

**Port of Hood River Commission  
Meeting Minutes of June 30, 2024 Special Meeting  
Via Remote Video Conference & Marina Center Boardroom  
10:00 a.m.**

---

**THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL until approved by the Port Commission at the next regular meeting.**

---

**Special Meeting**

**PRESENT: Commissioners:** Kristi Chapman, Heather Gehring, Mike Fox, Ben Sheppard, and Tor Bieker. **Staff:** Kevin Greenwood, Daryl Stafford, Ryan Klapprich, Adam Busch, and Patty Rosas.

**ABSENT:** Debbie Smith-Wagar

**GUEST:** Justin Doornink, HDR; Eric Rau, HDR; Scott Reynier, Columbia River Insurance; John Brestin, Kiewit Construction; Jeff Ellis, Kiewit; Mayor Catherine Kiewit, Bingen; Raquel Ferrell Crowley, Central Washington Director.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** President Kristi Chapman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
- 2. STAFF REPORT/INTRODUCTIONS:** Commissioner Chapman explained that the purpose of the meeting was for the commission and staff to receive a report from the Port of Hood River's ("Port") structural bridge engineer of record, HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR), They would hear recommendations from HDR and Kiewit Infrastructure West ("Kiewit"), deliberate, decide on a course of action, and, if necessary, authorize emergency contracting direction. The focus was on determining how the Port could safely reopen the bridge for public traffic as quickly as possible.

The commission, staff, and consultants had reviewed numerous comments, opinions, frustrations, and complaints regarding the incident. The Port's primary concern was the safe operation of the bridge, followed by the swift resumption of vehicular traffic. Due to the emergency circumstances, the commission did not receive public comments at the meeting. The Commission board room was open for public observation, and the proceedings were live streamed on the Port's YouTube channel.

President Chapman then handed the meeting over to Kevin Greenwood, Executive Director, for introductions. Greenwood provided a brief overview of recent events, noting that at 10:15 on Thursday morning, a semi-truck transporting a large excavator impacted six lateral members of the lift span structure above the travel lanes. The Port contacted HDR, their structural bridge engineer since 2014, who recommended closing the bridge to all traffic for further assessment.

Two parallel engineering activities have since been underway: assessing the current damage and planning for permanent repairs. Kiewit has reviewed HDR's processes and is leading the repair preparations. The Port will produce a report on the incident, including costs and legal issues, to be shared at the July 16th Commission meeting, where public comments will be shared.

- 3. BRIDGE ANALYSIS AND RECOMENDATIOS:** Justin Doornink and Eric Rau presented their findings. They identified six damaged locations on the overhead portal braces and recommended the following:
  - Keeping the bridge lift span in place until all damaged bracing is repaired.
  - Allowing traffic under the bridge if there's sufficient clearance without raising the lift span.
  - Limit traffic to cars to mitigate the potential for another accidental strike to the overhead bracing while the bridge is in a damaged state.
  - Expediting final bridge repair plans and immediate repairs.

Next steps involve HDR finalizing repair plans and specifications and conducting repairs with Kiewit.

A discussion followed, concerns were raised about determining which vehicles should be allowed to cross the bridge, considering potential interference and weight. Doornink commented that the assessment found that weight is not a current issue, but limiting traffic to cars is beneficial. The main goal is to restrict vehicle height to prevent another accidental strike while the bridge is damaged.

John Brestin from Kiewit reported that they have been collaborating closely with the Port and HDR, primarily to conduct constructability reviews and peer reviews of the engineering assessments. Kiewit, a full-service engineering and construction firm hired to design the new bridge, has observed the Port and HDR acting swiftly and making prudent decisions.

Kiewit supports the Port's cautious approach to limit the vertical lift operation of the bridge and restrict traffic to cars and possibly recreational vehicles, while prohibiting commercial and truck traffic until permanent repairs are completed. Kiewit endorsed HDR's process for assessing the bridge's readiness for reopening to traffic following a vehicular strike, noting its consistency with standard emergency protocols.

Additionally, Kiewit will provide a formal peer review of the engineering analysis conducted by HDR. They anticipate HDR's submission to Kiewit for review within the next 48 to 72 hours. Kiewit has already provided constructability input, engaged suppliers and fabricators, and is prepared to procure materials and begin fabrication upon receipt of preliminary drawings from HDR, expected later today.

Construction is scheduled to begin after the holiday weekend on July 8th, starting with lead paint abatement and night closures to remove and replace damaged bridge members. Kiewit expects the work to be completed within approximately a week, with further updates on the schedule to follow.

Questions regarding the plan to reopen the bridge were addressed. Assuming agreement on motions later in the meeting, staff recommended reopening the bridge once 24/7 monitoring for truck traffic at entry points is established. Communications with the Department of Transportation (DOT) in the region were planned for later that day to notify them of the reopening. Greenwood added that with communication efforts underway, the bridge could reopen by early afternoon, around 1:00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m.

Commissioner Chapman clarified that truck traffic restrictions, once the bridge fix is fabricated and installed, those restrictions would be lifted, likely within the next two weeks. Further milestones and installation dates were discussed.

**4. ACTION ITEMS:**

**a. Bridge Opening**

- Motion:** Move to open the bridge to limited vehicular traffic as soon as they can achieve a security situation on both ends, and if they have dispersed the appropriate communications to DOT and other agencies.
- Move:** Bieker
- Second:** Fox
- Discussion:** Concerns were raised about defining vehicle restrictions and enforcement before reopening the bridge. Greenwood commented that the Port plans to station visible staff at entry points with signage and walkie-talkies to enforce restrictions. Initially, they propose banning semi-trucks and similar freight-hauling vehicles, while RVs, typically below the height limit, may not be restricted due to lower potential for damage.

**Vote:** **Ayes:** Chapman, Gehring, Fox, Sheppard, and Bieker  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**b. Permanent Fix**

**Motion:** Move to direct Kiewit Construction and HDR Engineering, Inc. to complete design, procurement of materials, and construction of a permanent fix.

**Move:** Gehring

**Second:** Fox

**Discussion:** A question was raised about whether there is an intermediate repair standard that would make the bridge safe for all vehicular traffic without restoring the lift span's operation. Doornink clarified that the most economical and fastest way to implement the repair is to replace the damaged members in kind, which would restore the bridge's full capacity, including the lifting operation. He emphasized that this comprehensive repair approach is the quickest way to ensure both safety and functionality for all vehicles.

**Vote:** **Ayes:** Chapman, Gehring, Fox, Sheppard, and Bieker  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**c. Delegating Contract Approval Authorization**

**Motion:** Move to delegate emergency procurement authority to the Executive Director up to a limit of \$1 million in total contracts related to the repair of the Hood River Bridge.

**Move:** Gehring

**Second:** Bieker

**Discussion:** None


**Vote:** **Ayes:** Chapman, Gehring, Fox, Sheppard, and Bieker  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**5. ADJOURN:** Commissioner Chapman expressed appreciation for the swift response, professionalism, and collaboration from all involved, including insurance agents, facility staff, Port staff, and the engineering teams. Commissioner Chapman gave a special thanks to Commissioner Fox for his dedicated efforts over the past 48 hours. A reminder was made about the urgent need for a new bridge, emphasizing that the current one will only continue to deteriorate, underscoring the importance of expedited funding for its replacement. The meeting was then adjourned by unanimous consent at 10:25 a.m.

**ATTEST:**

DocuSigned by:  
  
00DEADE439F8421...

Kristi Chapman, President

DocuSigned by:  
  
1D968775DD2542A...

Michael Fox, Secretary