

**PORT OF BENTON**  
**SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 21, 2019**

- A. CALL TO ORDER:** The Special Commission 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 Port Counsel, David Billetdeaux, Interim Executive Director, Diahann Howard and Administrative Assistant, Kelly Thompson. Also present were Bill O’Neil and Scott Keller.
- B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** David Billetdeaux led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.
- David Billetdeaux provided a brief statement saying that on October 17, 2019, the Port received a complaint. The complaint will be processed pursuant to Port policy. An independent legal counsel will handle the complaint. At this time, Mr. Billetdeaux is in the process of identifying and retaining independent legal counsel. Port policy, as well as recent legislative changes to the Public Records Act, require the names of the complainant and respondents to be held in confidence at this time. The investigation will be conducted confidentially and any retaliation by the subject of the complaint or directed toward Port Staff or any other person as a result of receipt of the complaint is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Upon completion of the investigation, any findings or recommendations regarding acting or potential sanctions will be made public. This process will likely take some time.
- C. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The regular Commission Meeting was recessed at 8:33 a.m. and an Executive Session was convened pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 to discuss potential litigation. The Commission announced the Executive Session would last no longer than forty-five (45) minutes. At 9:18 a.m. the Executive Session was adjourned, and the regular Commission Meeting was reconvened.
- D. A motion was made by Commissioner Jane Hagarty, seconded by Commissioner Robert Larson and unanimously passed by the Commission authorizing Port Counsel to begin selecting a neutral third-party firm and hire them to investigate the grievance received by staff and it extend it back two years under previous leadership.**
- E. ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business, the Special Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

---

Robert D. Larson,  
Commission Secretary