

**PORT OF BENTON
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
November 6, 2017**

- A. CALL TO ORDER:** The regular monthly meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. at the Port of Benton Commission Meeting Room, 3250 Port of Benton Boulevard, Richland, Washington. Present were Commissioners Jane F. Hagarty, Roy D. Keck and Robert D. Larson. Staff members present included Executive Director, Scott D. Keller, PPM ®; Director of Finance, Stuart Dezember, PPM®, Port Attorney David Biletdeaux, Director of Airports and Operations, John Haakenson; Director of Maintenance, Kevin Howard; Director of Governmental Affairs, Diahann Howard; Director of Real Estate, Teresa Hancock; Director of Marketing, Wally Williams; Administrative Assistant, Kelly Thompson, and Port Counsel, Tom Cowan. Also in attendance were Dr. William Brauer and Bea Baker.
- B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Commissioner Roy Keck led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. CURRENT BUSINESS:**
- 1. CONSENT ITEMS:** A motion was made by Commissioner Roy Keck; seconded by Commissioner Jane Hagarty and unanimously passed by the Commission approving the October 11, 2017, Commission Meeting Minutes and the October 25, 2017, Special Commission Meeting Minutes.
 - 2. UNSCHEDULED BUSINESS/VISITORS:** Dr. William Brauer asked why the Port takes out loans instead of issuing a bond and raising taxes. The Executive Director explained it is a more efficient use of taxpayer dollars to get a short-term line of credit to purchase or design/build a specific project. There is no prepayment penalty with a line of credit and it is more flexible.
 - 3. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2018 PROPOSED BUDGET:** The regular Commission Meeting was recessed at 8:33 a.m. and a Public Hearing was convened for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding the 2018 Port of Benton budget. The Director of Finance presented the draft for approval of the 2018 proposed Port of Benton Budget. Commissioner Robert Larson asked for public comment. No public comment was received. The Public Hearing was closed at 8:38 a.m. and the regular Commission Meeting was reconvened.
 - 4. RESOLUTION 17-18:** A motion was made by Commissioner Roy Keck, seconded by Commissioner Jane Hagarty and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 17-18, adopting the 2018 Port of Benton Budget.
 - 5. RESOLUTION 17-19:** A Motion was made by Commissioner Roy Keck, seconded by Commissioner Jane Hagarty and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 17-19, Certifying the Port's 2017 Levy for 2018 collection.
 - 6. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2018 PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS:** The regular Commission Meeting was

recessed at 8:40 a.m. and a Public Hearing was convened for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding the 2018 Comprehensive Plan of Harbor Improvements. Commissioner Larson asked for public comment. Dr. William Brauer asked for an explanation of how the Port develops its Comprehensive Plan of Harbor Improvements. The Executive Director stated that Washington State RCW 53.20.10 requires that each Port file a Comprehensive Plan of Harbor Improvements each year after holding a public hearing. Dr. William Brauer also asked why the Port is so heavy in the wine industry and why they do not have more diversification. The Director of Economic Development and Governmental Affairs stated the Port strives to have a balanced portfolio, by partnering with both the City of Richland and TRIDEC to find clean energy storage and manufacturing users. These industries provide a good base of family wage jobs for the region. The Executive Director advised Dr. Brauer it was the Port of Benton and the City of Richland's partnership which brought the Preferred Freezer Group to Richland. Dr. Brauer also asked what the planning activities are for the Port's barge terminal and low dock. He was advised of the current modifications underway. The Public Hearing was closed at 9:00 a.m.

7. RESOLUTION 17-20: A motion was made by Commissioner Jane Hagarty, seconded by Commissioner Roy Keck and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 17-20, Adopting the 2018 Comprehensive Plan of Harbor Improvements.

8. RESOLUTION 17-21: Port Attorney David Billetdeaux highlighted the proposed changes to the Port of Benton's Personnel Policy. He reviewed each of the changes with Commission and advised he and the Director of Finance reviewed all changes with staff members. A motion was made by Commissioner Jane Hagarty, seconded by Commissioner Roy Keck, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 17-21, adopting the Revised Port of Benton Personnel Policy and Procedures.

9. BENTON CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (EDC): Bea Baker was present to provide an update on the Benton City EDC, which included the Quarter 1 Report, highlighting the new five year plan, new website and the potential hiring of an executive director. She thanked the Port for their continued support.

D. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS: Commissioner Roy Keck commented on his attendance at the Washington Public Ports Association (WPPA) Small Ports Conference and the Wings and Wheels event held recently at the Richland Airport. He stated he will be attending the WPPA Annual Meeting November 14-17, 2017.

Commissioner Hagarty also commented on her attendance at the WPPA Small Ports meeting. She also stated the Prosser Economic Development Association (PEDA) has adopted both a one year and ten year strategic plan. She also attended Lemtoberfest, held at the Walter Clore Wine and Culinary Center.

Commissioner Larson commented on his attendance at the PNWA Annual meeting last month; concerns about impacts and decisions by the Department of Ecology were discussed.

- E. COUNSEL COMMENTS:** The Port attorney updated the Commission on a phone call with Assistant United States Attorney, Dan Fruchter. The Port is being investigated for a false claims act violation regarding federal grants and the Railroad Retirement Fund. The remainder of his comments were deferred for Executive Session.

The Commission discussed increasing commissioner salaries from \$1,000 per month to \$1,500 per month. **A motion was made by Commissioner Robert Larson, seconded by Commissioner Jane Hagarty, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving a Commission salary increase from \$1,000 per month to \$1,500 per month for each Commissioner. Such increase will not take effect during the existing Commissioner's current terms of office.**

- F. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMENTS:** The Executive Director stated the new building in Prosser has the footings poured and contractors are underway preparing foundation.

Commissioner Roy Keck asked about the Chukar Cherry bid. The Director of Airports advised the bids will be ready mid-November, and bid opening scheduled for December 12, 2017, the day before the regularly scheduled Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Larson asked about the status of the solar farm. The Director of Economic Development and Governmental Affairs stated there are monuments being set for surveying and the project is proceeding.

- G. STAFF INFORMATION REPORTS:**

MARKETING: The Director of Communications and Marketing stated he is working on completing the 2018 port calendar and presented a new idea for the Port's Christmas card. He also stated he is working with the Port of Pasco on video for the Tri City Area Chamber of Commerce State of the Port's presentation November 29, 2017.

GRANTS: An updated grants status report was discussed.

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: The Director of Economic Development and Governmental Affairs updated the Commission on her projects. She recently attended the Association of Washington Business (AWB) Rural Summit. There were 250 in attendance, including 40 legislators present. The Port has submitted the \$60,000 requested by the Maritime Administration (MARAD) to begin the process of releasing restrictions on the property located in the Richland Innovation Center.

- H. SITE PROJECTS UPDATE:** The Commission was briefed on the Technology and Business Campus, Tri Cities Enterprise Center, Richland Business Park, Railroad, Richland Innovation Center, Richland Airport, Prosser Airport, Prosser Wine and Food Park, Prosser Vintners Village, Walter Clore Wine and Culinary Center, Benton City Properties and Crow Butte Park.

- I. PORT FINANCIAL ISSUES:** Vouchers audited by the Auditor as required by RCW 42.24.080 and certified expense reimbursement claims as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been recorded on a listing, which has been made available to the Port Commission. As of this date, November 6, 2017, Port Commission by unanimous vote approved for payment those vouchers included in said listing and further described as follows: Payroll Warrants numbered 03979 through 04030, totaling \$115,674.10 and General Expense Warrants numbered 067120 through 067352, totaling \$982,024.74 from the General Expense Fund.

The Director of Finance stated the Exit Conference with the State Auditor will be held November 7, 2017 at the Port Offices.

- J. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The Commission Meeting was recessed at 10:25 a.m. and an Executive Session was convened to discuss evaluating a legal risk and pending and threatened litigation pursuant to RCW.42.30.110 (l), (i) and (i-iii). The Commission announced the Executive Session would last no longer than forty-five (45) minutes. The Executive Session was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

- K. ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Roy D. Keck
Commission Secretary