

PORT OF COLUMBIA
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2015

Chairman Warren opened the meeting at 7:30 pm at the Port office. Those present were Commissioners Warren, Crowe and Marvin, Manager Dickinson, Auditor Shochet, EDC McMasters, Paul Didelius and Bob Litts of Frontier Rail Corporation, and member of the press Michelle Smith

The minutes to the August meeting were discussed.

MOTION was made by Chairman Warren, seconded by Commissioner Crowe to approve the August minutes as written. Motion carried with no further discussion.

Dickinson reviewed the budget report. Some tax revenue came in, and except for the \$105,000 construction invoice for the GSA remodel, the August expenses were not high. The 2016 budget hearing will take place during the November meeting. Dickinson noted that the November meeting falls on Veteran's Day. It was agreed that the staff would observe the holiday on a different day and not change the meeting date.

Dickinson presented the 2 year agreement with SEWEDA. Recent legislation resulted in a bit more funding for the SEWEDA ADO program which helps to fund the Economic Development Coordinator position. Dickinson said there were no significant changes in the contract.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Marvin, seconded by Commissioner Crowe to approve the biennium agreement with SEWEDA. Motion carried with no further discussion

Chairman Warren welcomed Frontier Rail representatives Paul Didelius and Bob Litts. Frontier Rail will be the new rail operator for the PCC line. They are working closely with Watco, the present rail operator to ensure a smooth transition. Didelius noted that Watco has been extremely cooperative during the process. Frontier Rail was established in 2006. They operate rail lines from California to Ohio, with the largest concentration in the northwest. They are very eager to get trains running in our area again. They have met with Watco to discuss the condition of the track, and noted several areas that are in need of repair. Didelius answered various questions from the commissioners about bridges and culverts, and the bid process for public projects. He did not give a specific date for when they'd take over the line. He is willing to assist Dickinson with rail bank applications for legislative funding. He is very familiar with the lengthy applications. Dickinson mentioned that there are several potential new businesses that would require rail transportation. Chairman Warren asked about the bridge improvement grant that has already been awarded to the Port. Dickinson said that more research is needed to determine if the funds would go to the Port or to the operator doing the repairs. Dickinson brought up a proposal she got from a railroad lobbying firm. For a nominal annual fee, they would assist in appropriating funds for railroad rehabilitation. Commissioner Marvin was totally in favor of the idea, stating that lobbyists are essential in appropriating the needed funds. No decision on the lobbying firm will be made until later in the year.

EDC McMasters reported on BMS marketing and events. NPR and Facebook continue to be very effective. BMS is a sponsor of the Heirloom Tomato event. Oktoberfest at BMS will be on October 17. Kiwanis will serve beer and hotdogs. He gave school teachers gift bags full of BMS produced goodies. Mary's Candies has "Produced at Blue Mountain Station" written on their packaging. They signed a simple document granting them permission to use the trademarked name for the duration of their tenancy at BMS. Other tenants are welcome to do the same. Dickinson said the co-op is considering opening the Market for an additional day. The Market is selling meat, eggs, milk and cheese. McMasters noted that 3 other BMS tenants are open for retail sales during the week, so it would make sense for the Market be open another day.

Dickinson reported that Lyons Ferry will install a playground after the summer season is over. The Corps of Engineers will send a letter to the concessionaires stating their intention to renew their lease when their present lease expires.

Dickinson reported that the Hearn Ditch District has repaired the pipe and graveled the alley. The commissioners expressed concerns about future leaks damaging Port property. They directed Dickinson to investigate, and speak with the Port attorney about the possibility of withdrawing from the Hearn Ditch Irrigation District and for ideas to lessen risk to other Port property.

Dickinson reported the USDA/GSA construction project is ahead of schedule. They should be finished in October. Dickinson and Shochet are preparing a request for cleaning proposals packet. A brief discussion followed about bonding, proof of insurance, and business license requirements.

McMasters reviewed his business lead and economic indicator report. Columbia County economic indicators are mostly favorable. The unemployment rate has dropped from 6.4% in May to 5.6% in July. Dickinson noted that the county is no longer classified as financially distressed. Hotels have done exceptionally well in 2015. The wind farm workers left in December 2014 and the lodging tax revenue continues to rise. McMasters described several event ideas for the upcoming Global Entrepreneurial Week. He will present county economic indicators on a quarterly basis.

The amount of vouchers approved for payment was \$142,255.28

Payroll & related expenses	\$14,513.78	Flynn's Electric	\$553.86
WCIF	\$658.43	Basin Disposal of WW	\$110.91
Banner Bank GO Bond	\$2,266.07	TVTV	\$60.00
Banner Bank Ind Bldg 6 N/P	\$4,680.32	Dayton Chronicle	\$304.20
Banner Bank Ind Bldg 2	\$310.08	Smith Brothers	\$1,026.95
Cardmember Services	\$550.58	Jennifer Dickinson	\$562.45
Total Office Concepts	\$88.70	Dayton Chamber	\$2,500.00
Pacific Power	\$690.11	Dingle's	\$100.59
City of Dayton	\$1,306.86	Aardvark Granola	\$36.00
Mary's	\$22.00	Walla Walla UB	\$156.00
US Linen and Uniform	\$75.68	Rey's Roast	\$64.86
Herres Enterprises LLC	\$45.00	Opp & Seibold	\$102,980.98
Cathy Shochet	\$20.70	Statewide Publishing	\$102.00
NPR	\$512.00	Chapman Heating	\$4,223.70
FerrellGas	\$463.08	Department of Health	\$103.90
Basin Disposal inc	\$15.08	Bradley McMasters	\$457.53
CenturyLink	\$250.25	Stenkamp Architecture	\$2,211.64
Crown Paper Janitorial Supply	\$177.04	Sun Pest Management	\$53.95
		TOTAL WARRANTS	\$142,255.28

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm. Next meeting will take place on October 14th at 7:30 pm at the Port office.

Earle Marvin, Secretary