

**Port of Hood River Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes of March 17, 2026**  
**Via Remote Video Conference & Marina Center Boardroom**  
**5:00 p.m.**

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**REGULAR SESSION**

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**PRESENT: Commissioners:** Kristi Chapman, Heather Gehring, Kathryn Thomas (Via Zoom), and Tor Bieker.  
**Staff:** Kevin Greenwood, Daryl Stafford, Debbie Smith-Wagar, Amanda Rose, Megan Channell, Amanda Rose, and Tia Kendall **Guests:** Jeff Renard, Aviation Management Services; Gretchen Goss, Gretchen Goss Creative; Brain Hackett, Hood River Parks and Recreation; Kate McBride, Hood River Parks and Recreation.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** President Heather Gehring called the meeting to order at 5:00pm

a. **Modifications, Additions to Agenda:** None

b. **Public Comment:** None

**2. CONSENT AGENDA:**

a. Approve Minutes from the February 17, 202 Regular Session

b. Approve PSA 211-213 N Wasco Ct.

c. Approve Res. 2026-26-22 setting Ken Jernstedt Airfield Minimum Standards

d. Approve RFP for Fixed Based Operator for the Ken Jernstedt Airfield

e. Approve contract with Luciano Cruz Tree Service for an amount not to exceed \$21,427.83 for Ken Jernstedt Airfield tree removal

f. Approve Entering into Negotiations and Authorizing Signing a PSC with Points Consulting LLC to Update the Port's Strategic Business Plan

g. Res. No. 2025-26-23 Adjusting FY26 Budget

**Motion:** Move to approve the Consent Agenda

**Move:** Chapman

**Second:** Bieker

**Discussion:** None

**Vote:** **Ayes:** Chapman, Gehring, Sheppard, Thomas, and Bieker

**MOTION CARRIED**

**3. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:**

a. **Monthly Financial Report:** Director of Finance, Debbie Smith-Wagar noted that in January the Commission passed a supplemental budget that reflects the reorganization of staff, but it will be reflected in next month's budget. In the next month there will be a lot of changes, so it will look different next year due to the reorganization. Commissioner Kathryn Thomas noted that the contingency decreased \$2.5 million and the capital outlay increased by \$2.5 million. Commissioner Thomas asked how much contingency remains after this adjustment, how that compares to prior years at this point in the fiscal cycle. Smith-Wagar explained that the original contingency contained the sale of Lower Hanel Mill and Big 7 Building in addition to the \$550,000 that was for operations. The reason why \$2.59 million was also included is because that was just passed in a resolution on the consent agenda for a piece of property we bought and one we are looking to purchase. Since you cannot spend directly out of contingency, it got moved to the capital outlay to be spent. That left us with the \$8 million in contingency, but that goes back to the purchase of property which has not yet closed and the discussion on how to spend will be discussed at the budget committee level. Smith-Wagar explained that it is difficult to compare it to prior years because we did not have that set aside for these specific sales of properties in the past and noted that in prior years the previous finance director tended to the budget more broadly and did not come back with supplemental budgets.

**4. PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- a. **Hood River Valley Parks & Rec District Pool Bond-** Kate McBride is on the citizen advisory and political action advisory committee for Hood River Valley Parks & Rec and is assisting in advocating for the ballot measure. Brian Hackett, a board member for Hood River Valley Parks & Rec, presented the history, the current plan and proposal, the funding, and the timeline of the pool bond project. Commissioner Thomas asked about the new pool design, Hackett explained that it will have permanent cover on it due to environmental factors. Commissioner Heather Gehring wondered if they had thought about moving the new pool to a different location so that way the current pool can stay open during the construction. Hackett explained that due to lack of real estate and moving the pool was not supported by the community; being able to describe a pool that is similar in size, shape and scope would be the best way to move forward. Commissioner Tor Bieker asked for the effects of the proposal, what county residents are paying currently and asked for a comparison to other parks and recreation districts that are similar size. Hackett stated that it is currently 34 cents. Hackett explained that he did not have information of what other districts pay with him but it is on their website. Hackett added that 80% of residents within Hood River would pay \$30 or less a month. McBride added that on the website there is an estimator for what your taxes would be, she added that \$75 of the residential households in Hood River would cost \$211-\$215 for the bond and around \$111 for the levy. Hackett added that since Hood River is a river/water community that has a year-round pool that provides swimming lessons for children, they have a program that school children can receive swim lessons during their grade school years. Commissioner Gehring noted that in the beginning of the presentation, alternate funding was mentioned, Hackett explained that the alternate funding comes from a foundation and hopefully grants.
- b. **Replacement Bridge Impact on Tollbooth-** Smith-Wagar explained the impacts to the existing toll facility resulting from the Bridge Replacement Project. Smith-Wagar noted that Director of Real Estate and Asset Management, Amanda Rose has gotten involved in this project as well as Commissioner Thomas. Smith-Wagar added that since the bridge is not fully funded yet, this is not for sure, but she wanted it to be on the commission's radar. Smith-Wagar also noted that we should know by July 1, 2026, if this will be happening, Commissioner Thomas confirmed as that is the date USDOT is sharing on their public webinars. When the current toll facility is removed it will create more open space and this could lead to issues with capturing the tolling, Commissioner Thomas noted that they are working on the technical details to ensure there is no revenue lost. Commissioner Bieker inquired about the open space Commissioner Thomas mentioned, Smith-Wagar explained that since they are planning to take out the canopy building and it creates a more wide-open space. Commissioner Thomas added that the Bridge Commission is working out the technical details to ensure that vehicles are being guided correctly when entering the bridge. Commissioner Kristi Chapman asked if Commissioner Thomas needed more support in these conversations about the tolling facility, Commissioner Thomas stated that Smith-Wagar have it handled, other Port staff are involved as well and are ensuring the Ports financial longevity. Commissioner Thomas and Smith-Wagar both mentioned that the Bridge Authority is also interested in us continuing to collect tolls as it helps them as well. Smith-Wagar also noted that she has been reminding the engineering teams that she has been working with that they do not own the tollbooth area and that there are two agencies we have to keep informed.
- c. **Government Affairs for Grant Advocacy-** Director of Capital Projects and Operations, Megan Channell explained the upcoming Washington DC trip related to the federal grants that the Port is seeking for many different projects. The trip would leverage support from Accelerate, which is federal government affairs firm that works with Business Oregon. Commissioner Thomas asked why we were going with that specific lobbying group- Accelerate- and if we needed to do a public RFP. Channell explained that we do not, this lobbying group is not directly contracted with the Port, they work directly with Business Oregon, Since Business Oregon is a state agency they are able to make their lobbyists available to other governments throughout Oregon. Commissioner

Thomas asked if this trip was budgeted and expected or if it was new. Channell explained that it would be a new expense, but Smith-Wagar noted that we do budget for travel and training. Executive Director, Kevin Greenwood, noted that these trips are most effective when a commissioner joins the trip. Greenwood asked if any commissioners would be willing to attend. Commissioner Bieker volunteered to go as he understands the value of this trip.

5. **DIRECTOR REPORT:** Greenwood noted that the Spring Planning Work Session is coming up and there are multiple discussions items on the agenda. Channell added that two things that are not on the Spring Planning Agenda are additional conversations around the commercial dock and consideration of master planning for the Marina. Commissioner Beiker requested that we start to track the welding repairs being made to the bridge and keep better documentation of the welding. Rose agreed and stated that she is working with the welding company to gather the information to make the documentation clearer.
6. **COMMISSIONER, COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None
7. **ACTION ITEMS:** None
8. **COMMISSION CALL:** None
9. **UPCOMING MEETINGS:** No Discussion
10. **ADJOURN:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

Signed by:  
  
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Heather Gehring, President

Signed by:  
  
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Kristi Chapman, Secretary