ORIGINAL

PORT OF BENTON
COMMISSION
BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES
OCTOBER 12, 2026

A. CALL TO ORDER: The Commission Budget Workshop meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. at the Port of Benton Commission Meeting Room, 3250 Port of Benton Boulevard, Richland, Washington.

PRESENT: Commissioner Bill O'Neil, Commissioner Scott D. Keller, Commissioner Lori Stevens (attended virtually)

PORT STAFF PRESENT: Quentin Wright, Summers Miya, Ron Branine, Joe Pisca, Angela Saraceno-Lyman, Audrey Burney, Brandin Lopez, Bryan Bell, Jorge Celestino, Mardie Romero, Stuart Dezember, Paul Brachvogel

ALSO PRESENT: John O'Leary, Gravis Law; Cliff Dyer, Sundance Aviation

The following attendees attended via remote communications: Shaylee Nilsson, Sheri Collins

The Commission Meeting Budget Workshop was noticed as required by RCW 42.30.070.

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

C. BUDGET WORKSHOP

1. 2027 Proposed Budget Review

Director of Finance Stuart Dezember presented the 2027 proposed budget.

Dezember said the proposed budget starts with an estimated cash balance of nearly $6 million, including a $2.2 million general reserve.

The proposed budget reflects the port's commitment to fiscal responsibility, transparency, operational excellence, and delivering on its economic development mission.

Key financial highlights include:

- Major assumptions
  - Lease Revenues, Increase in lease-related income/Proposed Projects
- Major pending items
  - Follow up with Rail car count participation payment of approximately $700,000
  - Negotiations continue with Tree Top land sale
  - 3110 Port of Benton Blvd: retain, lease, or sell before committing to $345,000 plumbing expenditure
- Major items noted
  - Rail
    - Rails transload/Intermodal improvements include $232,000, State Grant.

- Airports
  - Richland and Prosser FAA, WSDOT Design, Department of Commerce $500,000 Contribution
- Other
  - WSDOT Shore-Power electrification grants $1.9M
  - 2501 Stevens Dr. construction $1.55M Benton County .09 funds
  - Waterfront development plan
  - Asset maintenance and management

Dezember highlighted key budget takeaways:

- Operating revenues are decreasing slightly
- Property tax levy rate decreased
- Large amount of capital projects and grants
- Significant planning projects completed
- Proposed 2027 revenue of $17.9 million

2. 2027 Proposed Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements

Director of Capital Projects, Rail & Engineering Brandin Lopez explained that CSHI provides a public framework for existing and anticipated Port improvements and capital needs. Lopez proposed aligning the CSHI review and public process with the 2027 budget calendar. Public notices and reviews would follow, and final approval was targeted for November 10.

Lopez said the main proposed format change is to keep the Capital Improvement budget separate from the CSHI rather than embedding numerous budget pages in the plan. Lopez noted that a potential sale of 3110 would require updating the plan through the Ports surplus process.

D. ADJOURNMENT: With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:26 a.m.

Lori Stevens
Commission Secretary