

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

REGULAR SESSION

PRESENT: Commissioners: Kristi Chapman, Heather Gehring, Ben Sheppard, Kathryn Thomas (via Zoom), Tor Bieker (via Zoom). **Staff:** Kevin Greenwood, Debbie Smith-Wagar, Megan Channell, Daryl Stafford, Amanda Rose and Tia Kendall. **Guests:** Jed Reitman, Gorge Junior Sailing; Rudy Kellner, pFriem Family Brewers; Valerie Ringold, Corps of Engineers Portland District; Christine Longjohn, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs; Cindy Thieman, Hood River Watershed Group; Jeff Renard, Aviation Management (Via Zoom).

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

a. Modifications, Additions to Agenda:

1. Additional Document for Consent Agenda Item G- Resolution 2025-26-21 Authorizing Executive Director to Sign for 200 N. Wasco Ct.

b. Public Comment:

1. **Jed Reitman**, with Gorge Junior Sailing, has safety and environmental concerns regarding the sternwheeler entering the Marina.

2. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Approve Minutes from January 20, Regular Session
- b. Approve Res. No. 2025-26-15 Appointing Johnathan Tillman & Judy Newman to the Budget Committee
- c. Approve Marina East/West RFDI
- d. Approve Notice of Cancellation of HRSO Marine IGA for additional services
- e. Approve Accounts Payable to Berry, Elsner & Hammond, LLP
- f. Approve Resolutions Codifying Commission Committees
- g. Authorize Closing Documents of 200 Wasco Ct.

Motion: Move to approve the Consent Agenda, with correction of the Berry, Elsner & Hammond LLP invoice of 5 cents.

Move: Chapman

Second: Gehring

Discussion: Commissioner Kathryn Thomas had questions for staff regarding the intent and goal of the Marina East/West Request for Development Interest. Director of Capital Projects and Coordination, Megan Channell explained that the RFDI allows the Port to gain an understanding of the market viability and the potential development options for the site through a low-risk and non-binding process. With the information, the Port has many different options to proceed to meet the commissions priorities and look towards revenue generation.

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

MOTION CARRIED

3. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:

- a. **Monthly Financial Report:** Finance Director, Debbie Smith-Wagar brought attention to a question that Commissioner Thomas had previously asked about, which was what are the risks that she sees coming up. Smith-Wagar explained that we have a routine system and the risks that she could see arise are the unusual, non-routine items. The non-routine items coming up are the purchase of the Wasco property, the selling of the Lower Hanel Mill and the staff reorganization.

4. PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- a. **pFriem Annual Update-** pFriem is a long-term tenant at the Halyard Building, owner Rudy Kellner presented an update on business, recent community efforts and their future plans. With pFriem continuing to grow, they are reaching capacity in the Halyard Building. Kellner explained that to continue to grow they need co-location and he is hoping to continue to develop the Halyard site, specifically a metal building on the south side of the building for production. After working with architects and engineers, they believe they the ability to add a 5,280sf metal building to the Halyard building. pFriem provided an explanation about the financial cost of this project and hopes to get the commission's approval to continue to work with staff to figure out how to further develop the Halyard building. Commissioner Heather Gehring asked if they see any barriers to obtain permits to build, Kellner explained that he has had conversations with the planning department, they discussed the major complications, and he does not see those as an issue. The most complex issue of this project right now is relocation of some power utilities, but that has been considered in the budget and planning. Commissioner Gehring asked Director of Real Estate and Asset Management, Amanda Rose, for her opinion of this. Rose spoke highly of the tenant and spoke about pFriem providing job security and their love for the community and that it would be a great investment for the Port to explore. Commissioner Tor Bieker asked if pFriem continues to grow at the upper limit of 5-7%, at what point would they outgrow this expansion. Kellner explained that they have around 7 years but in the current economy and with the current state of the beer industry, 7 years is a long time. Kellner added that he thinks that there will be growth beyond the space, and that this will be the last major investment of the Halyard building. Commissioner Thomas gave support to pFriem and is excited to see the next steps in the project. Commissioner Ben Sheppard noted that this is not the first time pFriem and the Port have had this type of discussion, and with each investment it has been rewarded in revenue, increased jobs and helping a business grow. Commissioner Sheppard stated that as commissioners it is their job to help businesses grow and succeed. Commissioner Kristi Chapman noted that they are being optimistically cautious about their growth with the state of the alcohol industry, and they are also adding to their business with other endeavors by being viable for the community in ways other than beer; by having great food and customer service.
- b. **ACEC Project of the Year Award Video-** No Discussion.
- c. **Hood River Confluence Feasibility Study, Hood River Watershed Group-** Cindy Thieman from the Hood River Watershed Group and Christine Longjohn from the Confederated tribes of the Warm Springs presented on the Hood River Confluence Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Study. Thieman and Longjohn provided an overview of the study and its reasoning, its importance and its goals. Valerie Ringold from the Corp of Engineering Portland District explained the Water Resources Act (WRDA) of 2020 which is how this study came to be and explained how the funding works. Thieman clarified that they are not requesting funding from the Port for this study but looking for a partnership. Commissioner Sheppard asked why Nichols Basin is now important to the smelt and 5-10 years ago it was not or if this is now looking towards the future, Longjohn stated that it is for the future and reconnection. Longjohn explained that since the mouth of the Hood River is channelized, and issues of bird predation have arisen. Longjohn also explained that the goal for the smelt is to get a higher return rate. Commissioner Sheppard also asked about the timeline of this study, Thieman explained that in 3 years they will have the final recommendation, but they are hoping to have a draft report at about 12-14 months. Thieman also noted that in the next few months a small charrette will be held and requested someone from the Port is in attendance. Commissioner Thomas asked if bridge construction will affect this study and if there has been any coordination between the two groups. Ringold explained that she is the chief of the planning branch at the Corps of Engineers in the Portland District and is in very close coordination with the bridge construction. Commissioner Thomas also asked if they are working with Salmon Safe, and Thieman said that they are not and they aren't aware of any similar projects that would overlap

with this project. Thieman asked if there is any decision the commission makes to be a partner in this study, Executive Director, Kevin Greenwood explained that there is a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in place and there is not any further action the commission has to take. Greenwood recommended making sure that staff and the study group stay in communication for future opportunities.

- 5. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:** Greenwood noted that sturgeon season had opened and the team did a great job monitoring and taking care of the situation. Greenwood noted a draft agenda for Spring Planning; there are many projects in process currently and requested that they have any items that they would like included in the Spring Planning packet to reach out. Rose added that all the bathrooms will be open by next week. Jeff Renard, Aviation Management shared a photo of the start of excavation, and they are preparing for the foundation for the ten new T-hangars.
- 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 6:14pm.

ATTEST:

Signed by:


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 Heather Gehring, President

Signed by:


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 Kristi Chapman, Secretary