



COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 10, 2024
100 E. STREET
COLUMBIA CITY, OREGON 97018

The Port of Columbia County held a Board meeting at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 10, 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

Staff

Sean P. Clark	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.

Guests

Scott Jacobson	St. Helens Parks & Trails Commission
Jerry Belcher	St. Helens Parks & Trails Commission
John Walsh	St. Helens City Administrator
Ralph Culpepper	Scappoose
Alta Lynch *	Scappoose
Brady Preheim	St. Helens
Jan Schollenberger	Columbia City
Brenda Vassau	Agricultural Info. Committee
Kim Karber	Interim Columbia City Mgr.
Steve Nelson	Lignetics
Michael Sykes	Columbia River PUD

Gina Sisco	Comm. & External Affairs Mgr.
Christa Burns	Administrative Assistant II
Lacey Tolles	Data Res. & Projects Spec./ Interim Airport Manager
Susan Tolleshaug*	Administrative Assistant
Brittany Scott *	Finance Assistant
Sydell Cotton *	Assistant Finance Manager

Guests (cont.)

Jasmine Lillich *	Clatskanie
Natasha Parvey	NEXT
Bob Gadotti *	Scappoose
TKarchenes	

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

Additions To Agenda

Robert Keyser asked the Commission if there were any additions to the agenda. Nick Sorber requested to add a discussion on marina fishing. The Commission supported the addition. Sean Clark requested to add a guest presentation from St. Helens Parks and Trails, which the Commission also supported. Commissioner Keyser added St. Helens Parks and Trails to the first order of New Business and a Marina Fishing Update to Old Business. Mr. Keyser also set the precedent for at least two Commissioners to add to the Agenda.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Keyser asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Chip Bubl moved; Nick Sorber seconded a motion to adopt consent agenda items A and B: February 28, 2024 Minutes and March 2024 Finance Report. Motion carried unanimously.

Brian Fawcett moved; Chip Bubl seconded a motion to adopt consent agenda item C: Approval of Check Register (A) and electronic payments in the total amount of \$381,310.05. Motion carried unanimously.

Comments From the Public

Brady Preheim, St. Helens, stated that he is concerned with the public comment timeframe being limited to two minutes and the Commission should hold night meetings.

Old Business

Marina Update

Port Operations Manager Miriam House gave an update on projects at the Scappoose Bay Marina. The upland project is moving along on schedule, plans are at 100 percent, and the Port is preparing to submit an Invitation to Bid (ITB). The upland work includes building new pay stations and the Port maintenance staff found it more affordable to build them from scratch. There has been no movement on dredging since the last update on March 13. The Port is still waiting for information from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Ms. House would like to discuss the next steps with the Commission and mentioned Railroad Avenue as a possible dredge site. The Department of State Lands (DSL) is not offering any financial assistance for dredging, so the Port is looking into the possibility of assistance from DEQ. The channel has a three-to-four-foot draft which could be an issue for larger sailboats. Commissioner Fawcett wanted to clarify that the state does not maintain the channel outside of Scappoose Bay, nor does the state have any plans to dredge the channel. Ms. House confirmed and explained that it is not a navigational channel. Commissioner Keyser stated that kayaking is rated one of the top tourist destinations in Oregon and suggested engaging the state legislature. The Port has a meeting set up with DEQ regarding the channel. Executive Director, Sean P. Clark, said more will be discussed on dredging during the staff budget recommendations. Lacey Tolles also came forward to inform the Commission that Peak Electric and MSR Concrete will be on site at the marina beginning April 23 to begin installing the Electronic Vehicle (EV) charging stations.

Airport Update - there are no pending Thru-the-Fence (TTF) applications.

Lacey Tolles, Interim Airport Manager stated the airport gate has a new sign and the gate is working. The emergency generator project is moving along. There are no pending Thru-the-Fence (TTF) applications.

Marina Fishing Update

Commissioner Sorber brought up concerns about the current fishing ban within Scappoose Bay and requested it be added to the agenda. Miriam House came forward again to discuss the Scappoose Bay Marina fishing ban. Commissioners Sorber and Fawcett shared their understanding that the intent of the ban was to prevent sturgeon fishing and boats anchoring in the bay, but not to keep kids and the public from fishing. Mr. Sorber suggested revisiting this with the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) and revising it to only ban sturgeon fishing. Ms. House said that fishing is not banned on the bank, only inside the marina within the Department of State Lands (DSL) leasehold. Ms. House stated that the marina needs to be safe for all users. Mr. Fawcett asked for a map of the marina to be displayed. Mr. Clark pulled up a map to show the areas affected by the temporary ban, and the bank where fishing is still allowed. Commissioners Fawcett and Sorber are concerned that a large section of the bank where people have historically fished is currently closed off, limiting public access. Ms. House stated that boat anchoring and fishing off the docks has been impeding traffic and causing unnecessary navigational hazards. Additionally, there are safety concerns with Port staff, tenants, and marina guests. Mr. Clark asked about conversations with the Scappoose Bay Marina Advisory Committee, and Ms. House responded that the Advisory Committee was in favor of the fishing ban. Mr. Fawcett stated he has attended those meetings for several years and that he had a different recollection. As he recalls from those discussions, the intent was to ban sturgeon fishing and not to ban the public from fishing in those areas. Mr. Clark said the Commission is giving direction to discuss revising the policy, so staff will go back to the Advisory Committee to work through it and determine the best resolution for all.

Port Westward Dock Update

Elliot Levin, North County Operations & Terminal Manager, updated the Commission on the dock restoration efforts at Port Westward. At the last Commission meeting on March 13, Mr. Levin stated that the product, vapor recovery and inert gas lines had all been repaired and returned to service. The permanent walkway is now in place and extends for the full length of the pipe bridge with safety lighting installed. The Portland General Electric (PGE) water discharge line has been rebuilt, the electrical conduit has been connected, and the heat trace is in place on the two water lines. Commissioner Keyser suggested having an official local gathering to acknowledge the re-opening of the dock.

Lignetics/Neighbors Update

Sean P. Clark, Port Executive Director, gave an update provided by Lignetics Plant Manager, Steve Nelson. Lignetics has issued purchase orders for the capital items that were discussed, site visits have been made by suppliers, and they are confirming construction details. DEQ has acknowledged their permit changes and final approval is anticipated for August 2024. Mr. Nelson said that Lignetics is on track to add the misters, close the hammer mill, and have the sawdust under cover by June 1. Discussions are ongoing about relocating the truck entrance, as it also requires personnel and operational changes. Mr. Nelson added that they are reducing operating hours, and the plant will not be operating on weekends. Ms. Schollenberger shared a picture taken on April 9 showing the product that is stored outside and stated there were more emissions in the air that day due to the wind. She requested the changes be instituted earlier than June 1 and asked the Commission to apply pressure on DEQ. Mr. Keyser said the Port would be happy to write a letter. Ms. Ward asked if Lignetics had heard anything back from DEQ. Mr. Nelson replied that they were only informed that their application had been received. Lignetics restricted their footprint last summer due to reaching the offloading limit. Mr. Nelson said they could get the misters in place before June 1 and provide an update on the timeline. Ms. Schollenberger also suggested Lignetics keep an eye on the wind and adjust the sprinklers based on the wind direction.

New Business

St. Helens Parks and Trails Commission

St. Helens Parks and Trails Commissioners Scott Jacobson and Jerry Belcher, and St. Helens City Administrator John Walsh gave a PowerPoint presentation to inform the Port of Columbia County Commission about a proposal to build a joint loop trail at Milton Creek. The proposed loop trail would be located on both City of St. Helens and Port of Columbia County property. In March 2024, Mr. Jacobsen and former City Councilor, Patrick Birkle, met with Port staff members Sean Clark and Lacey Tolles to gauge interest in pursuing the joint trail development project. The reaction was positive, and the St. Helens Parks and Trails Commission were invited to present it to the Port Commission. They would like feedback from the Port Commissioners and staff about project feasibility and to solicit input regarding key stakeholders and partnerships to involve in the process should the project proceed. The joint loop trail would be approximately three miles and would follow Milton Creek from McCormick Park to the riverfront.

Composting Facility Feasibility Study

Brenda Vassau, Project Manager for the Agricultural Information Committee, gave a PowerPoint presentation on a proposed composting facility on Port property in Clatskanie. The property is just over 194 acres and currently has hybrid poplar trees. This proposal incorporates keeping the trees on the land by using a thinning process rather than eradication to start clearing the land in a sustainable way. Ms. Vassau said the proposed facility would be a long-term solution for the agricultural community throughout the region. As part of the feasibility study, she reached out to local farmers, gardeners, and composting facilities throughout the state not related to ecology or waste control organizations. The purpose of the independent feasibility study was to compare with other independent composting facilities. Ms. Vassau described some composting resources and land management strategies, and explained why the composting facility is a suitable alternative. Farmers could avoid paying for a rendering service or sending animal waste to a landfill, neither of which are

viable options. The advantages also include job creation and keeping local resources in the county. Some of the challenges include DEQ and county permitting which could cause delays. Ms. Vassau proposed a ground lease with the Port maintaining ownership of the land and a rent-free period for sustainable land development. The other option would be a rent-to-own purchase agreement. She would like the Port to consider how the proposal works in alignment with the Port's strategic plan. Nancy Ward inquired about start-up costs. Ms. Vassau explained she did not have that information at this time and offered to put together a five-year plan to present to the Commission.

PGE Delay with Legal Agreements

Elliot Levin, North County Operations & Terminal Manager, informed the Commission about difficulties the Port has encountered working with Portland General Electric (PGE) to update the Port Westward legal agreements, including several use agreements and easements. Many of these agreements involve several tenants and the Port and need to be processed within a reasonable time, as delays by one party impact others and affect our ability to do business at Port Westward. The process started six years ago and in October 2019 the Port sent draft agreements to PGE. In November 2019, Port Staff and Commissioner Keyser met at the PGE office in downtown Portland to discuss the agreements. At that time, PGE promised to send revised documents within two weeks. The Port has been trying to get these agreements completed for the past three years. In an effort to get the agreements completed, the Port requested an in-person meeting between the Port Westward industrial tenants and Port staff. Participants flew into Portland from across the country for a 2-day meeting at PGE's Portland office in October 2023. Port staff including Elliot Levin, Sean Clark, Robert Salisbury, and Christa Burns attended those meetings. Ms. Burns ran the technology and modified documents in real time as the parties went over them. Each legal agreement was reviewed line-by-line. PGE, Columbia Pacific Bio Refinery (CPBR), and the Port divided up the agreements and set deadlines for each to circulate their drafts. CPBR and the Port met their deadlines. PGE chose to edit the Water Discharge Agreement. However, instead of modifying the agreement discussed at the in-person meeting, PGE proposed a different agreement describing their concept of what the water discharge agreement could be. On March 21, 2024, during the regular monthly phone call that has taken place for many years, PGE's sole representative was someone attending for the first time who had no knowledge of ongoing issues. PGE representatives promised to have the documents reviewed by the end of April. Port staff have brought this concern to the attention of the Commission to find a way to improve the process and finish legal agreements that involve PGE. Mr. Levin shared with the Commission some ideas from Port staff to consider in the future. The first option would be to remove PGE as manager of the water discharge system. Secondly, the Port could remove PGE from infrastructure agreements such as the Dock Use Agreement. The third option would be to reduce the PGE lease footprint on the industrial land surrounding the Beaver Plant in order to reduce the easements involving PGE and free up land for industrial tenants. The current process is not working, and while Port Staff does not have a recommended course of action at this time, we would like to discuss these ideas with the Commission to develop a better way to process the legal agreements in a timely manner.

Resolution 2024-05

APPOINTING RACHEL ARMITAGE, DANIEL GARRISON, RACHAEL BARRY, PAUL LANGNER, AND ROBERT GADOTTI TO THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

Budget Committee members serve as volunteers and play a vital role in advising the Commission on the budget. Currently, there are five vacant positions on the Budget Committee. Port Executive Finance Manager, Guy Glenn, Jr. recommends adopting Resolution 2024-05 to appoint Rachel Armitage, Daniel Garrison, Rachael Barry, Paul Lagner and Robert Gadotti to the Budget Committee. The first Budget Committee meeting will take place on May 8, 2024, when a presiding officer will be appointed. A second Budget Committee meeting will be held with the Commission on May 22, 2024. The Budget is scheduled to be approved on June 12, 2024.

President Keyser called for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-05. Chip Bubl moved; Brian Fawcett seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-05. The motion carried unanimously.

Budget Priorities: Staff Recommendations: Impose the Port Tax

Sean P. Clark, Executive Director and Guy Glenn, Jr., Executive Finance Manager for the Port both came forward to present staff recommendations for the fiscal year 2025 budget. Mr. Glenn began by providing a recap of the discussion on capital budget priorities from the March 27 Commission work session. Mr. Glenn went over the reserves and cash position of the Port and explained they are only assumptions. His recommendation is to take a conservative approach to the Port's finances while seeking revenue-generating projects and investments. Staff is recommending that the Commission vote to impose the full amount of the Port tax. Mr. Clark stated that the seismic upgrades at Port Westward will be a priority at Port Westward due to being required by law. Multnomah Industrial Park is being considered for the Port maintenance shop. Priority projects at Scappoose Airport include westside pavement, emergency generator installation, and runway rehabilitation. For Scappoose Bay Marina, the recommendation by Port staff is to invest in upland improvements including access for ADA parking, a new kayak unloading area, improved lighting and landscaping, and increased safety for pedestrians. The Port will also install a new pay station at the marina and upgrade the existing one. Recommendations for the marina also include developing a plan for fiscal year 2026 and investing the port tax in upland improvements. There are no capital projects planned for McNulty Industrial Park, Railroad Avenue, or Clatskanie Business Center. Based on these staff recommendations, approximately \$4M has been cut from the fiscal year 2025 budget. Mr. Glenn also recommended the Port consider a financial policy on reserves. The formal budget process will include two budget committee meetings in May 2024 followed by a budget hearing with public comments, and then filing with the county by June 30, 2024.

Executive Director's Report

Provided and read by Sean Clark. Mr. Clark reported that he attended the Scappoose Annual Town Meeting last Saturday, April 6, with Commissioner Nancy Ward and Gina Sico. Later that day, he and Ms. Ward met with Senator Jeff Merkley. Mr. Clark and Amy Bynum are participating in the Columbia County Business Community Connection Project along with the Columbia Economic Team (CET), which is being led by Sierra Trass with the Columbia County Small Business Development Center (SBDC). He thinks it will be helpful to the Port and beneficial to the business climate of the overall area. They will attend the first task force on Thursday, April 11. Mr. Clark will also have lunch with Senator Wyden local representative, Ree Armitage, next Wednesday, April 17. The Executive Director's Report is on file at the Port Office.

Commissioner Reports

Brian Fawcett stated attendance has not been great at the second monthly Commission meetings, and suggested less frequent, higher value meetings. Mr. Fawcett stated that as the person who initially proposed having evening meetings, he feels strongly about giving the public opportunities to comment. He proposed the Commission establish quarterly evening work sessions in various locations in the district versus monthly.

Nick Sorber said he appreciates all the hard work by Port staff, and that he enjoys the PowerPoint slides and pictures.

Chip Bubl stated that he has enjoyed the quality of the materials over the past months and thanked the Port staff.

Nancy Ward seconded Commissioner Bubl's comments and stated the importance of being consistent and available to the public. Ms. Ward thinks the public should be given advance notice if there is a change to the meeting schedule. She also thanked Brenda Vassau for her presentation and said she is excited to see how the composting facility might work for both the Port and the community as a whole. Ms. Ward attended the Scappoose Town Hall meeting on April 6, 2024, and stated there was a huge amount of community support and input.

Mr. Keyser commended the Port maintenance staff for their work and their plan to build the pay

stations rather than farming them out. Saving money is appreciated, and he hopes the Port can find the funds to build a new maintenance shop. Mr. Keyser stated that he values the discussions and debates, which are reasons the Port has five Commissioners. He thanked the other Port Commissioners and said he appreciates everybody's point of view on the issues.

Port Executive Director, Sean Clark suggested holding off on Executive Session until after the Port receives a reply from PGE, and the Commission agreed. Mr. Clark also acknowledged Michael Sykes, General Manager of Columbia River Public Utilities District (CRPUD) attending.

Executive Session

Port General Counsel, Robert Salisbury announced that Executive Session was listed on the agenda, but the Commission decided there will be no Executive Session.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION, THE MEETING
ADJOURNED AT 11:23 A.M.**



President

June 12, 2024

Date Adopted by Commission



Secretary