

**MINUTES
PORT OF PEND OREILLE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
Date: March 12, 2024**

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 Peterson (via Zoom) and Port staff members Kelly Driver, Susan Bluff, Corey Ives, Myles Keogh, Jessica Garza, Sarah Reaveley (via Zoom), also ERC team member Jim Cupples. Also, in attendance John Janney PUD General Manager, Sonya Scaufaire Selkirk Sun editor and BAT member.

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 February 13 and 16, 2024. Motion seconded by and so ordered by Chairman Kiss.

Comments: None.

Correspondence: None

Broadband Discussion: Jim began the discussion by providing information on his assignment to the Port and TEDD under the Economic Recovery Corps. He will work 20 hours per week with the Port and 20 hours per week with TEDD. Some work may be remote. He attended a grants workshop in Washington DC and received training from ERC as well. He will be working on broadband with the PUD, BAT and Noa Net in Pend Oreille County. Jim is also working with Pend Oreille County's GIS team, the local schools, and the library district to get information out to the public on the need to challenge current coverage data.

John Janney discussed fiber needs, especially in the north county, the PUD is looking for grants for extending coverage. There are two main grants; Reconnect is a more challenging grant and 10 states are favored in that grant. The BEAD grant provides \$1.2 billion to Washington State and is based on upload and download speeds.

Sonya Scaufaire discussed the long-standing BAT group. She would like to see the Port take on the BAT as well as applying for infrastructure grants as part of the ADO functions. She will provide information on BAT to John, Jim, and Kelly. She indicated she is done volunteering for this group but would be willing to contract as needed.

John Janney indicated he feels it is more appropriate for the PUD to take over the BAT as it is in line with their scope of work. The Port may be able to provide some assistance in addition to Jim working with them on the Port's behalf. The Kalispel Tribe's need for broadband was also discussed.

Old Business:

1. Architect and Engineer Contract:

A. **Discussion:** Myles stated MMEC has obtained information from ALSC from when the south end shop was built. MMEC is working on potential design and site locations.

2. ADO Updates:

A. Discussion: Kelly and Jessica discussed multiple items:

- Name change from EDC. Options were discussed with Port Economic Development Advisory Committee (PEDAC) being the preferred name.
- Welcome to Pend Oreille County signs, located at Tiger and the Pend Oreille County line on Highway 2. A request to move these from the EDC to Port ownership will be made at the March 20th EDC meeting.
- The need for Mission and Visions statements as the ADO. Staff will work on these for the April meeting.
- Memberships as the ADO. WEDA – Washington Economic Development Association is for ADO's and does lobbying on behalf of ADOs, the Newport Chamber of Commerce and PORTA. Membership with WEDA will be started as soon as possible. Jessica will attend a Newport Chamber of Commerce meeting for more information. Staff will work on obtaining more information from PORTA as well.
- Sponsorships were discussed for the ADO operations. Use of Commerce and/or .09 funds have specific requirements for use. Each request for sponsorship will be looked at on a case-by-case basis.
- Marketing for tourism and business recruitment were discussed. Marketing with a third party was debated; this will be discussed more as the Port becomes more fully engaged with Commerce.
- Bylaws will be discussed with the (EDC) PEDAC group at the March 20th meeting. Included in this discussion were membership dues. The end result of the discussion was, at least for the first year, there would be no membership dues.
- Strategic planning with the PEDAC group is necessary for an entity applying for .09 funds from the County.
- Membership dues were a part of the EDC group, but the Board is opposed to a dues structure for now. The Board would rather reach out to the group if there was a specific project that needed assistance from some or all.
- Hotel/Motel funding may be an option for tourism events. Staff will look into this more.

The County still has not provided a contract for discussion.

B. Action: Commissioner Peterson made a motion to change the name from EDC to Port Economic Development Advisory Committee, for staff to provide mission and vision statement options at the April Board meeting, to allow the transfer of the Welcome to Pend Oreille County signs and utility costs to the Port, and to join WEDA for ADO projects. Motion seconded and so ordered by Chairman Kiss.

3. Newport Property:

A. Discussion: The RFP for Asbestos Abatement work has been sent to four companies. The estimate for this work is under \$50,000 so a formal bid was not necessary. Kyron, as our asbestos training company, will provide oversight and review of the bids. Bids are due April 1st at 1:00 p.m. There is a mandatory walk-through meeting on March 18th from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

4. Other Old Business:

A. Wolfred Property Cleanup

1. Discussion: Staff reported Big Foot Trucking is at the Wolfred property with their grinder doing cleanup for Avista.

New Business:

1. Personnel Policy Change:

A. Discussion: Tabled until the April 2024 meeting.

B. Action: Not applicable.

2. Salary Schedule Update:

A. Discussion: Kelly provided an updated salary schedule for approval.

B. Action: Commissioner Peterson moved to approve the revised salary schedule. Motion seconded and so ordered by Chairman Kiss.

3. County IT Assistance Contract:

A. Discussion: Kelly provided a draft agreement with the County for IT services on an as-needed basis. She indicated a change for signatures needed to be made before signing but asked for any questions.

B. Action: None necessary until changes are made.

4. Website

A. Discussion: Jessica presented options on a new Port logo, as well as potential website design options. She has pulled information from the EDC website for use as may be necessary for Port use for economic development. Conversation continued regarding EDC ownership of videos and pictures.

She will also work on social media presence options for Facebook and Instagram as well as Pinterest. Social media can be used for press releases too.

B. Action: Not applicable.

5. Broadband Action Team Appointment:

A. Discussion: Port representation on the Broadband Action Team (BAT) is important. Kelly recommended the Board appoint Jim Cupples, the Port's ERC team member, to represent the Port at these meetings.

B. Action: Commissioner Peterson moved to approve appointing Jim as the Port's representative and to report back to the Board at monthly meetings. Motion seconded and so ordered by Chairman Kiss.

6. Port/PUD/County Meeting:

A. Discussion: The Pend Oreille County Representatives meeting will be held on March 21st at the PUD office beginning at 9:00 a.m. Chairman Kiss will be in attendance for the Port, Kelly and Jessica will also attend.

7. Other New Business:

A. Emergency Services:

1. Discussion: As previously reported to the Board, staff had to call for emergency pumping of the sewer due to a back-up into the shop facilities. The back-up was in Port owned equipment, not Cusick's sewer system.

Board Travel Plans/Meetings:

March/April Meetings- Attendance/Authorizations:

A. Discussion: Commissioner Gentle may attend the March EDC meeting. Chairman Kiss will represent the Port at any ADO contract meetings.

B. Action: General consensus for meeting attendance.

Reports:

1. Board of Commissioners:

- No report

2. Executive Director, Kelly Driver:

- The EDC office is officially closed; the mail is also being redirected to the Port office.
- Continuing to attend Usk Sub area planning meetings.
- Attended a meeting with Chairman Kiss at the County office regarding the .09 contract with the County.
- Staff members completed first aid training.
- She met with John Janney at the PUD office.
- After attending multiple webinars on new regulations on small works roster requirements as well as bidding requirements she is looking at, and will probably suggest, that the Port contract with MRSC for both services.
- She and Myles met with representatives regarding possible hydrogen locomotives.
- Attending required LEPC meetings to update the County Hazard Mitigation plan.
- Jessica on board as of March 1, working with her to move forward with the ADO matters.

3. Railroad Operations Manager, Corey Ives:

- Car repairs for February were approximately \$12,000.
- Crews are continuing with brush cutting in Sub 3.
- Crews are also working on the sinkhole location.
- He ordered a carload of railroad ties.
- He commended Mike Walker and Nathan Coston for the work they did on completing the changes to the boardroom with short notice.

4. Auditor – Susan Bluff:

- Distributed the financial report for the year ending February 29, 2024, as well as storage car information. She indicated bills for shop projects have been sent out so the next financial report will show higher shop revenues.

5. Chief Mechanical Officer-Myles Keogh:

- The shop crews continue to work on multiple locomotives.
- He is working with MMEC on the shop expansion project.

6. Grant Writer – Sarah Reaveley:

- The Port's grant for SSFI funding was declined. It will reopen in July. She will check to see if they will provide information on why our project was not funded.
- She looked into an industrial site readiness grant. The Port does not qualify as it requires a minimum of 50-acre parcels.
- RAISE grant for \$11.5 million was submitted at the end of February.
- EDA grant for \$12 million, including \$50,000 for additional planning, will be submitted by March 26th. Notice of funding will be determined at the end of June; there is another round in October.
- CRISI grants open in April.
- Additional grant opportunities were discussed.

7. Economic Development Director – Jessica Garza:

- She had a Zoom meeting with the Department of Commerce and will continue to have weekly meetings with them until the ADO paperwork is complete.
- Working on launching a new website, social media options and tourism ideas.
- She attended a County Commissioner meeting in Metaline with Kelly where the Teck Cominco Mine property, including potential marketing of the property, was discussed.
- She met with representatives of Merkle Standard and toured their business as well as the greenhouses on site.
- She did an interview with the Journal of Business regarding her appointment as the Economic Development Director.
- She will set up meetings with TEDD and Greater Spokane Incorporated.
- She will be attending a meeting on small business matters in Spokane later today.

8. Economic Recovery Corps – Jim Cupples:

- See information under Broadband Discussion.

Records for Approval:

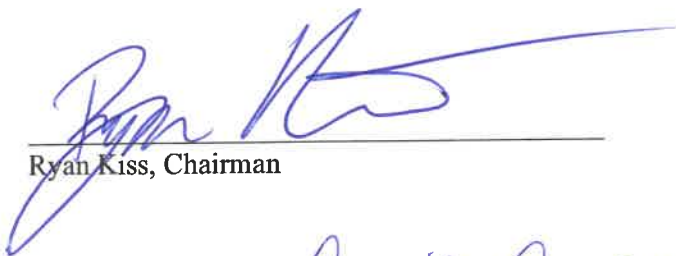
A. Time and Expense Sheets: Tabled until April meeting.

B. Warrants: Operating Expense warrants 52861-53116 totaling \$572,962.22 tabled until April meeting.

Executive Session: At 11:50 a.m. Chairman Kiss recessed the regular meeting to convene in executive session regarding a real estate matter (RCW 42.30.110(b)) and a personnel matter (RCW 42.30.110(g)) both matters were expected to take approximately 5 minutes total. At 11:55 a.m. Chairman Kiss brought the meeting back to regular sessions, stating no decisions were made in executive session.

No final action was taken.

Adjourn: There being no further business Chairman Kiss adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.



Ryan Kiss, Chairman



Kelly J. Driver, Executive Director

Date Approved:

April 9, 2024