



PORT NEWS

Winter 2024

Seasons of the Port

A note from
Port Commission President Kristi Chapman



One of the beautiful things about living in the Columbia River Gorge is the chance to experience

the changing of the seasons. Each year we watch nature put on its seasonal show with wintry weather, spring growth, summer heat and long days of sun, followed by fall, where things slow down and hibernation for the cozy winter begins again. Much like the world around us, the life and purpose of the Port of Hood River undergoes seasonal changes, as the Commissioners who guide the vision and mission of the Port changes over time. Created in the 1930s, the Port Commission is made up your neighbors, friends, co-workers, business leaders who volunteer their time to not only run for the position during election seasons, but spend hours in meetings,

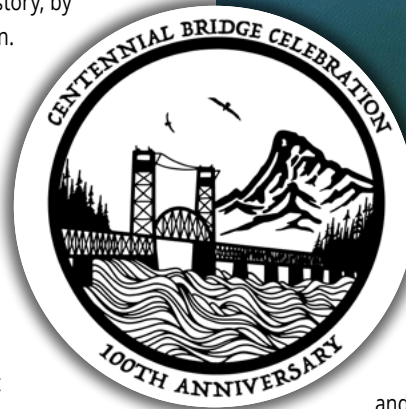
Please see **Seasons** on page 4

Centennial Bridge Celebration

On December 6, 1924, the newly constructed Hood River White Salmon Bridge opened to the public, providing an important river crossing and allowing new economic growth in the Columbia River Gorge. 1,500 people turned out for the event, bundled in coats and hats, to cross the bridge for the very first time. This moment in history was captured by newspapers, photographers, and held in the memories of locals for years to come.

On October 6, 2024, the Port of Hood River aimed to recreate that pivotal moment in local history, by throwing a Centennial Bridge Celebration. Determined to create a truly local-focused celebration, the Port began planning a reenactment of the 1924 opening, using information from local historians and the records from the The History Museum of Hood River County. The goal was to keep the event focused on locals, using local vendors and artists and marketing to the community at hand. While the event would come at an expense to the Port, it was determined that it should be free to the public to rule out any barriers to event accessibility. Local artist Anna Laxague from Basko Creative designed the Centennial logo, which the Port used to create shirts, sweatshirts and hats in hopes of offsetting some of the event costs. With the historical knowledge from former Mayor Arthur Babitz, dreams of recreating the fruit exchange and mayoral handshakes from 1924 began to brew. It would be a bridge birthday party, with free parking, free bridge toll, and the goal of creating a community-focused and celebratory event.

"Happy Bridge Day!" yelled one person to another as they passed each other on the deck of the Hood River White Salmon Interstate Bridge. The weather was glorious, with sunny skies and still waters. Mount Hood shone in the morning sun to the south, and the sound of laughter and music filled the air.



The Centennial Bridge Celebration was underway, with over four thousand friends and neighbors from Oregon and Washington stepping onto the deck of the bridge, taking the unique opportunity to walk from one side of the river to the other.

At 9:30 that morning the bridge closed to vehicular traffic, and at 10 o'clock, Arthur Babitz led the procession of people onto the bridge in his restored Model T. Reaching the Washington side, Mr. Babitz picked up Klickitat County Commissioner Jacob Anderson and delivered him to the center of the bridge, where Hood River County Commissioner Chair Jennifer Euwer was waiting. Crates of fruit were exchanged, once again symbolizing the now free flowing trade, agriculture and services that the construction of the bridge allowed.

The celebration continued, with local pianist Erick Haynie playing tunes under the lift span as people walked from one state to the other. Please see **Centennial** on page 3



Port Update



WATERFRONT:

- The Event Site was used for multiple events over the summer and into the fall. Record numbers of people turned out for the Hops Fest, CGW2 Gear Swap, All Winds Trade Show, Harvest Fest and the Gorge Marathon.
- A parking study was completed showing that less than 7% of all parking transactions resulted in citations – of these, a quarter of them were dismissed.
- The Port approved parking use agreements with CAT and Mt. Hood Meadows for the 2024/25 snow season. These agreements provide support to both a major employer in the county (Mt. Hood Meadows) and helps to reduce vehicle congestion and carbon emissions.

BUILDINGS:

- The Facilities staff has been hard at work preparing several spaces in the Big 7 building for new tenants. We look forward to supporting long-time tenant Wolf Ceramics in expanding the creative community in the building, including The Clay Commons, Mesloh Textiles, and Industrial Street Studios.
- Industrial Street Studios is currently accepting applications for new art collective members. Benefits include private, communal, and classroom workspaces, open studios and public gallery events, and resource sharing. Sign up at industrialstreetstudios.com.

AIRPORT:

- Amended the Airport Advisory Committee rules to extend terms to 4 years and allow non-districted electors to participate if no in-district electors are interested in serving.
- The Port received multiple grants that will allow them to move forward on the construction of a turf taxi lane and design and bid out a 10 unit T-hangar on the South Apron.

BRIDGE:

- Over 4,000 people walked the bridge on October 6th, as part of the Centennial Bridge Celebration.
- The Port of Hood River will be waiving tolls from 12:00pm on December 24, 2024 until 6:00am December 26, 2024 for the Christmas holiday. ●

A Community United: *a letter from Executive Director Kevin Greenwood*



Living and working in the Columbia Gorge is a privilege, one that connects us to a place unlike any other. Surrounded by awe-inspiring mountains, rich agricultural landscapes, and a river that draws visitors from across the globe, we are fortunate to call this stunning region home. But what truly sets this place apart isn't just the natural beauty—it's the way our communities come together to build something greater than the sum of their parts.

Here, innovation thrives in every corner.

Whether it's cutting-edge technology or the vital work of our local nonprofits, the Gorge is a hub of collaboration and progress. From the fruit harvested in our orchards to the wine and beer crafted from it, the products of our land travel far and wide, bringing our communities' strengths to the global stage. What we share goes beyond the products we create—it's the unique spirit of each town, united by a collective drive to grow and prosper.

On October 6, we were reminded of just how interconnected we are when communities from across the Gorge gathered to celebrate the Hood River Interstate Bridge. It was a day where people from every walk of life came together—musicians, dancers, local leaders, and families—sharing stories and forging memories. The excitement in the air was palpable as we commemorated the bridge's legacy, which has connected our communities since 1924. It was a perfect reflection of the Gorge: diverse, vibrant, and deeply connected.

The Port of Hood River has long been at the heart of this transformation. Since 1933, the Port has not only driven the development of our riverside, but also created spaces for small businesses to thrive. From revitalizing industrial sites to providing affordable spaces for entrepreneurs, the Port plays a pivotal role in our community's economic foundation. Our buildings, like the Big 7 complex, house a dynamic mix of businesses—from pottery studios to non-profits, tech companies to wellness clinics. These spaces are not just bricks and mortar; they are where dreams are realized, where our community's entrepreneurial spirit comes to life.

I am deeply proud to work alongside a dedicated team that shares a profound commitment to the community. Our staff members are involved in everything from PTA meetings to outdoor recreation, embodying the values we hold dear—health, happiness, and connection. The work we do every day, the plans we make, and the projects we champion are all driven by one central mission: to strengthen and support the community that makes this place so special.

Every step we take, every decision we make, is with the goal of creating a positive impact. It's not just about the spaces we provide or the projects we support—it's about the people who call the Gorge home. We are united in our vision for a thriving, connected, and resilient community, and I am honored to be part of this shared journey. Together, we're building a future that celebrates our past, nurtures our present, and holds limitless possibilities for generations to come. ●

Centennial *continued from page 1*

The smiles were countless and the vibe energetic as people mingled, took photos, shared laughs and shared an experience they would not soon forget. A group of enthusiastic musicians even marched their way across the bridge, playing a selection of upbeat jazz tunes and joining Erick Haynie for a spontaneous concert. People danced, sang along and relished the moment, one which some had waited for their whole lives.

At noon the party shifted to Marina Green, where local food trucks, musicians, community partners and a timeline of WAAAM cars were ready to continue the celebration. United States Senator Ron Wyden, Washington State Senator Curtis King, White Salmon Mayor Marla Keethler and Oregon State Representative Jeff Helfrich spoke to the importance of the community connection the current bridge provides and the hard work The Port of Hood River and Hood River White Salmon Bridge Authority have done to secure funding for a new bridge.

With speeches over, the crowd danced to the tunes of Tony Smiley, while enjoying a piece of bridge birthday cake provided by the The History Museum of Hood River County. Museum entry was free for the day, with the community enjoying their latest exhibit "A New Avenue: Historic Photos of the Hood River Bridge." By three the party was winding down, but the elation of the day would not be forgotten. For one hundred years the Hood River White Salmon Bridge has connected us and strengthened the economies of our small rural towns. It has changed over the years, as all things do, and is showing its age as traffic increases and time marches on. But one day, in the not-so-distance future, the bridge will be gone, replaced by a new structure that will continue the legacy of community connection. And when that day comes, there will be conversations over local brews remembering the day they walked the old green bridge. ●

Art of Community



The Thinker

Art is all around us. In small scale, as postcards and stickers, to large murals, sculptures and architecture. Hood River specifically, does big art well, with large pieces dotted around the city's landscape that make up the Hood River BIG ART Outdoor Gallery. Consisting of 16 sculptures, you'll pass them downtown, walk by them on paths along the river, spy them at intersections and use them as directional landmarks, "I'll meet you at Frog beach!" This amazing outdoor gallery is brought to us by Art of Community, a local art-focused organization that the Port of Hood River has proudly sponsored and supported for over 10 years. Established in 2014, Art of Community has a vision to "Inspire community engagement and helps create a sense of place, awareness, optimism, discussion, and identity throughout the Gorge." The big art features are chosen by a panel of local artists, installed and enjoyed by the community on a two-year term. For the 2022-24 term the Port of Hood River sponsored two installations: "Inspiration" by Joseph Rastovich, and "Eggtimer" by Rodger Squirrell. The Port has also chosen to support local artists by purchasing sculptures to be permanently displayed and enjoyed by the community. You can find "The Thinker" by Ralph Tretheway, "N'Chi Wanapum" by Foster Kalama, and "Constellations" by CJ Rench on highly visited Port-owned properties along the waterfront. Pick a sunny day, grab a friend and e-bike and explore the Hood River BIG ART Outdoor Gallery, just one of the many beautiful and unique things about our community. For more information on Art of Community, to sponsor an artist, or find Port sponsored installations, visit art-of-community.com ●

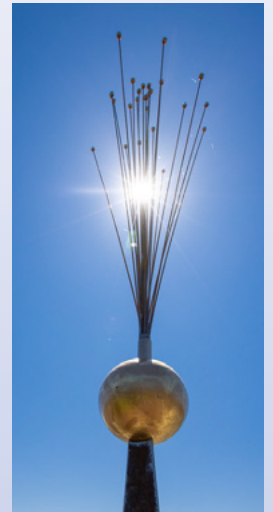


Egg Timer

For more information on Art of Community, to sponsor an artist, or find Port sponsored installations, visit art-of-community.com ●



Constellations



Inspiration



N'Chi Wanapum



Welcome to the Port team!

The Port of Hood River is happy to announce the addition of two new stellar employees to the Port team! Molly Harpel has taken on the role of Project Coordinator and Tylor Singleton has joined the facilities team as a Maintenance Supervisor. Please join us in welcoming them both to our beautiful community.



Meet Molly

Hailing from San Antonio, Texas, Molly Harpel has joined the team as our Project Coordinator. Having majored in Urban Studies, Molly has always been passionate about local government and the importance of community spaces. Having spent years working in the private sector as a Project Manager, Molly is excited about this unique opportunity to combine her skills and interests here at the Port. Molly is excited to learn more about Hood River, and the surrounding communities. She enjoys snowboarding, gardening, arts & crafts and playing the bass guitar. Her favorite season in the gorge so far has been summer, as she spends her time swimming and exploring the many beautiful water spots in the valley. After a day of adventure, Molly likes grabbing a bite to eat at the Mesquiteria.



Introducing Tylor

Tylor joins the Port as a Maintenance Supervisor. Raised in Stockton, California, Tylor found Hood River as many of us do, through falling in love. Led to Hood River by his wife, Tylor was excited to join the Port team and expand his knowledge and skills in his new role. With a love for exploring the great outdoors, the Columbia River Gorge is the perfect backdrop for his family adventures. Tylor's favorite season in the gorge is fall; he loves the colors and wearing hoodies. After a day adventuring with his wife and kids, Tylor would opt to grab dinner from either the Hood River Taqueria or Twin Peaks.

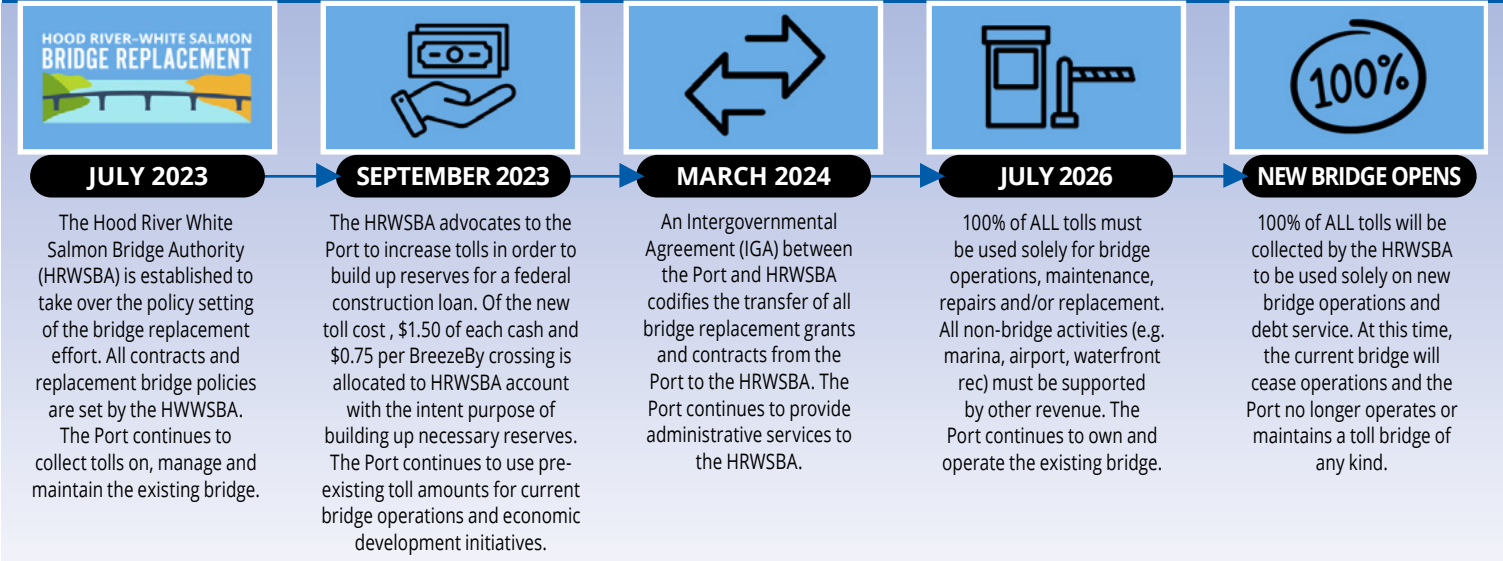
Seasons continued from page 1

conferences, doing research and discussing the issues that our fast-growing community faces and how the Port can handle it with grace and good financial stewardship.

The challenge that seasonal leadership faces is maintaining the continuity of ideas, vision and purpose. Each seated board has a focus that may not be the same as the previous administration, which can cause rebuilding, replacing and redeveloping to be slower and more complicated than the community at large realizes. Our current Commission is focused on ways to bring the Port alongside the community in a more positive and engaging way, building strong relationships with our constituents. We are doing this by supporting the Hood River White Salmon Bridge Authority to help secure funding for a new bridge, an enormous project that requires effort from both sides of the river. We are supporting local businesses by offering leased space in commercial buildings and dreaming of more programs and infrastructure to help new businesses take flight in the gorge. We are looking ahead to opportunities that the Ken Jernstedt airfield holds, as it sees an uptick in use and interest. And we are working to find ways to beautify, diversify, and make our recreational waterfront areas more accessible and sustainable as they become the focal point of summer adventures, and their use has increased substantially.

As the Port works through its seasons, as well as the changes in our once small and quiet town, I would like to take a moment to encourage you to try and view our civil servants and community volunteers as just that...servants and volunteers. These roles are not filled by power and money hungry corporate climbers, but rather the orchardist down the road, the business owner across the street, and the mom of your kid's friend. It can be easy to sit in the negativity of a project that doesn't seem to be moving, or a closure that causes an inconvenience, but it is imperative that as we move forward together into the next season, that we speak kindly, consider thoughtfully and be neighborly. "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose..." Join us at the Port of Hood River as we move into the next season and continue the Port's purpose. From the airport to the waterfront there is a place for you to roll up your sleeves and help guide the Port into future seasons. Stay up to date on board meetings through our website, email a commissioner with a thought or question, sign up for the Port newsletter and stay informed. We welcome you to join us and experience the seasons of the Port. ●

TIMELINE OF BRIDGE OPERATIONS



FAQ

There are many questions that the staff and Commissioners field both in person and online. In the next few issues of the newsletter, we will be answering some of the most common questions in hopes of adding clarity to the purpose and operations of the Port of Hood River.



What is a port district?

Port districts in Oregon function in a specialized role, assigned by state statute to function as government agencies that also focus on profit-making enterprises that support economic growth and opportunities. Port districts can borrow money, issue bonds, levy taxes and charge for services like many other special districts. Under Oregon law, port districts are allowed to make improvements to harbors and rivers, construct warehouses and other storage areas, operate airports and interstate bridges, construct and operate public marine facilities, and develop industrial parks.

How is the Port operated?

The Port is run by 5 elected board members, called Commissioners. These five members guide the Port on decisions that promote economic growth and recreation. All administrative, maintenance and bridge personnel work under the direct supervision of the Executive Director. The Executive Director then reports to the Commission on updates to policy, projects and day-to-day operations.

What taxes does the Port of Hood River collect?

A very small portion of the Port's revenue is collected through taxes. With the lowest tax rate in the district, just over three cents per \$1,000 of assessed value is collected by the Port annually, totaling \$95,634 in the last fiscal year.

How long has The Port of Hood River existed?

The Port of Hood River was established in 1933 as a result of the Bonneville Dam Project, with the vision and mission to initiate, promote and maintain a healthy economy and strong quality of life in the Port District.

How do you become a Port Commissioner?

If qualified to be a commissioner, delegates must be at least 18 years old, a registered voter and live within the Port of Hood River district. Individuals seeking a seat on the commission must run for the seat and be voted in by the residents of the Port of Hood River district.

How much are Commissioners paid?

Commissioners are paid \$100 each month.

How long do Commissioners serve?

Commissioners serve a 4-year term, that begins July 1 of the year elected.

How do we know what the Port is working on?

The Port Commission meets on the third Tuesday of each month in the Marina Center Boardroom at 1000 E. Port Marina Drive, Hood River, Oregon. Meetings are open to the public and can be viewed online on the Port of Hood River YouTube channel. You can view meeting packets at least 24 hours before each meeting.