

**PORT OF BENTON  
SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING  
AND PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES  
AUGUST 21, 2023**

- A. CALL TO ORDER:** The Port of Benton Special Commission Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. at the Port of Benton Commission meeting room, 3250 Port of Benton Boulevard, Richland, Washington.

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Christy Rasmussen; Commissioner Roy Keck; Commissioner Lori Stevens; Executive Director, Diahann Howard; Port Attorney, David Billetdeaux; Director of Finance, Jeff Lubeck; Public Information Officer, Summers Miya; Director of Facilities & Operations, Ron Branine; Construction Project Manager, Bryan Bell; Director of Real Estate, Teresa Hancock; Airport Manager, Quentin Wright; Accounting Clerk, Liz Renz

**THE FOLLOWING PARTICIPATED VIA REMOTE COMMUNICATIONS:** Sara Schilling, Tri-Cities Area Journal of Business

- B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Commissioner Lori Stevens led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**C. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There were no comments from the public.

**D. PUBLIC HEARING:**

Commission President Christy Rasmussen opened the public hearing at 3:03 p.m.

1. For the Purpose of Receiving Public Comment Concerning Amending the Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements for the Possibilities of Building Improvements at Richland Airport, finding land surplus to Port needs, and land transfer exchanges with the City of Richland.

Port Attorney David Billetdeaux explained that the discussion today pertains to the 1845 Terminal Drive building at Richland Airport, which will be discussed in more detail when the first item of business is explained. The building is an improvement owned by Bob and Cheryl Moe, on Port land. When the Port may be expending money on land, buildings, improvements, etc., the Port needs to update the Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements, and to do that, we hold a public hearing with proper notice to seek any comments or concerns from the public.

Billetdeaux stated that the other item pertains to the Special Joint Workshop held in June with the City of Richland City Council and a potential land transfer or exchange between the Port and the City, and highlighted the potential areas of land to be transferred/exchanged.

Billetdeaux added that the Port would like to seek public comment, as well as be prepared and ready if further movement is taken on these items.

Billetdeaux stated that this will ultimately place the land in surplus, which will then be brought forward in more detail at a future meeting.

Commission President Christy Rasmussen closed the public hearing at 3:06 p.m.

**E. ITEMS OF BUSINESS:**

1. Resolution 23-27, A Resolution for the Acquisition of Real Property at the Richland Airport, 1845 Terminal Drive

Port Attorney David Billetdeaux explained that the acceptance of Resolution 23-27 allows the Port to amend the Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements by adding real property.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Lori Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Roy Keck, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 23-27, A Resolution for the Acquisition of Real Property at the Richland Airport, 1845 Terminal Drive.**

2. Resolution 23-28, A Resolution of the Port of Benton authorizing the acquisition of real property/leasehold improvements, Robert & Cheryl Moe.

Director of Real Estate Teresa Hancock explained that 1845 Terminal Drive is the original airport terminal constructed in 1977 and this resolution is an administrative piece which will allow the Port to move forward with the potential purchase of the building. Hancock added that the building has been held privately for a number of years. Hancock stated that it is a great opportunity for the Port to pursue purchase, as the building can prove to be a viable revenue source for the Port.

Executive Director Diahann Howard added that the acceptance of this resolution will also show the CARB board that all steps have been taken and the correct documents are in place, as the Port may consider pursuing a \$1.1M loan from CARB for this purchase.

Howard added that applicable reports, including tenant list, rent roll, etc. have been obtained and added that the building has many possibilities, including a future space for a new pilot's lounge. Howard added that the building currently serves as office space and future plans may consider an aviation and office space combination to support growth of the airport.

Howard stated that if the Port does obtain the building, proper time will be taken for the future planning.

Port Attorney Billetdeaux added that any purchase and/or sale is contingent on receipt of the CARB loan.

Airport Manager Quentin Wright added that the purchase and revitalization of the building fits with the current airport master plan.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Roy Keck, seconded by Commissioner Lori Stevens, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 23-28, A Resolution of the Port of Benton authorizing the acquisition of real property/leasehold improvements, Robert & Cheryl Moe.**

3. Resolution 23-29, A Resolution of the Port of Benton to Amend the Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements

Port Attorney David Billetdeaux stated that this item is a follow-up from the public hearing and allows the Port the ability to transfer an exchanged between City of Richland and Port of Benton, adding that the acceptance of this resolution puts the land into the Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements.

Visuals were provided to the Commission and Executive Director Diahann Howard featured the  
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City and Port land that would be exchanged, adding that the Port land in the North Horn Rapids (1,341 acres) does not involve any land that Atlas Agro is considering.

Howard added that some of the City land is next to American Rock land, which further puts the Port in a good position in moving forward.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Lori Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Roy Keck, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving Resolution 23-29, A Resolution of the Port of Benton to Amend the Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements**

**4. Award of Port of Benton Blvd. East Lane Repair Project – Inland Asphalt**

Construction Project Manager Bryan Bell explained that this project pertains to the northbound lane of Port of Benton Blvd. from University St. to Hill St., and will be the first section of three to be repaired, with the other sections to be repaired in later years.

Bell added that this project will focus on 15,400 feet of road that is failing and in need of repair. Bell added that they will also investigate the reason for the road failure, which may be due to running water. Bell clarified that the issues were not from a construction defect.

Bell stated that bids were received for the Port of Benton Blvd. East Lane Repair Project and the Port would like to move forward with a contract for \$96,890 plus \$8,429.43 in tax for a total of \$105,319.43 to Inland Asphalt.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Roy Keck, seconded by Commissioner Lori Stevens, and unanimously passed by the Commission approving the award of the Port of Benton East Lane Repair project to Inland Asphalt for a total of \$105,319.43.**

**F. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The regular Commission meeting was recessed at 3:19 p.m. and an Executive Session was convened at 3:21 p.m. to discuss real estate for 15 minutes. It was noted that if any action was required, Commissioners will reconvene the regular meeting and bring forward any item at that time.

**G. ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m. with an announcement that the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting would be held on Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. at the Walter Clore Wine & Culinary Center, located at 2140 Wine Country Rd., Prosser, Washington.



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Lori Stevens  
Commission Secretary