

**PORT OF BENTON
SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
September 8, 2026**

A. CALL TO ORDER: The special meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.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, Stuart Dezember

The following attendees attended via remote communications: Wendy Culverwell, Tri-City Herald; one unknown phone number; Carolyn Lake, Attorney; Dan Hanson, Apple Valley News; Christy Rasmussen

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

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

C. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Convene Executive Session

- Discussion with legal counsel regarding potential litigation and legal risks – RCW 42.30.3110(1)(i)
- To evaluate the qualifications of a candidate for appointment or performance of a public employee – RCW 42.30.110(1)(g)

Commissioner Bill O'Neil stated that the Commission will move into executive session for discussion with legal counsel regarding potential litigation and legal risks – RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) and to evaluate the qualifications of a candidate for appointment or performance of a public employee – RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) for 30 minutes.

Commissioner O'Neil stated that if any action is required, the Commission will reconvene the special meeting and bring forward the item at that time.

D. RE-CONVENE SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING

The special meeting was recessed at 4:01 p.m. Commissioner Bill O'Neil announced that an Executive Session would commence at 4:01 p.m. for 30 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 the executive session at 4:01 p.m.

The Special meeting was reconvened at 4:31 p.m.

There was no action taken.

E. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.



Lori Stevens, Commission Secretary