



COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES JUNE 12, 2024 100 E. STREET COLUMBIA CITY, OREGON 97018

The Port of Columbia County held a Board meeting at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 12, 2024 at the Port office and via Zoom (*) video conferencing with the following present:

Commissioners

Robert Keyser	President
Chip Bubl	Secretary
Nancy Ward	2nd Vice President
Nick Sorber	Treasurer
Brian Fawcett	Vice President

Guests

Chris Iverson	Hagan Hamilton Insurance
Jan Schollenberger	Columbia City
Kim Karber	Interim Columbia City Mgr.
Ralph Culpepper	Scappoose
Natasha Parvey	NXTClean Fuels
Kevin Jones *	CPBR / Global
Alta Lynch *	Scappoose
Scott Keillor *	WSP
Dan Serres *	Columbia Riverkeeper

Staff

Sean P. Clark	Executive Director
Amy Bynum	Deputy Executive Director
Robert Salisbury	Port General Counsel
Guy Glenn, Jr.	Executive Finance Manager
Miriam House	Operations Manager
Elizabeth Millager	Operations Coordinator
Elliot Levin	North County Ops. & Terminal Mgr.
Gina Sisco	Comm. & External Affairs Mgr.
Christa Burns	Administrative Assistant II
Lacey Tolles	Data Resource & Project Spec.
Amy Bynum	Deputy Executive Director
Brittany Scott *	Finance Assistant
Sydell Cotton *	Assistant Finance Manager
Susan Tolleshaug*	Administrative Assistant
Mary Laitala	Administrative Assistant

President Robert Keyser called the Port of Columbia County Budget Hearing to order at 8:30 a.m. All Commissioners were present.

Budget Hearing

Commission President Robert Keyser opened the Budget Hearing to take comments from the public. There were no public comments on the proposed budget and the Budget Hearing closed at 8:32 a.m.

The Port of Columbia County regular Board meeting was then called to order at 8:33 a.m. by Mr. Keyser.

Additions To Agenda

Robert Keyser asked the Commission if there were any additions to the agenda. The Commission added the Executive Director Performance Evaluation to Executive Session.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Keyser asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Nancy Ward moved; Brian Fawcett seconded a motion to adopt consent agenda items A, B and C: April 10, 2024 and May 22, 2024 Commission Meeting Minutes, May 22, 2024 Budget Committee Minutes, April 2024 Finance Report, and Approval of Check Register (A) and electronic payments in the total amount of \$459,061.57. Motion carried unanimously.

Comments From the Public

Brady Preheim, St. Helens resident, commented on Resolution 2024-09. Mr. Preheim stated that he would support the Port tax because the Port needs the money, but also needs the rental revenue from NEXT. He suggested giving NEXT a 30-day notice to begin making full rent payments.



Dan Serres informed the Commission that the online participants could not hear what happened before the Consent Agenda. Mr. Keyser responded that the Executive Director Performance Evaluation was added to Executive Session under "Additions to Agenda."

New Business

Resolution 2024-09

SETTING THE PORT TAX

Port Executive Director Sean Clark presented Resolution 2024-09. The Port held a Budget Committee Meeting on May 8, 2024. At that time, the Budget Committee voted in favor of setting the Port tax at \$0.0400 per \$1,000 of assessed value. The next step is for the Commission to vote and, if voting to set the tax at zero, Resolution 2024-09 will need to be amended. Robert Keyser stated that at the time of the Budget Committee meeting, he voted yes on the \$0.0400 tax rate in order to move it forward to discussion. However, he does not support levying the Port tax this year. Mr. Keyser said that he had a conversation with Commissioner Ward about putting together a committee to look at water access, dredging, and marina issues, and to make sure that stakeholders in the community are involved. They would like to determine whether it makes sense to add the tax back into the Port's budget next year. Nancy Ward reinforced Mr. Keyser's comments and added that if there is any type of change to the tax structure, the Port needs outreach to the community. Ms. Ward also thanked Chip Bubl for his letter to the newspaper. Commissioner Bubl stated that he supports the tax and agreed with Mr. Preheim regarding the NEXT lease. Mr. Bubl pointed out that it has only been four years since the tax was removed from the Port's budget, so at some point the public voted to levy the tax. Additionally, the public has never voted to remove the tax. Mr. Bubl said that it is important for the Port to start taxing again for fiscal stability, and that he would support levying the tax at 0.08 per \$1,000. Nick Sorber stated that he does not support the tax at this time and said the Port has already done public outreach to educate the community on how the Port operates, specifically at Scappoose Bay. Mr. Sorber echoed levying the full rate of 0.08 percent if the Port tax is brought back. Brian Fawcett stated that he is also opposed to reinstating the Port tax this year in an environment where most taxes were voted down. Mr. Fawcett thinks it is important for the Port to continue educating the public about the marina, water access, and local recreation. He pointed out that the tax is a small amount that would make a big impact on bringing more value to the community. Mr. Fawcett looks forward to having those conversations over the next year and reevaluating the tax in 2025.

Robert Keyser called for a motion. Brian Fawcett moved to amend Resolution 2024-09 to set the Port tax rate at 0.0 per \$1,000 of assessed value; Nick Sorber seconded the motion. Commissioners Keyser, Ward, Sorber and Fawcett voted yes. Commissioner Bubl voted no. Motion carried 4-1.

Resolution 2024-10

ADOPTING THE FY 2024-25 BUDGET, MAKING APPROPRIATIONS

Sean Clark presented Resolution 2024-10. Mr. Clark explained that the Port has followed the legal budget process. The Budget Committee met on May 8, 2024, and a Budget Hearing was held at the start of today's meeting to take public comment. There were no public comments on the proposed budget. Following the adoption of the FY 2024-25 Budget, the adopted budget will be submitted to the County by the June 30, 2024 deadline.

President Keyser called for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-10. Brian Fawcett moved; Chip Bubl seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-10, adopting the fiscal year 2024-2025 Budget in the total amount of \$17,564,969. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.



Resolution 2024-11

ROTATING THE NOMINATION PROCESS FOR THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

Port General Counsel Robert Salisbury gave a PowerPoint presentation on Officer Elections: Rotating the Presidency. Mr. Salisbury explained the officer elections process and went over the order of priority for nominations. The Commission President is selected based on majority vote at the first meeting in July each year, subject to accepting a nomination. The Vice President is automatically selected based upon the Commissioner second in order of priority. Mr. Salisbury noted that a board member must have served on the Commission for at least one year in order to be eligible for President or Vice President. The top priority in the new Policy for choosing the Port President would be the person with the most seniority as Commissioner who has never served as President. Second priority would be the person with the most seniority and the longest period of time since serving as President, and third priority would be the person with the longest time since serving as President. Mr. Salisbury informed the Commission that he consulted with two statistical and analytics experts and they agreed that the Policy was very well-written and comprehensive. The only question that came up was how to resolve ties. The Commission considered this question and decided to leave that open to a majority vote or other process to be decided later. Mr. Keyser stated that this assumes all of the candidates accept the nomination, and Mr. Salisbury confirmed this would just be for nominations and, if a candidate declined the nomination it would go to the next in line based on seniority. Mr. Fawcett asked who would be next in line for Vice President if the first in priority says no, and Mr. Salisbury replied that the first in line for President would then be given the chance to become Vice President.

President Keyser called for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-11. Nancy Ward moved; Brian Fawcett seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-11. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0. Port Policy 008 and Mr. Salisbury's PowerPoint are on file at the Port Office.

Resolution 2024-12

APPROVING AN AGRICULTURAL LEASE WITH CRAIG COLEMAN AT PORT WESTWARD INDUSTRIAL PARK

Elliot Levin, North County Terminal & Operations Manager, presented Resolution 2024-12, which would authorize the Port to enter into an agricultural Lease with Craig F. Coleman Inc. for 118 acres at Port Westward. Mr. Levin displayed a map showing the location of the parcel and said that the Port bought the land in 2009 from Lower Columbia Tree Farm. Under that purchase agreement, Lower Columbia Tree Farm retained timber rights to the land; thus, it had not previously been leased to a third party although Columbia River Ranch has licensed the land periodically to graze cattle. The trees were recently harvested, and the land is now available for lease. Mr. Levin informed the Commission that over the past few months, the Port and Mr. Coleman began negotiating a lease. Rent for the first two years will be \$30.00 per acre per year. This rate compares with that of other Port agricultural leases and recognizes that the land will need time to become productive. During the third year of the lease, the rent increases to \$150.00 per acre per year. If the lease extends beyond the initial 4-year term, rent increases again to \$175.00 per acre per year. This lease structure recognizes the work needed to improve the land while bringing the rent up to the market rate of the land. Next, Mr. Levin introduced Craig Coleman to discuss his plans for the property and answer any questions from the Commission. Mr. Coleman stated that he has been in the farming business since 1982 and has a farm in Hermiston, OR which his son now oversees. They primarily grow blueberries among about fifteen other crops depending on the season. Mr. Coleman said he is relocating to Columbia County and had purchased about 300 acres in the Beaver Drainage District last summer (2023). He plans to grow blueberries at Port Westward and hopes to have the crop started in the Spring of 2025. Mr. Keyser asked if he had considered the 200 acres by the boatyard. Mr. Coleman responded that he did and that he is interested in acquiring more land once the trees are harvested. Ms. Ward asked what brought him to this area. Mr. Coleman responded that the land appears to be undeveloped and that he wants to bring high value to the community.



President Keyser called for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-12. Brian Fawcett moved; Nick Sorber seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-12. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

Marina Update

Miriam House, Port Operations Manager, provided an update on the Scappoose Bay Marine Park. Ms. House stated that the Upland construction project is moving along on schedule with design plans at 100 percent. When the Port receives the building permit, the Invitation to Bid (ITB) will go out. Ms. House complimented KPFF, the consulting engineers, for doing such great work on the drawings. Port maintenance staff completed the building of two new pay stations except for the metal roofs which will be installed on site during construction to accommodate the electrical wiring. The only unplanned addition was the replacement of an old fire hydrant. The project came in under budget and the Port received a grant in the amount of \$408,000. The electric vehicle chargers (EV) have been installed at the marina in partnership with the Columbia River Public Utilities District (CRPUD). Ms. House showed a photo of vehicles already being successfully charged. The Port hired a contractor to perform maintenance on the nature trails to increase pedestrian safety. This recent maintenance included filling potholes, removing tree roots, and re-paving sections of the trail loop, at a cost of \$26,000. Ms. House reported areas of the main truck and trailer parking lot that also need the same treatment, and the plan is to time those repairs with the Upland construction for less interruption to park visitors. Ms. House also reported that Metro-Watch security service is on duty at the marina and at Trestle Beach. Nancy Ward inquired about the 10-minute parking spots being removed. Ms. House confirmed removal of those spaces because they were not being used appropriately. Marine park guests often exceed the 10-minute time limit, and some remained parked there all day. Ms. Ward pointed out that we want people to use the facility, especially locals, yet the monitoring of parking spaces is a challenge for staff. Brian Fawcett agreed and suggested taking it to the Marina Advisory Board. The Commission agreed and gave consensus to have a discussion on parking and monitoring at the next Marina Advisory Board meeting. Lastly, Mr. Clark gave kudos to Miriam House and the maintenance team and said he appreciates their efficiency.

Airport Update

Interim Airport Manager Lacey Tolles gave a PowerPoint presentation on current projects at the Scappoose Airport. First, Ms. Tolles informed the Commission that there are no pending thru-the-fence permit applications. Ms. Tolles continued by stating that Northeast Electric is wrapping up Phase 1 of the Emergency Generator Project, and both generator pads have been placed at Transwestern Aviation and the Airport Lighting Vault (ALV). The tanks and generators are on order. Ms. Tolles also said the trench has been dug for infrastructure improvements on the east side of Airport Road. The Port would like to thank Ed Freeman and his Moore Road Expansion Project for providing the trench at no cost. As part of that process, the Port will be installing five concrete bases and laying conduit in preparation for future lighting and a natural gas line. The Port has ordered two lighted runway closure lights that will be housed on site at Scappoose Airport for quicker access. Ms. Tolles also announced that the Port is moving forward with an Invitation to Bid (ITB) on the Westside Pavement Maintenance Project. Commissioner Keyser asked about the status of the East side hangar demolition project which was included in the budget for fiscal year 2024-25. Ms. Tolles responded that demolition of the East side hangers is a priority and is being discussed with the Scappoose Advisory Committee.

Lignetics/Neighbors Update

Port Executive Director Sean P. Clark updated the Commission on Lignetics' progress with DEQ and stated that he had engaged Nate Stice, area representative for the Governor's Regional Solutions Team. The DEQ process requires approval of the air permit modification modeling before Lignetics can submit the air contaminant discharge permit application. Mr. Clark stated that he received a message



from Mike Sale, VP of Lignetics, confirming that Lignetics had submitted the air modeling for the new cyclone and is still waiting on approval from DEQ. As a response to the unannounced inspection by DEQ for the storm water permit, DEQ provided a list of items for Lignetics to address by July 16. Sawdust left outdoors is required to be covered, and Lignetics has made a focused effort on reducing inventory. Mr. Clark stated that Lignetics will most likely not be rerouting the truck traffic due to the required changes to their operations and the expense of moving the scale. Nick Sorber stated that the road in the back needs repairs. Nancy Ward mentioned that the truck location had been moved in the past and asked if moving the scale is the main issue. Mr. Clark replied that he would find out. Mr. Sorber said that trucks pulling out on the highway with no traffic light is also a concern. Mr. Clark added that Port tenant Clearwater Paper also uses that road to and from Longview, WA. Ms. Ward asked if it is a private road. Mr. Clark responded that the Port owns the road. The Port will continue to monitor any spillage from the trucks. Ms. Ward then invited Columbia City resident Jan Schollenberger to come forward to speak on the record. Ms. Schollenberger said the neighborhood appreciates the Port being proactive and helping to make progress. She said she is disappointed to hear about truck traffic not being rerouted, as the problem is not just the spillage from the trucks but also the congestion in residential streets. She also pointed out several items that were planned to be completed by September 2024 are now being pushed into 2025. The residents do not want to endure two more summers of the dust. The neighbors would like a timeline update from Lignetics. Ms. Schollenberger thanked the Port for its continued support and said that another community meeting will be held sometime this summer.

Donations Policy Discussion

Communications and External Affairs Manager Gina Sisco came forward to provide information on the Port's Donation Policy, as the Commission had previously requested a policy review. Under current policy, the Port does not contribute money or items of cash value to support charitable organizations. Ms. Sisco brought this up at the Commission's request for discussion and guidance on possibly revising the policy to create a fund for nonprofit donations requests. Brian Fawcett stated that it would be beneficial to the public and that including it in next year's budget process seems like a reasonable approach. Nick Sorber said the Commission would need to decide on an amount and how many awards would be given out annually. Nancy Ward added that it would need to be on a rotating basis for recipients. Ms. Sisco inquired about guidelines and an application and screening process. Mr. Bubl mentioned that earlier materials stated that donations must be related to our operations as a Port. Mr. Keyser recommended a set of guiding principles to include being related to Port functions and benefiting Port properties and economic development. This would be separate from community outreach funds for FY 2024-25. The Commission gave consensus to form a committee that includes two Commissioners to consider revising the resolution. Commissioners Fawcett and Bubl volunteered to serve on the Committee.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Sean Clark introduced Mary Laitala with Cardinal Services and announced that Port Administrative Assistant Susan Tolleshaug will be retiring. Mr. Clark stated that Ms. Laitala would be filling that role and welcomed her to the Port. Mr. Clark said that he attended the Pacific Northwest Waterways (PNWA) Conference in Clarkston, WA June 4 – 6 and one of the key takeaways is the rising costs affecting projects and budgets across the board. Mr. Clark and Amy Bynum toured SportCopter, a commercial tenant at Scappoose Airport, on Monday, June 10. Mr. Clark informed the Commission that Elliot Levin gave a presentation to the Oregon Freight Advisory Council as part of the review process for a Connect Oregon grant. Mr. Clark said he attended the Columbia County Business Alliance Board Meeting and had a round table with Columbia Economic Team (CET) to discuss Port specific issues. This Friday, June 14, Mr. Clark and Commissioner Fawcett will go on a Milton Creek walk. Mr. Clark and Commissioner Keyser will meet with Nate Stice from the Governor's Regional Solutions Team on June 20 at the Port office to talk about storm water issues and then take a tour of Port Westward. Mr. Clark asked the Commissioners if they would like to join any of the tours. Commissioner Fawcett said he will



join the Port Westward tour and Mr. Sorber will go on the Milton Creek walk. The Port will have a booth at Citizen's Day in the Park on June 22 and staff will attend a Tenant Luncheon at the Scappoose Airport on June 25. The Executive Director's Report is on file at the Port Office.

Commissioner Reports

Brian Fawcett reported that he has been having conversations around the budget and tax lately, as well as discussing a few marina items. Mr. Fawcett said he appreciates the Port staff's work and willingness to hear feedback.

Nick Sorber commented that he also appreciates staff efforts. Mr. Sorber said he is excited to hear about the agricultural lease and hopes that it works out.

Chip Bubl stated that he wrote a letter to the newspaper and had conversations with several people including a few Commissioners.

Nancy Ward reported being invited to join a group to get acquainted with the four people selected as finalists for Scappoose City Administrator. Ms. Ward suggested the Port look into the availability of federal funding for infrastructure improvements.

Robert Keyser reported that he was recently out of state. Mr. Keyser mentioned 200 acres that are available in Clatskanie for potential future development of blueberries and other crops.

Executive Session

The Board held an Executive Session to consider exempt public records, including written legal advice from Port General Counsel, which is privileged under ORS 40.225 and exempt from disclosure under ORS 192.355(9)(a) and ORS 192.660(2)(f).

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION, THE MEETING
ADJOURNED AT 10:10 A.M.**

Chris Bubl for Brian Fawcett

President

July 24, 2024

Date Adopted by Commission

Robert Keyser

Secretary