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

Joint Work Session

PRESENT: Commissioners: Ben Sheppard, Kristi Chapman (arrived 4:07 p.m.), Mike Fox, Heather Gehring, and Hoby Streich. **From Staff:** Kevin Greenwood, Genevieve Scholl, Daryl Stafford, Debbie Smith-Wagar, Greg Hagbery (via Zoom), John Mann, and Patty Rosas. **From HNTB:** Michael Shannon, and Brian Munoz. **Legal Counsel:** Kristen Campbell. **Bi-State Working Group:** Marla Keethler, Jake Anderson, Arthur Babitz, Grant Polson, Catherine Kiewit, and Paul Blackburn.

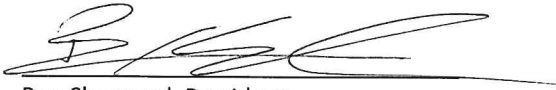
ABSENT: None

MEDIA: Noah Noteboom, Columbia Gorge News

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** President Ben Sheppard called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
- 2. Welcome & Introductions:** Commissioner Sheppard welcomed everyone to the meeting and proceeded with introductions from everyone present. Kevin Greenwood, Executive Director, commented that the purpose of the meeting is for an opportunity for the Bi-State Working Group (BSWG) to provide an update on the Bridge Replacement Project ("Project").
- 3. Recommendations of the Bi-State Working Group Related to Bridge Replacement –** Marla Keethler, Mayor City of White Salmon, noted that the BSWG group has been working towards identifying a reasonable toll increase to appropriately build the reserves and help finance the Project. Michael Shannon, HNTB Project Manager, noted that currently the total cost for the Project is \$520 million. The Project is asking for \$125 million from Oregon and Washington, and \$200 million from federal funding sources. The remaining \$70 million will be from local financing through a TIFIA loan. The Project must have reserves to apply for a TIFIA loan. A toll increase will help build the reserves needed for the TIFIA loan.

Keethler stated that it is critical to establish a toll increase as soon as possible to help secure funding for the Project. The goal is to generate \$15 million in reserves by 2028 and achieve a borrowing capacity of \$70-\$150 million. Implementing single or multiple toll increases prior to the new bridge opening must be considered, as well as maximizing the contribution from existing tolls. Keethler added that by showing Oregon and Washington that the tolls are fully going to the bridge repair or replacement fund will highly benefit the Project. Keethler is seeking a timeline of when the tolls can be completely dedicated to the bridge repair or replacement fund. The toll allocation timeline will help with a final toll increase recommendation from the BSWG. A discussion followed regarding the allocation of toll funds.
- 4. Q&A Period, Next Steps –** Commissioner Kristi Chapman stated that the most significant funding gap is their public spaces that is partially funded by tolls and added that if the Port commits the full tolls to the Project, how could the City and County support the Port with maintaining these public spaces. Commissioner Arthur Babitz replied that this is an issue that would require further discussion with the City and County. Commissioner Sheppard thanked the BSWG for attending and noted that the Commission will gather more information to consider their recommendation.
- 5. ADJOURN:** The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 4:58 p.m.

SIGNED:



Ben Sheppard, President

ATTESTED:



Michael Fox, Secretary