

Port of Columbia
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2023

Chair Bryan opened the meeting at 5:00pm. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Present: Commissioners Bryan, Crowe, and Watts, Port Staff Jennie Dickinson, Jill Essency & Tracy Clark, and 8 members of the public. Attending via Zoom were 4 members of the public. **Absent:** None.

Public Comment: Chair Bryan asked for any public comments. One member of the public made a comment.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Crowe moved to approve the minutes from the September 13th regular meeting, seconded by Watts. Motion carried.

Finances: Monthly Budget Report & Approve Vouchers – Dickinson reviewed the budget, indicating the tax revenue and grant reimbursements had been received. There was no further budget discussion and the vouchers were approved.

2024 Draft Budget Discussion: Dickinson explained the red highlighted items on the handout she had provided of the 2024 budget draft comparison. There was no discussion or comment from the commissioners on the proposed budget.

Executive Director Salary Discussion: The commissioners had agreed to a 7% COLA for staff members at the last meeting. Commissioner Crowe pointed out that Dickinson is well below other Port Executive Directors with similar budgets. She suggested a 15% increase to help bridge that gap, stating Dickinson is overseeing a large budget and sits on many committees representing the Port. Watts agreed that Dickinson is doing a good job of managing the Port. Bryan stated that we are the smallest populated county and doesn't feel that that large of increase is warranted. He also believes hiring an Economic Coordinator will reduce Dickinson's workload. Crowe made a motion for a 15% increase in Dickinson's salary. No one seconded the motion. Motion failed. Crowe then made a motion for a 10% increase, seconded by Watts, with further discussion. Motion carried. It was further discussed that the increase would consist of the 7% COLA and plus a 3% increase in salary.

Review Draft Capital Facilities Plan: The 2024 draft includes a new roof for Industrial Building #5, and an increase to the Blue Mountain Station New Building Infrastructure line item for the possibility of the Grain Cluster. Commissioners Watts and Bryan have concerns on the cost of constructing the pull-thru sites at the Marina. Bryan feels that other infrastructure may need attention first. More discussion needs to take place to make sure it provides a good return on investment. Dickinson will present a final Capital Facilities Plan at next month's meeting.

Set Public Hearing: A public hearing date for the 2024 budget approval was scheduled to take place at the next commission meeting being held on November 8, 2023 at 5:10 pm.

Leases: None.

Comp Plan Discussion: Housing – The commissioners agreed they would like to pursue the possibility of helping the community by adding more housing. Dickinson stressed that Ports don't build housing. They can, however, assist the City, County or outside developers maybe through partnerships. This is uncharted waters, and many Ports are looking for ways to help. One possible way would be to include a commercial aspect to a housing project. Another helpful idea would be Commercial Annexation. More discussion needs to take place on how the Port can help. Railroad – Commissioners Bryan and Watts strongly believe selling the railroad to a private party would be the best way to keep the rail in good operating condition. They would like to proceed with having it appraised. Commissioner Crowe believes it is an important asset and doesn't think the Port should sell it. She would like to hear from Chris Herman from WPPA on his point of view and for more information on rail assets held by other Ports.

Rock Hill Industrial Park: One of the two garage doors have been replaced. Michelle Shoun of Table Rock Meats is talking to her banker.

Lyons Ferry Marina: The marina has passed its recent Corps ERGO inspection. Anderson Perry is working with Inland Power on any updates that may need to take place if the pull-thru sites are completed.

Blue Mountain Station: An inverter for the solar panels needs to be replaced. It is still under warranty, so there shouldn't be any fee for replacing it. The Craft Malt Study is moving along nicely. A grain cluster might be well received at BMS. It could be a nice tie in with the addition of housing paired with a commercial aspect. Fall Family Festival was a big hit this year. Large numbers of people attended and gave only positive feedback.

CWW Railroad: The TVBB fiber project will use the right of way for placement.

Community and Economic Development

Staff Reports: More discussion took place regarding the placement of an old pickup truck at BMS. The truck would have the AWW logo on the door and flowers in the bed. Watts likes the idea of placing community banners on it to inform the public of events taking place in Dayton. Dave Harvey offered his truck to fulfill this idea. The Port has contracted with a digital and social media specialist to assist Essency with economic development marketing. The Port held its Fiber Lighting Ceremony. Essency assisted in helping Teeny McMunn host a flea market at the fairgrounds. It was a huge success, and they would like to do it again.

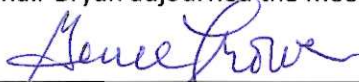
Dayton Community Broadband: Phase 1 – Zero dB has completed a 100% release for hookups. They will be in town for the next couple of weeks doing wrap up work. The project is looking at a 50%+ adoption rate in customers which means private, non-tax revenue for the Port. Managing cash flow has been challenging. **Touchet Valley Broadband:** Phase 2 – Blue Mtn. has begun measuring 25 feet from center rail for preparation on laying fiber. **Rural Broadband Planning:** Phase 3 – Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) is the next steps for this project.

Final Comments: Chair Bryan asked for final public comments. One member in attendance thought the commission should reconsider increasing Dickinson's salary. Another member mentioned that minimum wage is increasing 9%. There was much discussion regarding the railroad as an asset to the Port and community.

Approval of Vouchers: Commissioners approved regular monthly vouchers in the amount of: \$363,118.07.

10/01/2023	12529-12539	Payroll	22,126.17	10/11/2023	12563	Dingle's of Dayton	11.91
10/11/2023	12540	Seth Bryan	163.75	10/11/2023	12564	Double T Construction	785.90
10/11/2023	12541	Incidental Fund - Bank of Idaho	200.00	10/11/2023	12565	Emerge Technologies	70.00
10/11/2023	12542	Jennifer S Dickinson(O)	570.75	10/11/2023	12566	Inland Cellular	128.29
10/11/2023	12543	Dept of Labor & Industries	358.64	10/11/2023	12567	Jamestown Networks	198.23
10/11/2023	12544	Employment Security Dept.	168.66	10/11/2023	12568	Jay's Garage(v)	155.84
10/11/2023	12545	Employment Security Department	245.41	10/11/2023	12569	KAPP-KVEW	83.75
10/11/2023	12546	Dept of Revenue	6,431.47	10/11/2023	12570	LEAF	280.22
10/11/2023	12547	Employment Security Dept.	244.55	10/11/2023	12571	MBG Cleaning Services	2,460.00
10/11/2023	12548	Apollo Heating & Air Conditioning	1,362.05	10/11/2023	12572	National Pen	495.28
10/11/2023	12549	Artmil, Inc.	107.94	10/11/2023	12573	Obenland & Low Agency	100.00
10/11/2023	12550	Banner Bank - 1585	3,205.27	10/11/2023	12574	Pacific Power	1,255.96
10/11/2023	12551	Banner Bank - 1593	1,475.05	10/11/2023	12575	PacifiCorp (v)	4,949.28
10/11/2023	12552	Banner Bank - GO Bond - 3946	2,431.59	10/11/2023	12576	Precision Garage Doors	8,004.25
10/11/2023	12553	Banner Bank BMS #2 Bond - 9342	2,440.84	10/11/2023	12577	Roto Rooter	752.30
10/11/2023	12554	Basin Disposal of Walla Walla	272.41	10/11/2023	12578	Sandy's U-Rent	1,471.20
10/11/2023	12555	Blue Mountain Station Co-op(V)	4,336.00	10/11/2023	12579	Senske	71.38
10/11/2023	12556	Brewer's Bookkeeping & Payroll Srv	800.00	10/11/2023	12580	Three Little Birds	80.00
10/11/2023	12557	Cardmember Service	1,448.85	10/11/2023	12581	Touchet Valley Landscape	580.06
10/11/2023	12558	City Lumber	18.17	10/11/2023	12582	US Linen & Uniform	119.02
10/11/2023	12559	City of Dayton	2,307.79	10/11/2023	12583	Valley Wide Pasco Propane	339.65
10/11/2023	12560	Columbia iConnect	156.39	10/11/2023	12584	WA State Dept. of Transportation	1,557.33
10/11/2023	12561	Dayton Chamber of Commerce	2,500.00			Zero dB Communications, LLC	285,784.93
10/11/2023	12562	Dayton Mercantile	11.54				

Chair Bryan adjourned the meeting at 6:21 pm.



 Genie Crowe, Secretary