

Port of Hood River Commission
Meeting Minutes of February 20, 2024 Regular Session
Via Remote Video Conference & Marina Center Boardroom
5:00 p.m.

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

Regular Session

PRESENT: Commissioners: Kristi Chapman, Ben Sheppard, Mike Fox, and Tor Bieker. **Staff:** Kevin Greenwood, Debbie Smith-Wagar, Greg Hagbery, Daryl Stafford, Ryan Klapprich, and Patty Rosas. **Legal Counsel:** Ashleigh Dougill **HNTB:** Michael Shannon **Guests:** Dale Orgain; Mindy Sanders; Amy Schlappi, Columbia Area Transit; Kristen Godkin, Art of Community.

ABSENT: Heather Gehring

MEDIA: None

1. CALL TO ORDER: President Kristi Chapman called the meeting to order at 4:59 p.m.

- a. **Introduction of Ashleigh Dougill, Beery Elsner & Hammond** – Kevin Greenwood, Executive Director, introduced Ashleigh Dougill as the new general counsel of the Port of Hood River (“Port”). Dougill shared her background and experience in public entity representation. The legal team consists of 10 attorneys with various specialties, and Dougill will serve as the main point of contact.
- b. **Acknowledgement of Commissioner Fox SDAO Award** – Commissioner Mike Fox was acknowledged for winning the 2024 Outstanding Special District Service Award in the board member category for his involvement with the Bridge Replacement Project.
- c. **Modifications or additions to the agenda**
 - 1) Add Letter of Support for Columbia Area Transit (CAT).
- d. **Public Comment:**
 - 1) **James Dean Construction Concerning Weight Limit Reduction** – Written comment provided in packet.
 - 2) **Dale Orgain, Jet Boat Tour Operator**, proposed a small passenger vessel that would offer boat tours of the Columbia River Gorge, to help promote tourism and economic growth for the community. Orgain is seeking a Concession Agreement and moorage for the vessel.
 - 3) **Kristen Godkin, Art of Community**, discussed the Big Art program that began in 2014 to promote art and artists in the community. The program displays sculptures in Hood River, and operates on a two-year rotation, with sponsorship covering a portion of installation costs and artist fees. Godkin is seeking a Port sponsorship for two locations in the amount of \$3,000 and consideration for potential long-term opportunities.
 - 4) **Amy Schlappi, Columbia Area Transit**, requested support for a grant application for the Hood River County Transportation District’s Transit Site Development Project. The funding would enhance Hood River transportation facilities by creating a regional transit hub at Lot 1 and relocating a park-and-ride facility. There was consensus from the Commission to approve the letter of support that was provided to the Commission, in support of the project for the grant application.

2. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Approve Minutes from the January 23, 2024 Regular Session and February 7, 2024 Special Meeting
- b. Approve Lease with CG Operations LLC in the Timber Incubator Building

- c. Approve Accounts Payable to Campbell Phillips in the Amount of \$1,777.50

Motion: Move to approve Consent Agenda.
Move: Bieker
Second: Fox
Discussion: None
Vote: **Ayes:** Chapman, Sheppard, Fox, and Bieker
Absent: Gehring
MOTION CARRIED

3. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:

- a. **Bridge Replacement Project Update** – No Discussion

4. PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- a. **RV Park Feasibility at Lower Mill Site** – Greenwood provided the Commission with an initial cost estimate for county land use amendments and the design/construction of an RV Park at the Port's Lower Mill site in Odell. Following their findings, staff advised against pursuing workforce housing at Lower Mill. A discussion ensued regarding the findings. Subsequently, consensus was reached to prioritize building relationships with the County and the Odell Sanitary District to garner support for the project, followed by gaining a better understanding of workforce housing supply and demand, and finally revising the RV park concept to reduce costs.
- b. **Bridge Lift Policy Discussion** – Greenwood commented that the Internal Bridge Committee (IBC) met with Stephen Fischer, the District 13 USCG Bridge Operations Director, about the possibility of decommissioning the lift. Though full decommissioning is not permitted, alternative options were explored, including requesting advance notice for bridge lifts and reassessing the necessity of the 50 tension lifts associated with the wire rope replacement. Following deliberation, the Commission reached a consensus to hire a consultant to assist with advance notice for bridge lifts, collaborate with stakeholders and codify agreements to potentially minimize the need for bridge lifts altogether. Staff was also directed to reassess the necessity of the tension lifts.

- 5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:** Greenwood reported that staff is working with contractors to schedule welding work on the bridge, with single lane closures planned for April 8 to April 19. Staff also met with HDR Engineering to review the 30-year Capital Improvement Plan. HDR Engineering will meet with the IBC to present their recommendations. Greenwood inquired about the Commission's interest in participating in discussions concerning the messaging of the new partnership with The History Museum of Hood River County, and Commissioner Heather Gehring was appointed to participate in those discussions. An update was given on the sale of the Odell property; legal counsel is currently reviewing the agreement, and it will be presented to the Commission for approval at an upcoming meeting. The Budget Committee vacancies have been advertised and the deadline has been extended to March 11 at 5pm. A discussion followed regarding Port security. Furthermore, the Commission discussed picnic tables and explored methods to inform the public of their availability for public use.

6. COMMISSIONER, COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a. **Airport Advisory Committee (AAC)** – Commissioner Tor Bieker reported that the AAC decided against creating a mission statement for the airport but crafted a vision statement. The Committee agreed to refine the statement before presenting it to the Port. The AAC is also currently reviewing minimum standards for the airport, with an aim to promote diverse commercial activity.

7. **ACTION ITEMS:** None

8. **COMMISSION CALL/FUTURE MEETINGS:**

- a. **Commission Call:** Commissioner Bieker expressed concern over the definition of “reasonable” regarding the relocation expenses for the Port office and maintenance shed in the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and requested clarification. Michael Shannon, HNTB Project Director, commented that since the project falls under federal jurisdiction, the relocation would be regulated by federal guidelines. A discussion ensued regarding next steps for the relocation.
- b. **Future Meetings:** The Commission reached a consensus to maintain the scheduled date of April 9 for Spring Planning.

9. **CONFIRMATION OF DIRECTIVES:**

- a. Staff to respond to Public Comment requests.
- b. Staff to set up meetings with the County and the Odell Sanitary District to garner support for the RV park at Lower Mill. Followed by gaining a better understanding of the workforce housing supply and demand, and finally revising the RV park concept to reduce costs.
- c. Staff to hire a consultant to assist with advance notice for bridge lifts, collaborate with stakeholders and codify agreements to potentially minimize the need for bridge lifts altogether. Staff was also directed to reassess the necessity of the tension lifts.
- d. Staff to work with Commissioner Gehring on the messaging related to the partnership with The History Museum of Hood River County.
- e. Staff will explore methods to inform the public of picnic tables that are available for public use.

10. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

11. **POSSIBLE ACTION:** None

12. **ADJOURN:** The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:36 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Kristi Chapman, President

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Michael Fox, Secretary