

**PORT OF BENTON
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 14, 2022**

A. CALL TO ORDER: The regular monthly meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. at the Walter Clore Wine and Culinary Center, 2140 Wine Country Road, Prosser, Washington

PRESENT: Commissioner Christy L. Rasmussen; Commissioner Roy D. Keck; Commissioner Lori Stevens; Executive Director, Diahann Howard, PPM®; Port Attorney, David Billetdeaux; Public Information Officer, Summers Miya; Director of Finance, Danielle Connor; Director of Marketing, Wally Williams; Senior Accountant, Veronica Serna; Accounting Clerk, Liz Renz; Director of Real Estate, Teresa Hancock; Director of Economic & Governmental Affairs, Miles Thomas; Tom Glover, City of Prosser; John-Paul Estey, Prosser Chamber of Commerce; Neal Ripplinger, Prosser Economic Development Association

The following attendees attended via remote communications: Contract Specialist, Sheri Collins; Bryan Condon, Century West Engineering; Joshua Lott, Anderson Perry

The Commission meeting and public hearing were noticed as required by RCW 42.30.070.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commission Vice-President Roy Keck led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. CONSENT AGENDA:

A motion was made by Commissioner Roy Keck, seconded by Commissioner Lori Stevens, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving the agenda for the September 14, 2022 Commission meeting, approval of minutes from the August 10, 2022 Commission meeting, approval of vouchers and certifications, including payroll, for the month of August totaling \$699,598.45, approval of project vouchers and certifications for the month of August totaling \$259,755.75, approval of Resolution 22-27, to cancel warrant numbers 080176-080250, in the amount of \$0, which were printed with errors and approval of Resolution 22-28, to cancel warrant number 080296, in the amount of \$5,824.48, which was printed in errors.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no comments from the public.

E. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Executive Director, Diahann Howard introduced Prosser City Manager Tom Glover and congratulated him on his recent completion of the Prosser Leadership class of 2022.

Glover thanked the Port for the invitation to present at the Commission meeting and also thanked the Port for working with the city as they required a new location for their police department because of the fire last year. Glover remarked that the city is making plans to move forward with a permanent solution and have added a bond to the next ballot for approval from the city for a new

station. Glover stated that land has been purchased on Wine Country Road, across from Les Schwab and a feasibility study has recently been completed to determine the best possible location and the city is now in the design stage. Glover added that if the bond is not approved, they will regroup to determine the next steps.

Glover thanked Executive Director, Diahann Howard for recently presenting to the Prosser City Council.

Glover provided updates on recent projects throughout Prosser, including a public works project involving the resurfacing of highway area next to the exit and Wine Country Road overlay project. Glover added that access points were also fixed throughout the area and the sidewalk and bike lanes were improved with help of the Safe Routes to School project.

Glover stated that the city is working to replace two city land wells and have also been working on a utility extension, which will bring utility to the north side of town.

Glover added that 10-12 subdivision plats are currently under review, which means 1,000-1,300 new homes.

Glover stated that he is involved in the 2023 budget work and projects included for the future include work on OIE Highway, west of city limits with improvement of the north side and sidewalks added. Glover added that additional projects include library parking lot improvements and adding police officer positions and police vehicles. Glover added that the city will be converting to Microsoft 360, which he has been told is a 10-12 month, very detailed process.

2. Update from Prosser Chamber of Commerce, John-Paul Etsey thanked the Port of Benton for the use of airport property for their storage area for many years. Etsey announced that they have moved into the old high school shop building and the situation is improved.

Etsey thanked the Port for the continued support of the Chamber events, as the Prosser Chamber of Commerce works to promote tourism throughout the area. Etsey announced that the annual Scottish Fest event took place in June and welcomed 1,400 people on a cold and rainy mid-June day. Etsey added that this event is family-friendly.

Etsey stated that the July Art Walk event, which the Port is a sponsor, was held downtown and welcomed 900 people, which was down from 2020.

Etsey noted that the recent Beer & Whiskey Festival was successful and the Chamber is considering adding a sparkling wine event in November, which would be a gear-up for the holiday season and possibly held at the Walter Clore Center.

Etsey announced that Chamber membership numbers are above pre-COVID numbers with five new members just this month. Etsey added that they are considering hosting business socials to help gauge what the community is wanting.

Port Commissioners praised the recent Beer & Whiskey Festival, noting that there were many attendees from out of the area and with diverse interests and backgrounds.

3. Update from Prosser Economic Development Association, Neal Ripplinger thanked the Port for the invitation to present to the Port Commission.

Ripplinger announced that the Prosser leadership class of 2022 graduated in August and applications for the 2023 class are now open. Ripplinger invited Port employees to consider. Ripplinger stated that the class is still working on the community project at the Prosser Wine and Food Park and thanked the Port for the support for this project. Ripplinger stated that the landscape area has been cleared and the orbital marker will be installed in the near future.

Ripplinger announced that in partnership with the Prosser Chamber of Commerce, PEDAs has launched a Facebook group to promote all available jobs, which utilizes the #ProsserWAJobs hashtag and cross posting to Instagram. Ripplinger added that the group has gained a good following, as many businesses have struggled to maintain staffing in recent months.

Ripplinger added that PEDAs has taken a second look at the HUB Community and Tourism Assessment and are looking at ways to pursue funding for future projects.

Ripplinger announced that collaboration is underway with the Prosser School District and WSU/IAREC as housing has historically been a struggle for many students. Ripplinger added that plans are underway for possible career fair at the high school.

Ripplinger announced that Prosser has not seen a population boom like what is currently happening since the 1950s.

Ripplinger provided an update on PEDAs Business, Recruitment, Retention and Expansion program, adding that the state and federal government continues to roll things out. Ripplinger noted that communication is in place with local restaurants and a local restaurant analysis is underway.

Ripplinger stated that plans for the new hospital are underway and planners are committed to turning this project into reality with bids going back out last month.

Ripplinger stated that at the recent C-5 Summit, the Prosser mixed-use building that is currently under construction was accepted and promoted as one of the few properties in Benton County that fit the particular requirements and was promoted at a large real estate summit.

Executive Director, Diahann Howard inquired on the current population of Prosser and after discussion, it was determined that the number is anywhere from 6,000 – 6,400.

Ripplinger added that there is a huge push to promote future Census studies.

4. Resolution 22-29, Amending Signers for Banner Bank

Port Attorney, David Billetdeaux stated this this resolution is a housekeeping item due to the specific requirements from Banner Bank to remove Interim Director of Finance/Port Auditor Karen Schmidt from the Banner Bank account and adding current Director of Finance/Port Auditor, Danielle Connor to the Banner Bank account.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lori Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Roy Keck, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 22-29, amending signers for Banner Bank to include Danielle Connor.

5. Resolution 22-30, Surplus of Rail and Airport Items and Equipment

Port Attorney, David Billetdeaux noted that at this time, rail items will be removed from the request, as airport items and equipment are the current focus. Billetdeaux added that rail surplus items will be presented at a future meeting. Billetdeaux explained that the current focus is airport-related surplus equipment and two organizations have reached out to the Port requesting airport items and equipment that are no longer in use.

Billetdeaux explained that the two organizations are local 501c3 non-profits, with one being the local airplane museum. The items to be surplussed have no monetary value to the Port. Many of the items were recently removed in accordance with the current electrical replacement project.

A motion was made by Commissioner Roy Keck, seconded by Commissioner Lori Stevens, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 22-30, approving the surplus of airport items and equipment

6. Resolution 22-31, Authorizing a Sale of Real Property

Port Attorney, David Billetdeaux stated that this resolution is another housekeeping item, reminding the Commission that Resolution 21-14 authorized the sale of 721 9th Street and 723 9th Street in Benton City to Luis and Gabriel Ruiz, dba 9th Street Studio LLC. Billetdeaux added that due to COVID-19 and stricter lending requirements, the tenant was unable to obtain financing and complete the sale previously. In the interim, a portion of the land previously authorized for sale was sold to a different entity via Resolution 21-55. Now, 9th Street Studio has obtained funding and is ready to proceed with the sale, minus the portion already sold via Resolution 21-55. Billetdeaux noted that the sale price is \$80k, plus share of closing costs and earnest money deposit with a closing date on or before November 10, 2022. Billetdeaux stated that the sale is consistent with economic development initiatives supporting job creation, business stability with private capital investment within the downtown corridor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lori Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Roy Keck, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 22-31, authorizing the sale of real property.

7. Resolution 22-32, Authorizing a Lease Modification (5+ years) and Expenditure of Funds for Improvements

Executive Director, Diahann Howard noted that the original lease was between the Port and Mission Support Alliance (MSA), dated March 11, 2011 for office, warehouse and yard space located on the ground level at 2345/2355 and 2377 Stevens Drive. Howard added that with the COVID-19 pandemic, reduction in workforce, Atkins released the 23,990sf space in this building.

Howard added that MSA transferred leases to Hanford Mission Integration Solutions & CPCco (HMiS) in 2021 with a current lease modification extending use and terms through December 31, 2025 for 11,000sf office, 99,941sf high bay warehouse, six covered truck loading docks and 4.1 acres of secured yard area. Howard reminded the Commission that the lease modification was within the Delegation of Authority by term but expenditures to ready for any business occupancy exceed \$50k, warranting Commission approval.

Howard added that HMiS will add 23,990sf of office space area, effective October 1, 2022, with an existing option term 2 of 2, (January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2025), a new lease negotiated at end of option term, base rent of \$96,655/month, \$1,159,868/year plus LET, with additional rent/pass-through \$3,998.33 utility/month, \$47,979.96/year and a CPI adjustment on January 1, 2023.

Howard added that readying the space requires improvements in the warehouse in addition of lease modification executed July 2021 and new 2nd level office area with privacy office doors, racking systems, electrical and security proximity readers. Howard stated that this results in HMiS expansion/retention of 75+ jobs.

Howard stated that the work modifications are a fixed-cost reimbursement by HMiS to the Port, upon completion with a reimbursement total of \$239,019.38 including sales tax and fees.

A motion was made by Commissioner Roy Keck, seconded by Commissioner Lori Stevens and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 22-32, authorizing a lease modification (5+ years) and expenditure of \$239,019.38 of funds for improvements.

8. Review Revisions to Port Personnel Policy, and to Salary and Benefits Policy Directive

Port Attorney, David Billetdeaux announced that there is only a minor revision to the current policy as the current policy did not have a clear definition of the floater holiday and in the past the floater was designated by the Executive Director for all Port employees. Billetdeaux explained that the policy will now allow Port employees to select their own floater holiday. Billetdeaux noted that the policy did not have the updated Juneteenth information, which has also now been added. Billetdeaux noted that he will likely bring this back next year to add minimum wage updates.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lori Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Roy Keck, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving the revisions to the Port Personnel Policy, and to Salary and Benefits Policy Directive.

F. INFORMATION REPORTS:

1. Grants Update

Executive Director, Diahann Howard provided further updates on the projects featured on the August grants report.

- National Science Foundation – Application not submitted due to partnership and resource readiness. Will hold for future submittal.
- Railroad Improvements/FRAP Grant – Application has been submitted for \$1M grant and \$250k Port match. Update in November.
- Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvement (CRISI) – Over \$1.4B federal funding available, first time offered, 80% federal dollars with 20% Port match. Port to request \$8M (\$2.4M match). Update in spring 2023.

2. Richland Airport Lighting Project Update

Executive Director, Diahann Howard provided an update on the Richland Airport Electrical Replacement Project. Howard stated that the contractor, Sierra Electric, began work on July 18 and as of this coming Friday, the intersection work will be completed, which is one week ahead of schedule. Howard stated that this allows Runway 8-26 and Taxiway B to be fully lit and LifeFlight may also return. Howard added that direct mailers are going out late this week, which announce the closure of Runway 1-19 and the full use of Runway 8-26, which affects air traffic patterns in surrounding neighborhoods. Howard added that information has also been provided via City of Richland utility billing, Port website, social media and weekly notices to airport users and tenants.

Howard added that the new runway lights are taller and FAA-approved. Howard reminded the Commission that this \$3.2M project is 100% grant-funded, including the minor change orders. Howard stated that the emergency generator will not arrive until approximately summer 2023 due to the supply chain issues.

3. Rail Update

Public Information Officer, Summers Miya provided an update on the recent Van Giesen/SR-224 Rail crossing replacement project and provided a PowerPoint presentation to highlight pre-project and project outreach and communication.

Miya highlighted the press releases sent on August 1 and August 17, including hand-delivering the press release and detour map to all Richland Airport tenants and businesses on August 4. Miya noted that 24-hour construction notices were also hand-delivered to nearby residents on August 18.

Miya presented examples of the communication provided through social media pre-project, during and after, including photos of the WSDOT closure signage on the highway.

Miya highlighted the reach from many of the posts, as weekend reach exceeded 18k on some posting, as the community was very engaged and supportive throughout the closure.

Miya noted that a press release was issued upon completion of the project and showcased some of the kudos received from the community, including congratulatory remarks from city partners and a letter to the editor.

4. 2023 Preliminary Budget Presentation

Director of Finance, Danielle Connor provided a briefing of the 2023 preliminary budget, which provided a comparison with the 2022 budget. Connor stated that revenues are expected to be up \$1M in 2023, although temporarily, thanks to new leases, including rail and the White Bluffs Archive facility.

Connor provided a detailed look at the preliminary budget, including projected lease revenue, airport operations, Crow Butte operations, grant revenue, capital projects and rail. Connor added that no increase to the reserve is proposed, as anything additional is being put towards rail. Connor added that a walkthrough was recently performed at 2579 Stevens, the former TCRY facility, and expects this building to be a large financial ask for the future. A more detailed version of the proposed 2023 budget will be presented at the Budget Workshop in October, and again briefly during a public hearing at the October regular Commission Meeting.

G. COMMISSIONER REPORTS/COMMENTS:

Commissioner Roy Keck announced that he recently presented to the City of Richland council and provided an overview of the Port rail, including the upcoming rail caucus event and Richland Airport project.

Commissioner Keck added that he attended the Darigold groundbreaking ceremony, which is a \$600M project, creating 200 jobs. Commissioner Keck stated that he also attended the recent Atkins groundbreaking ceremony for the \$20M engineering lab.

Commissioner Lori Stevens stated that the earlier Prosser presentations did a great job covering the Prosser update.

Commissioner Stevens added that she has attended recent lunches for PEDAs, Prosser Chamber and the Benton City Chamber.

Commissioner Christy Rasmussen announced that she had the opportunity to attend the Jackie Toth Clean Energy Small Modular Nuclear Development meeting. Commissioner Rasmussen added that she also attended and made great connections at the recent congressional staff reception.

Commissioner Rasmussen noted that she is excited for the workforce development opportunities in store in the future for the community.

Commissioner Rasmussen praised the recent Beer & Whiskey Festival.

H. DIRECTOR REPORTS/COMMENTS:

1. AIRPORTS

Director of Real Estate, Teresa Hancock announced that she is finalizing the site plan for future hangar sites and continues to receive inquiries. Hancock stated that the appraisal was completed last week, which will be brought forward in the future.

Executive Director Diahann Howard added that the Ohler T-hangar at Prosser Airport has been identified previously for removal by the FAA/master plans and contact was made with Ohler to discuss.

2. FACILITIES & OPERATIONS:

Executive Director, Diahann Howard provided a facilities update, explaining that Director of Facilities & Operations, Ron Branine was handling rail operations.

Howard announced that the Port plans to shut Crow Butte Park completely down for the winter, completely vacating, but with plans to leave the dock open. Howard added that the Army Corps finally provided permission to install the smart parking meter, which Branine hopes to be able to install this fall. Howard added that the park is preparing for the season-ending cleanup, water shut-off and winterization.

Howard added that the Port is working with the City of Richland on an interlocal agreement which would allow the city to handle overnight railroad callouts. Howard added that the Port is working diligently to put a request for a Short-Term Operator for the rail out as soon as possible and recent interest reflects that there is a market out there for rail operators interested in north Richland.

3. REAL ESTATE:

Director of Real Estate, Teresa Hancock announced that a month-to-month lease has been set-up with WSU Tri-Cities at 2019 Butler Loop, which will be temporary staging area for the Hanford History Project artifacts and administration pending the Certification of Occupancy for the facility currently under construction at 3251 Port of Benton Blvd. Hancock stated that the temporary lease includes the area of 5,000sf at the Richland Airport Business Park and the security deposit was waived due to the tenant being a higher education, public entity.

Hancock stated that base rent for the White Bluffs Facility is \$4,583.33/month with a LET exemption because they are a higher education university.

Hancock informed the Commission that the five-year lease at 3251 Port of Benton Blvd. coincides with grant and other contracts using October 1 and rent will commence upon granting of the certificate of occupancy.

Hancock added that the area is 7,580sf (pending as-build plan) with a administrative, artifact catalog and registry and education focus.

Hancock stated that the term is three year, with two one-year option renewal terms. Hancock informed that the base rent for year one is \$11,220/month; year two is \$12,466.67/month; year three is \$13,713.33/month. Hancock noted that utilities are 100% pass-through with a request to waive the

security deposit due to WSU Tri-Cities being a public entity and higher education university. Hancock added that the Grant Award Notification expiration is 9/30/2025, with early termination in event of award, contract or program discontinued.

Hancock stated that there are two new leases at 3100 George Washington Way with WSU Tri-Cities, GEAR UP (Educational Outreach and Partnership Organization), awarded two grants in the amount of \$43M, which will support students in quest of post-secondary education, providing college readiness resources, mentorship, advising, professional development, tutoring and more. Hancock explained that the program, which stands for "Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs" is a federally-funded program that provides academic support in middle school through first year of post-secondary education. Hancock added that since 2002, the program has served 35k students.

Hancock broke down each lease:

1. 3100 George Washington Way, #106-108 (2,642sf)

\$23M / 14 middle schools / 12 high schools (College Place, Dayton, Kennewick, Moses Lake, Othello, Prescott, Soap Lake, Touchet and Walla Walla)

- Term: 5 Year, (5) 1-year renewals (October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2027)
- Base Rent : \$3,302.50 (mo) / \$39,630.00 (yr)
- Base Rent, Annual Adjustments, 3% minimum
- Fixed-utility fee \$3,000 per year, 5% annual increase (minimum)
- Total Financial Impact: \$210,400.44, base rent (+ \$16,577 additional rent)
- Higher Education University – leasehold excise tax exemption
- Grant Award expirations 8/28/23 and 9/29/27
- Early termination clause in event funding or program discontinues at expiration
- Security Deposit: Request Waiver, Higher Education/Public Entity
- Job Creation: 5-10

2. 3100 George Washington Way, #101 (1,046sf)

\$20M / 13 middle schools / 13 high schools (Evergreen, Pasco, KiBE, Prosser, Mabton, Finley, Columbia, Clarkston, North Franklin, Ephrata)

- Term: 5 Year, (5) 1-year renewals (October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2027)
- Base Rent : \$1,481.83 (mo) / \$17,781.96 (yr)
- Base Rent, Annual Adjustments, 3% minimum
- Fixed-utility fee \$2,615 per year, 5% annual increase (minimum)
- Total Financial Impact: \$94,406.04, base rent (+ \$3,178 additional rent)
- Higher Education University – leasehold excise tax exemption
- Grant Award expirations 9/25/24 and 9/8/27
- Early termination clause in event funding or program discontinues at expiration
- Security Deposit: Request Waiver, Higher Education/Public Entity
- Job Creation: 3-5

A motion was made by Commissioner Lori Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Roy Keck and unanimously passed by the Commission approving the waiving of the security deposit for WSU Tri-Cities GEAR UP program Lease #1, Harvest of Hope and Lease #2 One Vision Partnership, as both leases involve WSU Tri-Cities, a higher education university and public entity.

4. MARKETING:

Director of Marketing, Wally Williams announced that he has been working on the fall newsletter, as well as updating several PowerPoint presentations. Williams stated that he has been working with the Communications team on updating the riverfront kiosks and updated content and posters will be unveiled soon.

Public Information Officer, Summers Miya stated that she has been assisting Williams with newsletter, kiosk and PowerPoint rework. Miya added that she has been focusing on communications and sending out weekly eNews, bi-weekly VERTICAL eNews, daily social media posts, plus project messaging.

Miya provided an overview on the Vintners Village triple ribbon-cutting and block party event taking place at Vintners Village the following afternoon, highlighting that in addition to the business spotlights there will be complimentary face painting, live music, wood-fired pizza and business specials.

Miya announced that the Port is hosting a rail caucus event September 28-29 in partnership with the Port of Pasco. Miya stated that the caucus meeting will take place Wednesday at the Port of Pasco with a reception immediately following and the rail tour will take place in Richland and Pasco the following day.

5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS:

Director of Economic Development & Governmental Affairs, Miles Thomas announced that he has been focusing heavily on the HMiS project.

Thomas announced that the first onsite walkthrough of 2579 Stevens took place with DES and McKinstry and McKinstry is putting together an analysis on the building, which may take a month or more. Thomas added that there is a lot of work going on at the building and quite a bit of interest from potential tenants.

Thomas stated that there has been a lot of interest in properties, as well as clean energy and hydrogen, with potential businesses wanting and needing a lot of land.

Thomas announced that he has been involved in the Tri-Cities Legislative Council and it has been announced that changes are coming to the TIF bill.

Thomas noted that Tri-Cities Legislative Day will take place in January, with Clean Energy Day planned the day prior.

6. FINANCE DIRECTOR:

Director of Finance/CPA, Danielle Connor provided an update on the 2021 Accountability Audit, stating that the State Auditor's Office (SAO) is looking more closely at procurement/bidding process compliance, with state requirements, as well as internal policy, electronic funds transfer, financial condition and open public meetings. Connor noted that the SAO auditor is estimated to be onsite next week and added that the Accountability Audit is due by the end of the year.

Connor announced that the lease entry process is at 89% complete with Accounting Clerk, Liz Renz working diligently on lease entry and Senior Accountant, Veronica Serna working on testing billing. Connor stated that the team will run multiple test months as the new system has a strong reliance on lease entry for accurate billing and revenue recognition.

Connor added that Renz is also going back and reviewing leases to date to ensure any changes have been accurately reflected and current.

Connor noted that there is an upcoming meeting in place to revisit the integration and review the GASB 87 module configuration.

Connor stated that integration continues to make progress and is currently in the quality assurance phase of the project.

Connor stated that IT provider, Columbia Basin IT was able to set-up the hosted server for the secure file transfer, and she is working with both teams to ensure access and file movement. Connor noted that she hopes to test drive it in October during parallel testing.

Connor said that she estimates approximately 6-8 weeks of pre go-live cutover items and reconciliations and has revised the schedule to run a parallel test the month of October. Connor noted that it is critical that billing and revenue are correct.

Connor provided a PowerPoint presentation of the financial status report, highlighting that available general operating cash was at \$2.85M and the project fund was at \$3.2M. Connor highlighted the cash receipts for August at \$541k with \$523k from tenants and \$18k in grant reimbursements. Connor highlighted disbursements at \$700k in August, with \$181k in payroll and \$215k in projects with \$200k Port capital and \$15k grant.

Connor highlighted that there is \$257k currently outstanding in Accounts Payable. Connor stated that there is currently \$345k outstanding in Accounts Receivable, with \$321k being tenant A/R greater than 90 days past due.

Executive Director, Diahann Howard noted that the LEAN project that was cancelled in June is looking to be rescheduled for November and this summer reinforced the importance of this training.

7. PORT ATTORNEY:

Port Attorney, David Billetdeaux announced that he recently attended the leadership training offered by the City of Richland.

Billetdeaux stated that he has been working on federal grants for railroad and wanted to point out that an amendment to the indenture stated that the Port must first use revenue from the 1100 area to fund the maintenance of the railroad. Billetdeaux noted that the indenture also states that the track must be maintained to a safe level. While TCRY was the Port's short line operator, the maintenance obligation was legally passed on to TCRY. Billetdeaux stated that TCRY has vacated the line with deferred maintenance to be completed. Thus, the Port is planning to find grant funding to help maintain the line, and Billetdeaux is planning to disclose the language within the amendment to indenture in any federal grant applications

Billetdeaux announced that the Governor's office has stated that all emergency proclamations will be lifted on 10/31/2022. Billetdeaux added that the Port still has an emergency proclamation in place, but is keeping an eye on the state and will likely follow the State's guidance and own actions.

8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Executive Director, Diahann Howard announced that the RIC project rescope has been bumped to 2023. Howard reminded that this project included RIC streetlights only and was part of the Benton County .09 funds that could be rolled forward.

Howard stated that the White Bluffs construction project was underway and on schedule, aside from the HVAC. Howard added that the underground tank is slated for removal this Thursday.

Howard noted that she attended the PNNL/WSU Advanced Grid Institute Industry Day.

Howard noted that WPPA currently has two vacant board positions available for Commissioner consideration and the application process must be completed by September 30.

Howard added that the Rail Caucus event is coming up and a second rail tour will be offered at a later time for the City of Richland. Howard thanked Commissioner Keck for presenting on rail to the Richland City Council.

Howard noted that American Rock may possibly mine the inside of the city's loop track and if so,

the Port has offered a proposal to support the city and ARP in this endeavor.

Howard stated that she recently hosted EWU's new president and participated in discussion involving workforce.

Howard announced that she had the opportunity to present on the CHiPS and Science Act along with Senator Patty Murray and other community leaders.

Howard noted that she presented at a recent City of Prosser council meeting and recently participated in a conversation with TRIDEC along with representatives from Fukushima.

Howard announced that the American Association of Port Authorities has invited her to speak at future events and become a mentor to future PPMs.


Howard commented on the passing of former community leader, Bob Ferguson, who had experience working on three area reactors, in addition to many valuable contributions to the community, stating that she has been given access to the plaque formerly displayed at Ferguson's Gesa building in the Parkway. Howard added that she would like to create a space for the plaque to be displayed at the White Bluffs facility and something that would honor the spirit of all he accomplished. Howard added that Ferguson helped transition TRIDEC to its current state and had numerous economic development accomplishments throughout his career. Howard added that she would like the Commission to consider changing the name of 11th Ave. (near the Port office) to Ferguson. She asked commission if she was ok to proceed in this direction, they provided their concurrence.

Howard announced that there has been a lot of movement with VERTical and there has been a lot of one-on-one meetings with CESA and industry. Howard added that she would be presenting at the National Cleanup Caucus workshop in Washington DC later this month.

Howard added that she would like to provide an update on the Director of Airports search in Executive Session.

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION: The regular Commission Meeting was recessed at 11:30 a.m. and an Executive Session was convened at 11:35 a.m. to discuss ongoing and potential litigation, real estate and personnel matters. It was announced that Executive Session would take 25 minutes and if any action was required, the Regular Commission Meeting will reconvene and bring forward the item at that time.

J. ADJOURNMENT: The Commission meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m. with an announcement that the Port of Benton Commission would hold a Special Budget Workshop at 8:30 a.m. on October 10, 2022 and the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting would be held on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. Both meetings would be held at the Port of Benton Commission meeting room, 3250 Port of Benton Blvd., Richland, Washington.


Lori Stevens
Commission Secretary