

**PORT OF BENTON
SPECIAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 23, 2022**

A. CALL TO ORDER: The Special Commission Workshop meeting was called to order at 8:31 a.m. at the Port of Benton Commission Meeting Room, 3250 Port of Benton Boulevard, Richland, Washington.

PRESENT: Commissioner Lori Stevens; Commissioner Roy Keck, Commissioner Christy Rasmussen, Executive Director, Diahann Howard, PPM®; Director of Finance, Danielle Connor, Director of Operations & Facilities, Ron Branine; Director of Real Estate, Teresa Hancock; RGW Enterprises, Roger Wright; Executive Administrator, Summers Miya; Port Attorney, David Billetdeaux; Director of Marketing, Wally Williams

The following attendees attended via remote communications: Contract Specialist, Sheri Collins; Accounting Clerk, Liz Renz; Senior Accountant, Veronica Serna; McKay Larrabee, Flo Analytics; Emma Swanson, Flo Analytics; Bryan Condon, Century West Engineering; Wendy Culverwell, Tri-Cities Area Journal of Business; Dave Furtado, KEPR Action News; David Fritz, Community Member;

The Commission Meeting was conducted as a hybrid meeting with Commissioners meeting in-person; public attending both remotely and in-person, and Port staff members participating in-person and remotely, and said meeting was noticed as required by RCW 42.30.070.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Roy Keck led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Richland Industrial Center Sidewalk and Street Light Project

Engineer Roger Wright stated that as part of the Richland Innovation Center (RIC), Rural County Capital Funds Project, the Port recently advertised for bids to complete the final portion of the work including the sidewalks and streetlights installation. Wright announced that six bids were received for this project and recommended that the Commission reject all bids received.

Wright explained that the first part of the RIC projects was completion of the Fermi Avenue widening project and to date, finance reports that the Port has spent approximately \$623k. Wright added that he expects that once all costs to date have been paid and recorded, he expects that number to be approximately \$750k of the \$1.1M.

Wright noted that during the design of the sidewalks and streetlights project, the design consultant identified the details of the needed construction and the cost estimate of the work continued to rise. Wright stated that the Port felt that the bids would still come in close to what was remaining in the budget, but the actual bids that came in were much higher and in the range of \$530k - \$838k. Wright added that the apparent low bidder did not have a complete bid package and had to submit an additional document late.

Wright clarified that the reasons to recommend rejection of all bids and for the Port to break apart and re-scope the project and then re-bid in smaller phases was because the apparent low bid had a portion of their bid documents submitted late and the apparent low bid was more than the available budget.

Wright also clarified that the advertised bid documents, Section 16, states that *"The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids..."* and added that the Port believes it is in the best interest of the Port to reject all bids for this project and allow for the Port to break apart and rescope the project to allow it to be completed within the Port's available funds.

After no further discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Roy Keck, seconded by Commissioner Lori Stevens and unanimously passed by the Commission, rejecting all bids received for the Richland Innovation Center Sidewalk and Streetlight Improvements Project.

2. Richland Airport Electrical Replacement Project

Engineer Roger Wright reminded the Commission that the FAA awarded \$3.1M towards mostly lighting improvements for the Richland Airport.

Wright stated that advertisements for bid went out and a mandatory walk-through of the site was performed with potential bidders on Monday, March 14, 2022.

Wright announced that two bids were received for the project, with Sierra Electric being the apparent low bidder with a \$1,432,235.53 (with tax) bid. Wright stated that Sierra did omit contractor information in one form but provided the information asked for in another spot, which is a waivable irregularity. Wright noted that Century West contacted the Port of Pasco because Sierra Electric is involved currently in a project for them and received positive feedback about the work being performed. Wright added that Century West feels confident moving forward with accepting the bid received from Sierra Electric.

Wright reminded the Commission that all work for this project will be performed on the taxiway, runways, tower and also the addition of an emergency generator in the tower.

Wright stated that there is an approximate three-week time period when all runways lights will be inoperable and for approximately two weeks both runways will need to be closed Monday - Friday due to the project, which will impact the airport users significantly. Wright noted that information has been provided to tenants and owners but no detailed schedule will be available until the contractor is in place and has provided a definite construction schedule.

Wright stated that the hope is to start the project in July, but there may be a delay due to materials delivery. Additionally, the bidder who provided the second bid has stated they may submit a formal protest and if this is the case, the Commission may need to come back to discuss and review the bids and protest.

After no further discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Lori Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Roy Keck and unanimously passed by the Commission, approving the Executive Director to award the Richland Airport Electrical Replacement Project bid to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, Sierra Electric, who provided a \$1,432,235.53 (with tax) bid, after any bid protests were completed.

3. Redistricting Process Review and Presentation of Draft Maps

Port Attorney, David Billetdeaux introduced consultants, McKay Larrabee and Emma Swanson of Flo Analytics, who have been hired to prepare and present the updated districts and boundaries. Billetdeaux reminded the Commission redistricting is required to take place every ten years, following the census, with the goal to properly represent the constituents of the county.

Consultant, McKay Larrabee presented a slideshow of the redistricting overview.

Larrabee explained that the process includes the following steps:

1. Data collection
2. Draft map – public hearing testimony and email comments
3. Final map

Larrabee explained that the US Census adjusted database was released in the fall of 2021 and Flo Analytics began the project initiation and data gathering in January 2022, with the development of draft scenarios happening in February 2022. Larrabee stated that the draft maps were published to the Port website on March 15, 2022 and now being presented at the March 23, 2022 Special Commission meeting and available for public comment.

Larrabee provided redistricting requirements:

- Districts must be population balanced
- Districts must be contiguous
- Redistricting must be drawn in compliance with all local, state, and federal laws, including the Federal Voting Rights Act
- Redistricting must not be done to favor or disfavor a protected class or political party
- Districts should be as compact as possible
- Districts should preserve communities of mutual interest
- Districts should preserve the use of existing natural boundaries
- Districts should not split census blocks

Larrabee explained that when balancing population, the total population must be considered, which reflects the principle that an elected body represents all residents, not only those who are eligible to vote. Larrabee added that the key metric is deviation range from the “ideal population” with ideal population being the total population divided by the number of districts, add together the % deviation of the most and least populous districts to determine the deviation range.

Larrabee stated that the deviation range must be below 10% and should be below 5% and always aspire toward 0%.

Larrabee highlighted redistricting criteria:

- No islands, with an exception of real or jurisdictional islands which then must be functionally connected.
- Districts should not be unnecessarily thin or serpentine

- Compactness will be measured
- Existing or natural boundaries utilized and include: major streets and roads, rivers, lakes, mountains, lines that are already being used as boundaries

Larrabee explained the importance of preserving communities and added that a community of interest is a population that shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation. Larrabee highlighted that redistricting should preserve communities. Larrabee stated that examples of communities include: Cities and towns, school districts, military installations, neighborhoods, homeowners associations, census-designated places, utility districts, geographically concentrated minority populations.

Larrabee provided an overview of the current districting conditions, which is currently at an overall range of 22%. Larrabee provided draft map 1, which brings the range to 4.8% and draft map 2, which brings the range to 0.4%.

After discussion, the Commission requested Flo Analytics to continue work on drafting boundary maps with a stringent focus on keeping communities together, to be as close to 0% as possible and no jumping over contiguities.

Billetdeaux reminded the Commission that the Port has until November 15, 2022 to present the final boundaries, but will plan to present updated maps at the regular Commission meeting on April 13, 2022.

D. ADJOURNMENT: With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:21 a.m. with a note that the draft maps presented at today's Workshop are currently posted to the website.



Lori Stevens
Commission Secretary