

Port of Columbia
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2022

Chair Crowe opened the meeting at 5:00pm

Present: Commissioners Crowe, Bryan and Watts, Port Staff Jennie Dickinson, Melody Shahan, consultants Adam Schmidtgall, Brian Hansen and Ken Van Voorhies and approximately 140 members of the public.

Public Comment: Chair Crowe asked for any public comments. Many members of the public provided comments for and against the Touchet Valley Trail.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the March meeting were reviewed.

MOTION: Commissioner Bryan moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Watts seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Review Monthly Budget Report & Approve Vouchers: Commissioner Bryan questioned a payment of \$2,500 to the Dayton Chamber. Dickinson explained it is for economic development services and is paid every quarter as per contract. Dickinson explained specific lines on the budget to show that the Port is not running at a loss.

Tablets: Dickinson suggested buying 10" Google Android tablets from Amazon for \$79. Commissioner Bryan asked to amend the policy to include the tablet purchases. He suggested Samsung Galaxy tablets from Costco. Dickinson will also compare prices at Costco and Inland Cellular.

MOTION: Commissioner Bryan moved to purchase tablets for Port purposes with a proposed budget of \$500. Commissioner Watts seconded it. Motion carried unanimously.

Rock Hill Industrial Park: Barker Inc began grading the Industrial Park but had to stop due to weather. An annual inspection at the USDA building is scheduled for Monday, April 18th. Blues Crew volunteers will have a Rock Hill Trail work day on May 1st.

Lyons Ferry Marina: An inspection at the marina is scheduled on May 2nd with US Army Corps of Engineers. An inspection with the Department of Health is planned as well for the large onsite septic system (LOSS).

Blue Mountain Station: The soil by the garden was tested for arsenic and came back within the acceptable range. Window repair at the Bell Farmhouse was completed. BDI trucks when leaving the area can have some debris fall off their trucks and is left behind on the highway. Volunteers come every year to help clean it up. A workshop tour at Blue Mountain Station was scheduled for 4:00pm on April 27th. No action will be taken at this workshop.

CWW Railroad: Jennie found volunteers to clean up garbage left under the railroad bridge. The railroad operator hired a new company to spray the railroad right-of-way. A local reporter called curious about a caboose seen by Huntsville. Port staff called the railroad operator about the caboose and contact information was sent to the reporter for follow up.

Executive Director's Report: Dickinson recently toured My Friend's House in Walla Walla, a childcare center operated by the YWCA. A community forum will be held in May. Work continues on a value-added agriculture business expansion.

Touchet Valley Trail: Dickinson gave a brief background on the trail. Adam and Brian with Anderson Perry and Ken with SPVV, a subcontractor with Anderson Perry, made a presentation on construction funding opportunities. Brian gave design updates, noting a revised route that included moving the trail from Commercial Street to Main St. Ken described the RCO grant program and Adam spoke about WSDOT grant opportunities. Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions.

Public Comment: Commissioner Crowe read names of over 70 people who submitted letters in favor of the trail. She received two letters in opposition.

Commissioner Bryan spoke about the trail and concerns regarding maintenance, property rights, grants and ownership of the land along the proposed trail. He stated he felt that the majority of the community need to come forward to show support of the trail. He referenced a petition with 600 signatures. He also said he thought it should be put on the ballot as an advisory vote.

Commissioner Watts commented that he agreed with the points made in Commissioner Bryan's speech. He stated that of the thousands of people he spoke with during his campaign, many of them expressed fear of retribution if they showed opposition to the trail. He is not against trails but feels the we are in a different time than when the trail research began. He does not want to move forward with the trail.

Commissioner Crowe thanked Commissioner Bryan for his in-depth research. She stated that she believes the info that Dickinson and the experts have told her regarding the trail. She corrected Commissioner Bryan by stating it is a "rails with trails" project. She had not experienced, in her travels on other trail systems, what others have reported. She supports the Touchet Valley Trail and the rails with trail project. She added that to raise taxes for a project, it must be voted on by the community. She further stated she relied on the experts to give her current information rather than on her own interpretation of what is said in documents and reports, etc.

Several members of the public spoke in favor of and in opposition of the trail.

Dickinson answered a few comments including those asked concerning restrooms, grants, snow removal, etc. She expressed that many questions would have been better asked and discussed during the workshop or the consultant's presentation to avoid confusion and misinformation being given to the public.

MOTION: Commissioner Bryan moved to deny resolution 2022-01, Commissioner Watts seconded. Motion passed, 2 to 1.

MOTION: Commissioner Bryan moved to deny resolution 2022-02, Commissioner Watts seconded. Motion passed, 2 to 1.

Dickinson stated there is no legislative mechanism in allowing a port to put an advisory vote on the ballot. Cities and Counties both have the authority. Commissioner Bryan expressed no further action unless a majority of the public is polled and comes to agreement. Commissioner Crowe said a majority of voters should pursue this again in two years.

MOTION: Commissioner Bryan made a motion that no further action be taken on funding the Touchet Valley Trail project until we gain clear and obvious majority opinion, through an advisory vote, that the community is for the trail, Commissioner Watts seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner Crowe called for a five-minute break. The meeting resumed at 8:13pm.

Broadband: Inflation is affecting the cost of broadband projects across the state. Funding agencies may have to consider adding funds to projects. Because estimates were made over a year ago, material costs have skyrocketed. The lowest responsible quote we received was over the minimum federal threshold for small projects. Dickinson shared the quote with the commission, and pointed out it did not cover the fiber needed to complete the project. Therefore, we must re-bid the project using different federal guidelines. Because costs keep rising we need to order fiber as soon as possible. Dickinson asked for approval to spend no more than \$350,000.00 after bids are reviewed.

MOTION: Commissioner Watts made a motion to purchase fiber, not to exceed \$350,000 in total costs. Commissioner Bryan seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Housing: The May meeting will have Walla Walla Community Council presenting about housing in Columbia County. A representative from the City or County may also attend to present further information.

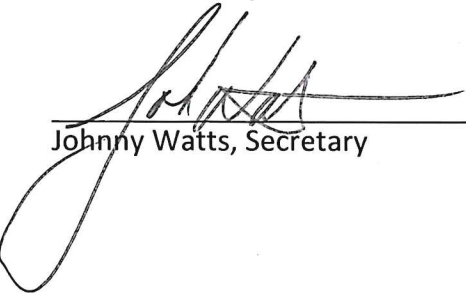
Executive session: An executive session as per RCW 42.30.110 was held to discuss real estate. No action will be taken after the executive session.

The executive session began at 8:33pm and was expected to conclude in 30 minutes.

Approval of Vouchers: Commissioners approved regular monthly vouchers in the amount of: \$87,874.81.

11601-11610	Payroll	17,101.87	11627	City of Dayton	1,875.13
11611	Employment Security Dept.	126.63	11628	Columbia iConnect	136.39
11612	Employment Security Department	154.55	11629	Dayton Chamber of Commerce	2,500.00
11613	Dept of Labor & Industries	297.17	11630	Dayton Mercantile	9.77
11614	Dept of Revenue	6,247.07	11631	Dept of Retirement Systems	25.00
11615	Jennifer S Dickinson{O}	299.69	11632	Dingle's of Dayton	5.95
11616	Artmil, Inc.	600.00	11633	Double T Construction	1,318.14
11617	Banner Bank - 1585	3,205.27	11634	Jamestown Networks	188.62
11618	Banner Bank - 1593	1,475.05	11635	LEAF	201.73
11619	Banner Bank - GO Bond - 3946	2,380.98	11636	MBG Cleaning Services	1,480.00
11620	Banner Bank IB#2 - 1189	4,216.67	11637	Mill Creek Mechanical	129.84
11621	Banner Bank BMS #2 Bond - 9342	2,440.84	11638	Pacific Power	1,793.06
11622	Basin Disposal Inc	56.85	11639	Senske	69.20
11623	Basin Disposal of Walla Walla	118.14	11640	Total Office Concepts	355.88
11624	Brewer's Bookkeeping & Payroll Services	1,200.00	11641	Touchet Valley Landscape	238.26
11625	Cardmember Service	3,965.16	11642	US Linen & Uniform	112.64
11626	City Lumber	227.10	11643	Zero dB Communications, LLC	33,322.16

Chair Crowe adjourned the meeting at 8:55pm.



 Johnny Watts, Secretary

