

Media Release

Port Nelson Limited reports a strong year's trading September 26, embargoed until midday.

Port Nelson Limited held its Annual General Meeting this morning, announcing a net surplus of \$7.5 million, with revenue \$4.7 million ahead of budget. This will deliver the shareholders, Nelson City and Tasman District Council, a dividend of \$3.8million for the full year.

Port company chair Nick Patterson said there were several factors behind the increased revenue, including an increase in cargo volume to 2.677 tonnes, once again breaking the company record.

“General cargo and fuel imports were up and the continued move to containerisation of cargo pushed up throughput of containers,” Mr Patterson said. “The two big oil industry support vessels, the Blue Marlin and ENSCO 56, brought in revenue and there was another increase in property values that flowed on into higher rental income.”

Operating expenses were also higher than budget, accounted for by increases in plant hire, wages, electricity and fuel charges, and repairs to the tug Huria Matenga and to the Liebherr crane jibs.

As in the previous year, the major focus for capital expenditure was the replacement of pavement in the operational area, and the renewal of a 60 metre section of Main Wharf North.

“With the Main Wharf South section completed in 2001, we now have almost 180 metres of 100 tonne axle-load at this wharf, making it a very good backup berth to Brunt Quay for container vessels,” Mr Patterson said. “We also expect it will be less noisy for port hills’ residents.”

The port company achieved the environmental certification ISO14001 during the year also made progress on the issues of fumigation and noise.

Mr Patterson noted that Port Nelson had fared relatively well from continued changes in shipping services within New Zealand and overseas.

“We picked up a new service importing steel ex-Australia and also two enhanced services from Maersk and MSC,” he said. “On the downside we lost some direct port calls as shipping lines moved to larger vessels to achieve economy of scale.”

There was a change in the line up around the board table for this year’s AGM, with former mayor Paul Matheson replaced by Nelson businessman and legal consultant Paul Le Gros.

Ends

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