

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Port of Whitman County

Date: 07/01/21

Observer Reporting: Carolyn Joswig-Jones

Length of Meeting: 60"

Members Present/Absent:

Commissioners: Karl Webber (District 1)
Kristine Meyer (District 2)
Tom Kammerzell (District 3)

Staff:

Joe Poire - Executive Director (ED) Brenda Stav - Finance Director
Kara Riebold - Chief Operating Officer (COO) ~~Sarah Highfield~~ - Communications Director
Debbie Snell - Properties & Development Manager
Seth Woolson / ~~Frank Chmelik~~ - counsel from Chmelik, Sitkin & Davis Attorneys at Law

WPPA (Washington Public Port Association)
POWBAC (Port of Whitman Business Air Center – airport in Colfax)
PIP (Pullman Industrial Parks East and West)
PNWA (Pacific Northwest Waterways Association)
NWRP (Northwest River Partners)
SWEDA (Southeast Washington Economic Development Association)
USACE (United State Army Corps of Engineers)
RCW (Revised Code of WA)
Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB)

Business pertaining to League Positions or topics of interest: (See below for full report of meeting)

- Boyer Park Marina is getting their docks in tip-top shape.
- Port and County working together on a road project at the Port of Wilma.
- The Port staff is studying possible land transfer concepts to obtain the Central Ferry North HMU land.
- Strategic Planning meeting has been moved to August 19th following the regular commission meeting.

To view Meeting Agenda, Minutes and all supportive materials follow this link:

<https://portwhitman-web.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/meetings/agendas/2021-07-01/2021-07-01%20Agenda.pdf>

Port of Whitman County Commissioners Meeting took place via **Zoom and teleconference**.

The commissioners, Director Poire, were together in conference room all wearing masks. Port staff, if in the office were behind closed doors or remote.

Commissioner and Staff Updates:

Commissioner Webber said Port is to host Pioneer Ports Commission meeting in person and they need to find a place. Director Poire reported that he had a meeting with Idaho Conservation League and talked about reshaping the river system and what that might look like. Commissioner Kammerzell spoke of the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force* which he described its members as being “loaded” with environmentalists and tribal members but “no users.”

OLD BUSINESS:

RCO Boating Facilities Grant Update

Port has a good chance of being awarded Boating Facilities (BFP) Grant through the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) being 6th on the list – to be announced on June 30th, 2021. This grant is for some of the docks to be replaced at Boyer Park. The commission passed a motion to allow staff to execute the grant contract for construction in anticipation of receiving the grant.

Boyer Park Dock Rehabilitation Project

Mott MacDonald, Collins Engineering and Pressler Engineering drafted a Conditions Report for rehabilitation of some of the Boyer Park docks. The cost for this project has gone up to \$1,321,000 due to COVID related supply chain increases. This project will be bid in tandem with the dock replacement project to have one contractor managing the marina upgrades. The detailed report with photos can be seen in the meeting agenda and supportive material using the link above.

Fly Washington Passport Program

Commission approved the Port to participate in the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Fly Washington Passport Program. The Port will put up a mailbox out at POWBAC in which a stamp would reside for pilots to access and stamp their Fly Washington Passport. Participants earn levels of recognition and prizes as they explore the airports of Washington State. A map of participating airports is included in the meeting agenda and supportive material using the link above.

Wilma Road Project

The commission approved and signed the Port of Wilma Road Project Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Whitman County. The Port was awarded a grant/loan for the project and the county will provide match. The project estimated at \$1,600,297.

CERB (Community Economic Revitalization Board) Broadband Application Resolution

Commission approved to authorize the CERB funding.

NEW BUSINESS:

FAA American Rescue Plan Act 2021 (Public Law 117-2) (ARPA) Grant

Commission authorized Port staff to execute a grant application for funds under the American Rescue Plan Act. This FAA grant is for \$22,000 and may be used to offset maintenance contract costs at the Port of Whitman Business Air Center. This may be the last of the no-match/100% grants available.

New Lease Terms – Rent Redeterminations and Port Improvements

Commission approved the staff proposed new rent redetermination practices for new Port tenants and existing Port tenants whose leases are expiring. Commission approved a simple 7% interest rate for tenants who choose to make payments over time for the cost of Port improvements.

Central Ferry North Habitat Management Unit (HMU)

The commissioners and staff have worked in strategic planning the past few years studying the USA Corps of Engineering owned property at Central Ferry (Central Ferry North HMU). The Port staff is studying possible land transfer concepts to obtain the Central Ferry North HMU land. This will be placed on the Strategic Planning agenda now scheduled to follow the regular commission meeting on August 19th.

Strategic Planning Agenda (July 26)

Strategic Planning meeting has been moved to August 19th following the regular commission meeting.

Upcoming Meetings

- WA Public Ports Association Directors Seminar, July 7-8, Alderbrook Resort, Union, WA and Virtual.
- Washington Public Ports Association Commissioner Seminar, July 20, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Virtual

Additional Comments/Opinions:

**I called the Port office and spoke with Debbie Snell, Properties & Development Manager, as I had a few questions about some meeting details I was missing. She didn't have the answers but is so pleasant to talk with anyway. She assured me that they are there to serve the public and she is always happy to help. She gave me Commissioner Kammerzell's phone numbers to get an answer to one of my questions.*

I called Commissioner Kammerzell to get the name of the organization he was talking about not having enough river user representatives. He didn't know exactly the name but as we talked, and I googled, we came up with the group he was referring to - Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force. From their website "NOAA Fisheries and its Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC) convened the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (Partnership) in 2017, bringing together diverse representatives from across the Columbia Basin to establish a common vision and goals for the Columbia Basin and its salmon and steelhead. The diverse group of parties on the Partnership includes Columbia Basin tribes; fishing, agriculture, conservation, river transportation, port, and hydropower interests; and the states of Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Oregon."

Commissioner Kammerzell, after I explained what we do as an Observer Core since he asked, suggested that we make more efforts to let people know that we have a "one stop shop" where we summarize public meetings because he didn't know that we do that. He also remembers all the past observers that attended the Port meetings. He said hands down, the candidate forums are the best thing that we do and that the forums have always been well run all the way back to the bird watching woman, he couldn't remember her name – Alice. 😊