, committed collaboration so those agencies that have local authority over the waters and lands of the Humboldt Bay Harbor – our Port – start working together to achieve benefits to our community.

Said another way, we simply expect these agencies – the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, the Wiyot Tribal Council, the Eureka City Council, and the Harbor Commission – to work together in developing a plan of action and carrying out the plan.

We expect teamwork and shared effort: Teamwork where they work together; Cooperation where they have agreement and harmony of a common goal; and Shared Effort where they have equal responsibility and accountability to achieve that goal.

We also expect continuous and progressive action toward the achievement of that common goal.

HBHWG does not have – nor ask for – a decision role in defining just what it is the collaborative efforts of the local agencies should achieve. We do, however, again have an expectation: That the result is the development of ONE plan to be adopted and carried out collaboratively by all the affected agencies.

What we do not want is continued lack of a common, community vision of our future, and continued status quo division of resources and agendas.

The success of the work of HBHWG and the collaborative local agencies will ultimately be judged by the Community. We hope the effort expended by HBHWG contributes toward proactive action to create jobs. But most importantly, we hope that the collaborative efforts of our local agencies foster a new era of teamwork with cooperation and shared effort among Humboldt County's population and local governments.

It is our conviction that only this approach will generate the outcomes we all want: Increased quantity and quality of job-creating harbor projects, and reduced obstacles for implementation.

If you are interested in working with the group, we encourage you to join us at one of our meetings (last Monday of the month, Labor Council, 5:30pm).