

PORT OF COLUMBIA
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
August 14, 2019

Chairman Crowe opened the meeting at 7 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Marvin and Crowe, Executive Director Dickinson, Economic Development Director Witherington, and Office Manager/Auditor Kerr

Guests: Mark Shoemaker, CEO/President and Zachary White, CSO, of M-FOR LLC. Approximately 20 members of the community were also in attendance to express concerns about the proposed Touchet Valley Trail project that will run adjacent to the active rail line on land owned by the Port of Columbia. Concerns included safety and privacy for adjacent properties and for highway users, the usage of tax dollars to maintain the trail, their rights to farm adjacent land, how the trail will be maintained, fire hazards, and Port's ownership of the rail line, among others.

The minutes from the July meeting were discussed. **MOTION:** Made by Commissioner Marvin to approve the meeting minutes as written. Motion carried with no further discussion.

The 2019 monthly budget report was reviewed. There were no questions on the budget report from commissioners.

Dickinson presented a new lease with tenants M-FOR LLC, who want the remaining space in BMS #2 for their hemp processing company. Shoemaker and White shared details on hemp and answered questions. Marvin asked how many jobs and what pay rate they anticipated. When they open, they will employ 5 people in the \$17-\$25 per hour range. Eventually they anticipate employing as many as 15 people. They hope to use the rail to ship product. Commissioners signed the new lease.

MOTION: Commissioner Marvin made a motion to appoint Port of Columbia District 1 resident Dan Aschenbrenner to fill out the term of office of former Port of Columbia District 1 Commissioner Gene Warren through and including December 31, 2019. Commissioner Crowe seconded the motion. Motion carried with no further discussion.

Commissioners reviewed Resolution #2019-04, authorizing new employee Valerie Kerr to be added as a signer on bank accounts and removing former employee Angela Smith. **MOTION:** Made by Commissioner Marvin to approve the resolution. Motion carried with no further discussion.

Lyons Ferry Marina: The US Army Corps of Engineer's Master Plan for the location needs to be updated as it was last updated in 1969. They are taking public comment until September 13th. There will be a meeting held by the US Army Corps of Engineers at the Best Western Hotel in Dayton on August 21st.

Rock Hill Industrial Park is full and only minor maintenance was completed this month. Witherington asked the Commissioners to consider building additional rental spaces in the future.

Blue Mountain Station: BMS #1 is full and only minor maintenance this month. The commercial kitchen continues to see heavy use during the summer. XO Alambic has been partnering with three of our tenants to make product. BMS #2 is now also full. Cedar Rain Spirits will be starting their lease on October 1st. M-For is starting their lease on August 15th. Construction should be finished in three weeks.

Railroad: Dickinson continues to work on a rehab funding strategy for the rail line. Our lease with the rail operator is up for renewal and Dickinson is working with Columbia Walla Walla Rail Line to set lease terms.

Touchet Valley Trail: Witherington reported on the progress of the Touchet Valley Trail. Two public open houses are being held next month to update on progress. There will be a design charrette in October with NPS, WSU students, and WASLA to develop an initial concept plan. Survey results are coming in and will be analyzed. Most respondents indicate they are local to the area and support the trail.

MOTION: Commissioner Marvin made a motion to approve a letter drafted by Commissioner Crowe be sent to the local newspapers detailing the Port's involvement in the trail project. Commissioner Crowe seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Executive Director's Report: Dickinson reported that she and Witherington attended a Broadband meeting in Pomeroy that was excellent and expressed an interest in having a similar meeting in Dayton. The contract with the Chamber of Commerce is being rewritten. The WPPA is searching for a new Executive Director. The Depot Auction went very well.

Economic Development Director's Report: Witherington reported the status of the current CERB broadband feasibility study grant. PocketiNet is currently working on several network designs that will direct the rest of the report. This process will likely take around 2 months. Dickinson and Witherington recently attended a listening session with Representative McMorris Rodgers in Pomeroy, in which the need to develop better rural broadband was discussed.

Witherington also shared some recent statistics from the WA State Employment Security Department. Our overall unemployment rate is 5.4% in June 2019. The Port receives 3.749% of county tax dollars. 45% of county tax dollars come from the three largest wind companies. One trend from the Office of Financial Management's annual population update indicates that growth is slow, and the majority of it comes from net migration in to the county. Natural increases (births and deaths) have been in the negative for the past ten years.

Public Comment: Several members of the public reiterated their concerns about the trail.

The following vouchers were presented for approval of payment in the approved amount of amount of \$63,825.02

	Payroll	\$16,739.22	10081	KC Industries	\$6,388.93
10057	Banner Bank	\$4,680.32	10082	Pacific Power	\$867.38
10058	Banner Bank	\$2,380.98	10083	City of Dayton	\$200.00
10059	Banner Bank	\$4,216.67	10084	Jessica Griffin	\$200.00
10060	Century Link	\$313.94	10085	Double T Construction	\$1,214.08
10061	Herres Enterprises	\$90.00	10086	Roto Rooter	\$610.83
10062	Total Office Concepts	\$21.08	10087	Sun Pest	127.32
10063	LEAF	\$201.73	10088	TV Television	\$65.00
10064	US Linen and Uniform	\$123.18	10089	WW union Bulletin	\$1,395.00
10065	NW Public Broadcasting	\$580.00	10090	UP Railroad	\$846.34
10066	Banner Bank	\$2,440.84	10091	Waitsburg Times	\$189.00
10067	Diane Patton	\$50.00	10092	Walt's Plumbing	\$152.86
10068	Artmil	\$367.20	10093	WPPA	\$345.00
10069	City of Dayton	\$2,184.88	10094	WW Valley Chamber	\$1,750.00
10070	Col. Co. Sheriff's Office	\$36.15	10095	WA Dept of Health	\$103.90
10071	Dayton Chamber of Comm	\$2,500.00	10096	Cardmember Services	\$2,808.41
10072	A-1 Plumbing	\$437.16	10097	WCIF	\$1,490.35
10073	Basin Disposal	\$243.63	10098	City Lumber	\$218.60
10074	Basin Disposal Inc	\$34.04	10099	Ferrellgas	\$839.70
10075	Dayton Chronical	\$329.50	10100	Katheryn Witherington	\$392.25
10076	Dayton Mercantile	\$47.23	10101	Jennie Dickinson	\$352.22
10077	Brewers Bookkeeping	\$570.00	10102	Valerie Kerr	\$43.75
10078	Incidental Fund	\$814.16	10103	Dayton School District	\$500.00
10079	Jim's Glass Shop	\$629.44	10104	Apollo	\$874.25
10080	MBG Cleaning	\$1,130.00	10105	Waitsburg Times	\$688.50

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m. Next meeting will take place on September 11, 2019 at 7 p.m. at the Port of Columbia office.


 Earle Marvin, Secretary