

PORT OF COLUMBIA
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2021

Chairman Earle Marvin opened the meeting at 3:32 pm

Present Via Zoom: Commissioners Earle Marvin, Sean Milligan, and Shawn Brown, Executive Director Jennie Dickinson, Port Office Manager Melody Shahan, community members Betty Longen, Jack and Barb Miller, Joy Smith, Tabitha Haney, Paul Ihle and member of the press Melissa Gemmell.

Marvin asked for any public comments. None were made.

Approve Minutes: Sean Milligan inquired if the other commissioners wanted more detail in the minutes regarding the comment made at the May meeting by Betty Longen. No one spoke up.

MOTION: Commissioner Milligan moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Brown seconded it. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Budget Report: No unusual spending this month. A full-page ad was run in the Walla Walla Union Bulletin marketing downtown Dayton and Blue Mountain Station. The large payment to Anderson Perry was for two months. Work was done on Dayton Tractor and Machine's HVAC system.

Primary Election Expenses: One of the open commissioner seats has 3 candidates for one seat, and it is the only race in the county with more than two candidates, so the Port will have to bear the full cost of the primary election. The extra costs, which will also include a voter's pamphlet that wasn't budgeted for, will at least triple the original amount budgeted for elections.

Annual Financial Statement: The accountant has prepared the annual report, and the information has been submitted to the State Auditor's office as required by law. A hard copy is available for each commissioner at the Port office. We ended 2020 in a strong financial position. This is the first time we've had to report revenue received from the federal government, so this may change our auditing requirements in the future.

Leases: No lease renewals this month.

Rock Hill Industrial Park: An easement with NoaNet was reviewed by commissioners. The easement is for documentation of the fiber optic line they installed (without prior approval) to the 533 Cameron Street building.

MOTION: Shawn moved to approve the easement, and Sean seconded it. Motion carried unanimously.

Painting and clean-up at 521 Cameron is nearly complete. Jennie verified with the commissioners that the space is expected to be rented for a business, not for storage. Commissioner Milligan agreed but doesn't want it to be vacant for too long. Commissioner Milligan adds that unless it is warehouse space used for storage by another business in the park, it should be used by a business that generated economic activity.

Lyons Ferry Marina: Dickinson attended the US Army Corps of Engineers' inspection and met with KOA quality assurance inspectors at Lyons Ferry Marina on Monday the 7th. The property is subleased to the concessionaires but the Port helps with maintenance and capital improvements. KOA requires their branded facilities to have pull through RV spaces with patios or they cannot be an affiliated KOA Kampground. A marina facilities plan, available online at the Port's website, was created several years ago with a location designated for the pull through RV spaces. We will need assistance from an engineer and a KOA designer to complete construction drawings. A plan must be submitted to KOA with a proposed date for completion in a 2-year time frame. Commissioner Milligan plans to take a closer look at the drawing, and asked about the advantages of being a KOA. Dickinson stated that it is mostly about marketing assistance. The marketing for KOA Kampgrounds is extensive and appeals to many campers and RV users for summer activities. KOA

also provides a Point of Sale (POS) system in the store and has a "Work Kamper" program to provide seasonal help. Jennie helped restructure the lease arrangement at the Marina 14 years ago to make it a more marketable and prosperous business the concessionaires, and it is the concessionaire's choice to affiliate with KOA. Because KOA conducts annual camper surveys and holds their own quality assurance inspections, it helps make compliance with Corps of Engineers' inspections easier to achieve. Earle suggested revisiting this topic quarterly for progress updates.

Blue Mountain Station: Columbia County Health Systems (CCHS) has been working on a feasibility study for an early learning and child care center in Dayton. Tabitha Haney with the YWCA & Paul Ihle with CCHS gave a short presentation on the concept. YWCA has a similar mission for children and wants to partner with CCHS on this project to help meet childcare needs in the Dayton area. Grant proposals have been submitted to Senator Maria Cantwell's office and the Washington State Department of Commerce. Paul said that a formal childcare report will be submitted to all state agencies and any interested parties. According to Tabitha, currently the only way for childcare providers to make money is by offering services for preschool and school age kids, which means younger children's childcare need are often unmet. This unmet need is what Paul and Tabitha want to rectify. YMCA would handle the childcare portion, CCHS will serve as the fiscal agent, and the Port could help by allowing the center to locate at Blue Mountain Station and extend utilities to the structure. Jennie and Paul have looked at the site for best locations. Commissioner Brown asked if the dollar amount listed in the funding application represents the value of the land, and Jennie said yes, it was a rough estimate for them to use as an in-kind contribution. Jennie further explained that no agreement has been reached, but her thought is that the Port would maintain ownership of the land and lease it to the childcare center at a rate that makes the project feasible. We've done that for other non-profits.

A live music event will be held on Saturday from 1-3pm at Blue Mountain Station. The Port was approached by the band, Rekless Kompany, who are playing in Walla Walla Friday night and asked if they could come play here. It will be a fun event and is free to the public.

CWW Railroad: A possible joint meeting to discuss opportunities and challenges for rails is in the works.

Director's Report: Dickinson provided a written report to commissioners. Several people have shown interest in buying Woody's including a gentleman from California. Since Tuesday's fire at the Eagles building next door, Jennie has heard there may be water damage but no there is no definitive evidence.

Marketing Grant: An ADO relief funds grant for marketing to assist businesses harmed by the pandemic was received for \$50,000 but must spent by June 30th. Dickinson recommends contracting with a marketing firm in order to meet this deadline. Staff have received two proposals, and Dickinson recommends entering into a contract with Tell It Media, who provides marketing services for Bluewood. The campaign would run through the summer and possibly into September. Commissioners agreed to have Dickinson sign a contract with the firm.

MOTION: Commissioner Brown moved to approve Dickinson's signature on the contract, and Commissioner Milligan seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioners would like to review the contract prior to signing, so a special meeting will be held prior to June 30th to review and approve it.

Broadband: An application for \$2 million in construction funds for the Dayton Broadband Project was submitted to CERB on May 26th. Three internet service providers (ISPs) have signed contingency agreements to partner with the Port on the project and provide service to customers. The match requirement is \$500,000. The Port has applied for and received \$13,500 from the Dayton Columbia County Fund and \$15,000 from the Warren Community Fund for broadband match. Both Columbia County and the City of Dayton will be asked to provide some matching funds. An application for federal grant NTIA must be submitted by September with funds being distributed in December. Dickinson is still not sure what areas would work for a funding application since ViaSat and Starlink already have received funds from the FCC to serve portions of our rural areas.

Innovia Grant: The Port received a \$15,000 grant from this private foundation for startup grants. Application process is being prepared.

Touchet Valley Trail: Dickinson reminded commissioners that she is waiting for their input before posting comments, questions, and answers received throughout our website and during the public meeting on our website. Dickinson also asked if the commissioners see anything in the 30% design, comments or questions that warrants a change in direction in the design phase. She reported that the Steering Committee has some suggested changes to the design but no major change in direction. Commissioner Milligan said he is curious what Anderson Perry's thoughts are on the potential reduction in costs by shifting the design to a "rails to trails" instead of "rails with trails." Eliminating two bridges would reduce costs. He suggests exploring alternatives but still continuing the design direction. Dickinson reminded commissioners that making a decision on whether or not to keep the rail line is monumental and needs to be made with care and public input. Commissioner Brown would like answers from the rail shippers about their intentions for using the rail in the future and is reluctant to eliminate the rail asset. Dickinson is still in discussion with shippers. Consensus is to move forward with the current "rails with trails" design at this time.

Earle would like commissioners to conduct their annual executive director evaluation at the July meeting. Dickinson will send an evaluation form with the July meeting packet.

Approval of vouchers: Commissioners approved regular monthly vouchers in the amount of \$56,997.14.

11137	Hayshaker Farm	25.00	11152	Cardmember Service	220.34
11138	Verdurous Gardens	22.28	11153	CenturyLink	326.29
11139	A-1 Plumbing	247.76	11154	City of Dayton	1,674.73
11140	Anderson Perry, Inc.	19,504.27	11155	Dingle's of Dayton	14.08
11141	Artmil, Inc.	1,200.00	11156	Double T Construction	1,318.14
11142	Banner Bank - 1585	3,205.27	11157	Jeffrey Bissett	500.00
11143	Banner Bank - 1593	1,475.05	11158	LEAF	201.73
11144	Banner Bank - GO Bond - 3946	2,380.98	11159	MBG Cleaning Services	1,210.00
11145	Banner Bank IB#2 - 1189	4,216.67	11160	Mill Creek Mechanical	5,357.67
11146	Banner Bank BMS #2 Bond - 9342	2,440.84	11161	Pacific Power	908.54
11147	Basin Disposal Inc	54.39	11162	Patton & Assoc.	2,275.00
11148	Basin Disposal of Walla Walla	116.79	11163	Sun Pest Management	63.84
11149	BF Power Vac, Inc.	2,977.75	11164	Total Office Concepts	11.63
11150	Boe Designs	360.00	11165	Touchet Valley Landscapes	2,037.57
11151	Brewer's Bookkeeping & Payroll Services	1,100.00	11166	US Linen & Uniform	117.22

Meeting adjourned at 4:42pm.



Sean Milligan, Secretary