

MINUTES
PORT OF PEND OREILLE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
Date: January 14, 2025

Call to Order:

Chair 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: Chair Kiss, Commissioner Gentle, Commissioner Peterson, and Port staff members Kelly Driver, Susan Bluff, Corey Ives, Jessica Garza, Tara Bowden, and Sarah Reaveley (via Zoom).

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

Minutes:

Discussion was held regarding the Pend Oreille Representatives meeting and associated minutes from December 11, 2024, there were no exceptions noted. Commissioner Peterson moved to approve the minutes of the Port's December 20, 2024 as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Gentle and so ordered by Chair Kiss.

Comments: Kelly introduced Tara Bowden to the Board.

Correspondence: None.

Surplus Property bids: No bids were received on the Clark Forklift. The forklift will be disposed of due to mechanical issues and potential liabilities with the lifting mechanism.

Old Business:

1. Website:

A. Discussion: Kelly and Jessica met with Keokee to discuss ideas for the website, and the type of audience we are trying to reach. Another meeting is scheduled for January 17th.

2. Employee Safety Dinner:

A. Discussion: Kelly has reserved the Cusick American Legion for March 8th from 4 to 11 p.m. Menu ideas were discussed.

3. WCCN Grant Salary Discussion:

A. Discussion: One employee has been hired under the WCCN grant. He will begin his apprenticeship as soon as his pre-employment physical and drug testing is completed. As per the WCCN grant there is a range of pay up to \$25.00 per hour without the option for benefits. Staff recommended \$23.00 per hour.

B. Action: Commissioner Peterson made a motion to approve the recommended \$23.00 per hour rate. Motion seconded by Commissioner Gentle, so ordered by Chair Kiss.

4. Other Old Business:

A. Port Property Priorities:

1. Discussion: The Commissioners and staff discussed plans for moving forward on the Wolfred Industrial Park, the Hotel site, and the shop. There was also discussion regarding the Port's property in Ione as well as 2025 grant funding opportunities.

New Business:

1. IRS Mileage Rate:

A. Discussion: The IRS has updated the reimbursable mileage rate to 70 cents per mile. Discussion followed.

B. Action: Commissioner Peterson moved to approve the change in the mileage rate to 70 cents per mile, retroactive to January 1, 2025. Motion seconded by Commissioner Gentle, so ordered by Chair Kiss.

2. 2024 Accident Report Review:

A. Discussion: As per requirements by the FRA and OSHA, Kelly presented the 2024 Accident information to the Board.

B. Action: No action required. The document is posted on the bulletin board as required.

3. Port Grant Writer Services:

A. Discussion: A request was received regarding applying for the Strategic Reserve Fund Grant. In checking into this, Jessica found that this is a grant that the Port is required to submit on behalf of the applicant. The grant must be front funded by the company, who then submits documentation to the Port, for reimbursement which is made by the Department of Commerce. Additional information has been requested on this grant and the process. Staff will meet with the interested party after receiving information from Commerce and may write the grant.

4. Other New Business:

A. PUD Letter of Support BEAD Grant Application:

1. Discussion: Kelly presented a letter of support for the PUD to include with its BEAD grant application.

2. Action: Commissioner Gentle made a motion to approve the letter of support. Motion seconded by Commissioner Peterson, so ordered by Chair Kiss.

B. Policy 5005 Revision:

1. Discussion: Kelly and Corey brought recommended changes to policy 5005, regarding crossing fees, to the Board for discussion.

2. Action: Commissioner Peterson moved to approve the policy as amended. Motion seconded by Commissioner Gentle, so ordered by Chair Kiss.

Board Travel Plans/Meetings:

January/February. Meetings- Attendance/Authorizations:

A. Discussion: No planned meetings.

Reports:

1. Board of Commissioners:

- Commissioner Gentle reported on the Pend Oreille Representatives meeting hosted by the PUD on December 11. The standard agenda was helpful in keeping the meeting on track. Main topics were legislative issues and the BEAD grant.
- Commissioner Gentle will not be in attendance for meetings for the month of February.

2. Executive Director, Kelly Driver:

- A one-year contract which deals with web hosting, cloud management and cybersecurity has been signed with Exbabylon. In addition, the current firewall is out of date so this will be changed in January for additional fees.
- Surveying information of the Wolfred Industrial Park should be completed soon. With that a boundary line adjustment can be made and rezoned to R5 for all properties.

- One employee for the WCCN grant will start this month. The shop position for this grant remains open.
- An MOU was drawn up and reviewed by our attorney for the grant assistance provided by the Port's Assistant Grant Writer, Tara Bowden. It was also sent to the County, and reviewed by Prosecuting Attorney, Dolly Hunt so it can be ready to be used without delays if grant opportunities are found that will help the County.
- The FRA will be conducting three separate audits. One on signals and Emergency Notification Systems, a Hearing Audit, and a Bridge Inspection Audit within the next four to six weeks.

3. Railroad Operations Manager, Corey Ives:

- Car Repairs for December were around \$15,000 and approximately \$171,000 for the year.
- Crews are cutting brush and tightening bolts.
- He is working with car storage brokers on potential storage opportunities.
- Vegetation management bids will be requested soon which will include an alternative for drone spraying for inaccessible areas.
- Working on efficiency testing.
- There are some on-going car issues between BNSF and Stimson that POVA is working to resolve.

4. Auditor – Susan Bluff:

- Susan provided budget status report information for the year ending December 31, 2024 for the Port and ADO. Items were discussed in detail with the Board.
- Shop project sheets and storage car information were also shared.

5. Chief Mechanical Officer-Myles Keogh:

- Absent

6. Grant Writer – Sarah Reaveley:

- Provided information on grants she is currently working on.
- She is working with Tara to get her comfortable with grant applications.
- Tara reported she will be reaching out to local government entities and 501C3 organizations to introduce herself and to set up meetings to talk about their needs and priorities.

7. Economic Development Director – Jessica Garza:

- The County Commissioners signed the contract amendment which will allow the Port to use the .09 funds for infrastructure as well as personnel. The Department of Commerce contract budget items are being amended to primarily be used for personnel.
- She attended the County Commissioner meeting where they discussed personal and board goals for 2025, TEDD meeting, North Pend Oreille Chamber meeting where she introduced Tara.
- The Newport Gala event is being held Feb. 8th she asked the Board if they would allow the Port to buy a table. The Board felt this was an appropriate use of ADO funds. Jessica, Tara, and Kelly will attend, and she will reach out to others as well to be a part of the Port's table.
- The Greater Newport Area Chamber of Commerce is on an upswing, all positions are filled, and more members are joining.
- WEDA dues have been paid for 2025, she will be attending a WEDA meeting in Olympia in early February.
- She is working on an event for March for business-to-business contacts.
- Discussion was held on the EDAC membership list; she will provide a list to the Board in February.

Records for Approval:

A. Time and Expense Sheets: Approved as submitted. .

B. Warrants: Operating Expense warrants 54108-54164 totaling \$140,250.86 and ADO warrants 2567-2576 totaling \$21,547.72 were approved as submitted..

Board Workshop: None held.

Executive Session: None held

Adjourn: There being no further business Chairman Kiss adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

		
<u>Ryan Kiss, Chair</u>	<u>Kelly J. Driver, Executive Director</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>