

**PORT OF BENTON
SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
August 28, 2026**

A. CALL TO ORDER: The special meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. at the Port of Benton Commission room, 3250 Port of Benton Blvd., Richland, Washington

PRESENT: Commissioner Scott D. Keller, Commissioner Bill O'Neil, Commissioner Lori Stevens

PORT STAFF PRESENT: Ron Branine, Summers Miya, Audrey Burney, Jorge Celestino, Stuart Dezember, Mardie Romero

ALSO PRESENT: John O'Leary, Gravis Law; Dan Hanson, Apple Valley News

The following attendees attended via remote communications: Sheri Collins, Julia Mora, Shaylee Nilsson, Angela Saraceno Lyman, Jeff Moore, Rachel Visick, TCJOB, one unknown phone number

The special Commission meeting was noticed as required by RCW 42.30.070.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Bill O'Neil led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance

C. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Resolution 26-55, A Resolution of the Port of Benton approving a Revised Lease Agreement with Bunge USA Grain, LLC. And Superseding Resolution 26-44, Richland Business Park

Director of Economic Development Audrey Burney presented an update to Resolution 26-55 for Bunge USA Grain. The added Area 4 was needed for Bunge's air permit through Benton County.

Burney reported revisions to the rental lease and related lease language. The exhibit and legal descriptions and the modifications to the right of first refusal provisions.

Commissioner Lori Stevens made a motion to approve the revised Lease Agreement with Bunge USA, Grain, LLC. and superseding Resolution 26-44, Richland Business Park. Commissioner Scott Keller seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed by the Commission.

2. HSI Workplace Compliance Solutions, Inc. Lease Agreement, Richland Business Park

Director of Economic Development Audrey Burney presented a lease agreement for HSI Workplace Compliance Solutions, Inc. at 2345 Stevens Dr. The tenant is in a multi-tenant location and is reducing its footprint. The lease reflects occupancy of approximately 612 Sq ft., including Suite 375 and a small closet. The tenant's testing center has moved to Hammer, due to HMIS's Contract. The proposed term runs from September 1, 2026, through July 31, 2027, with four 1-year renewal options to align with the current HMIS contract structure.

Commissioner O'Neil asked whether the vacated space could be leased to a joint tenant. Burney said there have been discussions with a tenant for that area, but nothing has been finalized.

Commissioner Scott Keller made a motion to approve a Lease Agreement with HSI Workplace Compliance Solutions, Inc., Richland Business Park. Commissioner Lori Stevens seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed by the Commission.

3. September 2026 Commission Meeting Date Change

Commissioner O'Neil approved moving the September regular commission meeting from September 9 to September 16. Commissioner O'Neil noted personal scheduling conflicts that week, and that the original date falls on Labor Day week. The later date was described as useful because the commission is likely to have attorney candidate interviews, including a meet-and-greet and tour, that week.

Commissioner Lori Stevens made a motion to approve the meeting date change from September 9 to September 16. Commissioner Scott Keller seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed by the Commission.

D. CONVENE EXECUTIVE SESSION

The special meeting was recessed at 8:40 a.m. It was announced that an Executive Session would commence at 8:40 a.m. for 45 minutes to discuss with legal counsel, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(g)(i), to evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee, litigation or potential litigation, and legal risks. Attorney Carolyn Lake joined executive session at 9:07 a.m.; at 9:25 a.m., the commission asked for another 10 minutes, reconvening at 9:35 a.m. At 9:35 a.m., the commission asked for another 10 minutes, reconvening at 9:45 a.m. The special meeting was reconvened at 9:45 a.m.

Commissioner Scott Keller made a motion to adjust the compensation for the Interim Executive Director. Commissioner Lori Stevens seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed by the Commission.

E. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:46 a.m.


Lori Stevens, Commission Secretary