

**MINUTES
PORT OF PEND OREILLE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
Date: April 11 2023**

Call to Order:

Chairman Kiss called the meeting of the Port of Pend Oreille Board of Commissioners to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Port office located at 1981 Black Road, Usk, Washington. In attendance: Chairman Kiss, Commissioner Gentle (arrived approximately 9:30 a.m.), Commissioner Peterson and Port staff members Kelly Driver, Susan Bluff, Corey Ives, and Myles Keogh. Also in attendance, Andy Armantrout with CR&NW LLC, Jamie Wyrobek with EDC, and Amy Sawyer with the Clean Energy Coalition. Port employee Tom Hardwick arrived at approximately 12:30 p.m.

For purposes of clarification, the minutes are presented as listed on the agenda, not necessarily in the order they were discussed.

Minutes:

Commissioner Peterson moved to approve the minutes of March 14, 2023 as presented. Motion seconded and so ordered by Chairman Kiss.

Comments: None

Correspondence: Thank you from the Cusick American Legion Auxiliary. Two (2) requests to purchase the Port's outstanding debt from the Ponderay Newsprint Bankruptcy, one from Argo Partners and another from JM Investment Trust were discussed. General consensus was to deny both offers.

Old Business:

1. Wolfred Property:

A. Discussion: Kelly and Corey met with Steve Delong from Vaagen Brothers and signed the timber contract. Logging is to be completed by the end of July.

As a courtesy, Kelly informed an adjoining property owner of the logging activity that will take place later in the year. As a result of that correspondence, Mr. Hunt met with Kelly and discussed the possibility of purchasing the one (1) acre parcel that is on the northeast side of Highway 20, along Yergens Road. Discussion followed.

B. Action: The Board felt that it would be best to hold on to the one (1) acre portion of the property in case there is a need for road widening or other unforeseeable issues. Kelly will inform Mr. Hunt.

2. Policy 1503:

A. Discussion: Kelly presented the clean copy of Policy 1503 for approval.

B. Action: Commissioner Peterson made a motion to approve policy 1503 as presented. Motion seconded and so ordered by Chairman Kiss.

3. FTZ:

A. Discussion: Kelly discussed general information on the FTZ and stated she has sent questions to the FTZ Board for clarification. Questions included whether a zone can be set up as County wide or if specific sites must be approved, if tenants must be found prior to setting up a zone, and other questions. She is still waiting for a response and will keep all informed when the information is received. Mr. Armantrout offered his assistance as may be needed.

4. Other Old Business:

None at this time.

New Business:

1. Grant Writer:

A. Discussion: Kelly proposed that if the Board were going to hire a grant writer that her preference, after four (4) interviews, is to go with Libby Ogard from Prime Focus LLC. Additional discussion included costs and types of funding as well as preliminary planning the Port needs to get done before engaging her services. The grant writer would be used for the large robust grants such as CRISI, the Port can still apply for smaller State grants. There is a great deal of preliminary work that needs to be completed before getting a grant writer involved.

B. Action: The Board agreed to contract with Libby Ogard from Prime Focus LLC as the Port's grant writer and instructed Kelly to follow up regarding more planning.

2. Personnel Policy – Step Program Changes:

A. Discussion: Due to raises provided to staff effective January 1, 2023, the Step Program Ranges needed to be updated in the Port policy. Kelly and Corey provided suggested changes to the Board.

B. Action: Commissioner Peterson moved to approve the changes as recommended. Motion seconded by Commissioner Gentle, so ordered by Chairman Kiss.

3. Salary Schedule:

A. Discussion: An updated salary schedule, including new personnel, was provided to the Board.

B. Action: Based on staff recommendations, Commissioner Gentle moved to approve the Salary Schedule as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Peterson, so ordered by Chairman Kiss.

4. Town of Ione Land Lease renewal:

A. Discussion: The Town of Ione has requested an extension of their current land lease for an additional five (5) years.

B. Action: Commissioner Peterson moved to approve the land lease extension. Commissioner Gentle seconded the motion, so ordered by Chairman Kiss.

5. Jackson Property Road Easement :

A. Discussion: Staff reported on property that has recently been listed for sale near Ashenfelter Bay. This parcel, listed as Jackson Living Trust, has no direct access as North Union Street is not a legal city street; only a few private homes and is used by the City of Newport have authorization to use the road. One (1) real estate developer has already backed out due to the access issues and development would require two (2) ingress/egress locations.

B. Action: None necessary at this time.

6. CEC Presentation:

A. Discussion: Jamie Wyrobek and Amy Sawyer gave a presentation on CEC current activities. They are looking to build partnerships, communicate regularly with multiple entities as well as keep the public informed on their efforts and progress toward improving infrastructure, recruiting potential manufacturing companies in our County, apprenticeship programs and other opportunities that may be available through grants.

B. Action: The Board thanked them for their work and for the presentation.

7. Other New Business:

A. Merry-Go-Round:

1. Discussion: Chairman Kiss presented a request for the Port to paint a Merry-Go-Round for the Town of Metaline as a public relations benefit.

2. Action: Commissioner Gentle moved to approve the painting of the Merry-Go-Round as a public relations benefit for the Port. Motion seconded by Commissioner Peterson, so ordered by Chairman Kiss.

Board Travel Plans/Meetings:

April/May Meeting- Attendance/Authorizations:

A. Discussion: Commissioner Gentle will be attending the EDC meeting next week.

B. Action: Meeting approved.

Reports:

1. Board of Commissioners:

Commissioner Gentle reported on CEC efforts; the individuals working on this committee are all volunteers. They are currently working to get a Scope of Work written for the County.

2. Manager, Kelly Driver:

- Four (4) new employees are at work.
- Multi-residential crossing finalized.
- Real Estate matter for executive session.
- Website issues are causing major problems. Exbabylon is trying to fix but nothing is holding; the website is down more than it is working. She is working with the County to see if we can contract with them for website and IT services.

3. Railroad Operations Manager, Corey Ives:

- Car repairs for the month of March were \$ 14,766.67
- Information on equipment repairs.
- Rockslides caused freight operations to be delayed for one (1) day. He had to hire an excavator to move some large boulders.
- Provided Ponderay Industries with an updated track quote.
- He had to be on site for a tow truck on tracks pulling out a car out of the snow. The car was not on the tracks but to pull it out, the tow truck would be.
- Hazard trees will need to be cut at Laclede.

4. Auditor – Susan Bluff:

- Distributed financial report and storage car information for the month ending March 31, 2023.
- Provided a shop projects spreadsheet showing billed projects for January through part of April.

5. Chief Mechanical Officer-Myles Keogh:

- Current projects include:
 - An engine replacement and two (2) locomotives with bad cranks.
 - One (1) locomotive is complete, needs BNSF inspection.
 - Has 16 painting projects lined up.
- Upcoming projects:
 - Two (2) locomotives for wheel change out and paint.