

**Port of Columbia**  
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes  
November 8, 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, Lyons Ferry Marina concessionaires Joanne and Wally Knouf and 14 members of the public. Attending via Zoom were 8 members of the public. **Absent:** None.

**Public Comment:** Chair Bryan asked for any public comments. Four members of the public made comments regarding Lyons Ferry Marina. Erik Young and Mike Spring expressed being in favor of completing the pull-throughs and other improvements. Dave Harvey stated that the marina is in good working order and very clean. Calab Young would like to see the marina remain a KOA.

**Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Crowe moved to approve the minutes from the October 11<sup>th</sup> regular meeting, seconded by Watts. Bryan requested the verbiage be changed in the paragraph regarding the Review Draft Capital Facilities Plan before approving the minutes. Revised minutes will be presented at the December meeting for approval.

**Finances: Monthly Budget Report & Approve Vouchers –** Dickinson explained there was a change on the October voucher approval and will need to be re-signed since the Zero dB check was sent out in November not October. There was no further budget discussion and both vouchers were approved.

**2024 Budget Review and Public Hearing:** There was no discussion or comment from the commissioners on the final budget. The Public Hearing opened at 5:10 pm. Bryan asked for public comment. None were made. The Public Hearing was closed at 5:11 pm. Commissioner Crowe made a motion to adopt Resolution #2023-04 approving the 2024 Budget which includes not taking the 1% tax levy option. Motion passed 2 to 1. Dickinson explained she made a couple of changes to the Capital Facilities Plan for 2024 to accommodate the request by the commission to improve the breakwater and moorage at Lyons Ferry Marina. Commissioner Watts made a motion to approve the Capital Facilities Plan for 2024, Crowe seconded. Motion carried.

**Leases:** Dickinson reported that Jordan Henderson Fine Arts has asked for a 1-year renewed lease with an option to cancel after 6 months, since he is building a new studio. She agreed to add that option since she had someone interested in the space if it becomes available. The commissioners signed the lease with no questions or comments.

**DRS Compliance Review:** Dickinson reported the review found the Port owes back contributions from two employees who were not enrolled in the States Retirement Plan by mistake. The Port was unaware that part-time employees working at least 70 hours per month were required to participate. Also, a former employee opted out of PERS and this is not allowed. The amount owed is less than \$18,000 and will be paid this year.

**Rock Hill Industrial Park:** A garage door will be replaced at #3 Port Way this month. Bryan made comment that the gravel in the industrial park is becoming wash boarded. Dickinson will check into having it graded again, which may be dependent on proper soil conditions. It can't be too wet or too dry.

**Lyons Ferry Marina:** Dickinson gave a brief history of the marina and how it operates. The concessionaires gave a report on the importance of remaining a KOA campground. Regarding the addition of the 10 pull-throughs, if they were at 75% occupancy April through September, they could generate \$100,000 per year would mean a 10-year ROI plus they could potentially see a volume increase at the store upwards of \$90,000 per year. They also found grants available to help cover the cost. Some grants have the possibility of match reduction or no match at all. Over the years the Knouf's have invested over \$200,000 into the campground and marina. There may be ways to save money on the construction of the pull-throughs. Bryan still has concerns over the condition of other infrastructure at the marina. Commissioners Watts and Bryan would like to talk more with

the concessionaires to get more information directly from them. Commissioner Crowe trusts the assessment of the Army Corps of Engineers following their annual inspection.

**Blue Mountain Station:** The Craft Malt Study is closing soon. It looks like it will cost about \$10 million for the infrastructure, the building and equipment. The Port could acquire funding for the building. The operator is meeting with the SBDC to make sure he can get financing and USDA grants in order to proceed. Once that is done the Port would see about acquiring CERB funding for infrastructure and the building shell. Should have a better idea in December if this is feasible. Val Mudry gave notice she is leaving BMS Co-op. Susan Larson will be taking her place starting November 14<sup>th</sup>.

**CWW Railroad:** Chris Herman from the WPPA will be attending the December meeting to provide information on Port owned railroads. Dickinson has contacted an appraiser for the rail. His fee, in 2024, will be \$12,250 for a full appraisal and consultation on structuring a deal. Bryan and Watts would like to proceed with this in January. Seneca is not happy with the condition of the 5<sup>th</sup> Street crossing and will be working with the rail operator to get it repaired. Our \$20,000 DOT grant match will be carried over again as Columbia Rail still hasn't completed the work.

**Dayton Community Broadband:** Phase 1 – Zero dB has crews in town completing cleanup. The project has met and is exceeding the 50% adoption rate predicted in customers. The Port hopes to have the final report to CERB and financially wrapped up by the end of 2023. **Touchet Valley Broadband:** Phase 2 – Blue Mtn. has begun boring and plowing. Five premises were added to the project after being inadvertently left off the first project. **Rural Broadband Planning:** Phase 3 – Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) funding is in process. The state of Washington is going to get millions of dollars and will have to decide how to distribute it. The Port hopes to have coverage up North and South Touchet Rds., the Wolf Fork, and the Tucannon. Dickinson would really like to help Starbuck by building a multi-county middle mile line through Starbuck to Washtucna.

### **Community and Economic Development**

**Staff Reports:** Dickinson reported the annual CEDS meeting is in the planning stages and will take place on Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 – 1:00. A new business is looking for a location in Dayton. She is participating in a presentation that will be made at the Chamber Banquet on the downtown revitalization. The wastewater treatment committee held its last meeting. The next steps are the conditional use permit, perc tests, complete the purchase and sales agreement. WPPA director Eric ffitch and his new government affairs director came to the Port for a tour and information about the Port of Columbia. Essency is working with a new business connecting them with the SBDC. She has been networking in the downtown area. The new social media campaign has started with Instagram and Facebook posts and has had good response so far. There have been twenty-one responses from businesses to the survey she sent out about holding networking and workshops provided by the Port. She will continue work on getting more businesses to reply. A small business Saturday campaign is taking place. The Horizon Grant group will be in town on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Housing:** Dickinson has been asked to meet with the Common Roots Housing Trust in the next couple of weeks. They are curious about a piece of property or ours. She will continue to work on compiling information she has gathered from other ports and to create a marketable document.

**Final Comments:** Chair Bryan asked for final public comment. Chuck Beleny uses the marina but thinks improvements need to be made before building the pull-throughs. Dave Harvey asked what a pull-through site would cost per night and suggested that the revenue could be reinvested back into the infrastructure for many years. Mike Spring wants to make sure the rail appraisal includes scrap metal. Dayton Chronicle asked what the deadline is for the pull-throughs to keep KOA status. Watts wanted to thank the Port staff for the hard work being done between the meetings. He also wanted to say thanks for the demeanor and respectfulness of those making comments. Bryan echoed what Watts said and is grateful for those who came out and appreciates the passion shown for the marina.

**Approval of Vouchers:** Commissioners approved regular monthly vouchers in the amount of \$368,527.70.

11/01/2023	12585-12591	Employee Payroll	12,528.96	11/08/2023	12611	Dayton Mercantile	36.25
11/01/2023	12593-12595	Payroll Liabilities	9,568.65	11/08/2023	12612	Inland Cellular	76.65
11/01/2023	12592	Zero dB Communications, LLC	285,784.93	11/08/2023	12613	Jamestown Networks	198.23
11/08/2023	12596	2Over Publishing	14.50	11/08/2023	12614	LEAF	268.12
11/08/2023	12597	Anderson Perry, Inc.	23,126.89	11/08/2023	12615	MBG Cleaning Services	1,480.00
11/08/2023	12598	AWB - Association of WA Business	575.00	11/08/2023	12616	Pacific Power	1,304.54
11/08/2023	12599	Banner Bank - 1585	3,205.27	11/08/2023	12617	PacifiCorp (v)	11,581.12
11/08/2023	12600	Banner Bank - 1593	1,475.05	11/08/2023	12618	Petrichor Broadband, LLC	1,497.00
11/08/2023	12601	Banner Bank - GO Bond - 3946	VOID	11/08/2023	12619	Senske	71.38
11/08/2023	12602	Banner Bank BMS #2 Bond - 9342	2,440.84	11/08/2023	12620	Tell It Media	2,090.90
11/08/2023	12603	Basin Disposal Inc	137.28	11/08/2023	12621	Touchet Valley Landscape	140.79
11/08/2023	12604	Blue Mountain Septic	250.00	11/08/2023	12622	US Linen & Uniform	119.02
11/08/2023	12605	Brewer's Bookkeeping & Payroll Svcs	800.00	11/08/2023	12623	WA State Dept. of Transportation	3,332.85
11/08/2023	12606	Cardmember Service	596.52	11/08/2023	12624	Waitsburg Times	90.00
11/08/2023	12607	City Lumber	44.50	11/08/2023	12625	Washington Public Ports Assoc.	410.00
11/08/2023	12608	City of Dayton	2,094.48	11/08/2023	12626	Incidental Fund	450.00
11/08/2023	12609	Columbia iConnect	156.39	11/08/2023	12627	Banner Bank - GO Bond - 3946	2,431.59
11/08/2023	12610	Dayton Chamber of Commerce	150.00				

Chair Bryan adjourned the meeting at 6:20 pm.

  
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 Genie Crowe, Secretary