

## League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

**Name of Agency:** Port of Whitman County

**Date:** 10/07/21

**Observer Reporting:** Carolyn Joswig-Jones

**Length of Meeting:** 1' 30"

**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 Calvin Johanson - Special Projects  
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)

- Greenhouse Gas Policy adopted – a strategy to manage and reduce energy and fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Executive Director Selection Discussion – Ms Riebold interim ED Jan-June 2022
- Commissioner District Boundary Lines – public hearing scheduled for December 20
- Port Recognition for “fiber-to-the-home project” from Department of Commerce

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

<https://portwhitman-web.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/meetings/agendas/2021-10-07/2021-10-07%20Agenda.pdf>

The commissioners and staff met in person at the Port office for the meeting.  
They had masks on for the meeting.

**Commissioner and Staff Updates:**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Resolution 21-11 Greenhouse Gas Policy**

A draft policy was presented last meeting and was adopted by the commission today without changes. This policy is “required for the Port’s current application for capital funds from the Public Works Board.”

**Executive Director Selection Discussion**

Commissioner Kammerzell stated that it is a “pivotal time” for the Port in finding a replacement for the retiring ED. He said it is “best for the citizens and the Port” to have an “open and comprehensive process” to find the “very best.”

Commissioner Webber said that “the Port is on the right track” and he is opposed to taking the search outside when “we have a qualified candidate” for the “highest probability for success for the Port.”

Commissioner Meyer mentioned that the Port went through a professional process to review the comprehensive scheme / pros and cons for an open search. She stated she is opposed to an open search and is in favor of an interim experience.

**The original motion was voted 1 for and 2 against having an outside search.**

There was a new motion made to have **Ms Kara Riebold be the interim ED for 6 months**, January to June 2022. 2 votes for, one vote against. Ms Riebold will be interim ED.

### **Fueling Station Project 2022 – POWBAC**

A motion was made and passed to “include \$100,000 in the Port capital budget for engineering, earthwork, and seismically compliant concrete pad for the proposed fueling station at POWBAC.”

### **Boyer Dock Replacement & Repair Project Update**

Approved Mott MacDonald amended contract for dock replacement project, additional 10%.

Approved a “contract to relocate resident house boats from the marina and temporarily store them in the dry boat storage area.”

### **Non-Exclusive Rail Spur License**

Approved the execution of the Non-Exclusive Rail Spur License agreement between the Port of Whitman County and the Great Northwest Railroad.

**2020 Audit Report** – full report is available in the Port’s agenda/supportive material using link above.

“Audit Highlights:

The Port has good processes in place to ensure its financial data is fairly presented in all material respects.

We appreciate the Port’s professionalism and timely responses to our audit requests.”

### **Commissioner District Boundary Lines Project Update**

“The Whitman County Auditor provided the Port with the following update regarding Commissioner District Boundary Lines.”

“Greetings-

I just wanted to give you a heads up that we will soon be receiving the 2020 Census data, which means we will be looking at potentially adjusting the three Whitman County Commissioner District Boundary Lines. This happens every ten years, as required by RCW and the adjustments are made based on our best attempt to equalize the population in each district. Since the Port Commissioner district boundary lines mirror the Commissioner district boundary lines, I wanted to let you know. As soon as a draft of the new boundary lines is completed, it will be posted on our county website. A public hearing with the BoCC is scheduled for December 20, 2021 to review these adjustments. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Art Swannack, Chair of the Board of County Commissioners or me.

Sincerely,

Sandy Jamison

Whitman County Auditor”

### **Fiber to the Home Update**

“In telecommunications, Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU) is the effective long-term lease (temporary ownership) of a portion of the capacity of an international cable.” - definition

The Port signed an IRU with Zipy for the Fiber to the Home Project. There were some misunderstandings and the use of fiber plan had to be clarified in that the fiber work is to be open access, open to any providers and free for the Port’s use. Rosalia’s launch for fiber was “less than optimal” and had to be terminated. After a letter from the Port’s attorney, Zipy stated that it was “important to get it right,” and they are working with the Port to get things back on track. The fiber launch in Palouse is set for about Oct 15<sup>th</sup>.

Ms Riebold was credited with smoothing over these unforeseen issues.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **2022 Snake River Family Festival Date Selection**

Proposed festival date of June 11, 2022, after school lets out for the summer.

#### **Port of Whitman County Recognition from Department of Commerce**

“Dr. Lisa Brown, Director of Washington State Department of Commerce, gave a roundtable update to Washington Public Ports Association members on September 28. In it, she featured the Port of Whitman County and neighboring port district, Port of Garfield County—which received assistance from Petrichor Broadband, LLC in their latest fiber-to-the-home project—as models for broadband deployment in Washington State.

The Port is thankful for the recognition and good rapport with the Department of Commerce and looks forward to a continued partnership to bring broadband to underserved areas of the County and State.”

#### **Sponsorship – Washington Airport Passport Program**

“The Port of Whitman Business Air Center has recently joined the Washington Airport Passport Program.” Commission approved a motion to sponsor the program at the \$500 level.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

- PNWA Annual Convention, 10/19-21/21, Vancouver, WA
- WPPA Small Ports Meeting, 10/21-22/21, Leavenworth, WA
- WPPA Finance & Administration Seminar and Annual Meeting, 12/1-3/21, Bellevue, WA