

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Port of Whitman County

Date: 10/15/20

Observer Reporting: Carolyn Joswig-Jones

Length of Meeting: 3' 22"

Members Present/Absent:

(with 10 and 25 min break)

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

Staff:

Joe Poire - Executive Director
Kara Riebold - Chief Operating Officer
Debbie Snell - Properties & Development Manager

Brenda Stav - Finance Director
Sarah Highfield - Communications Director
~~Matthew Johnson - Port Attorney~~

Others Present (i.e., media, public):

Hailey Lewis – SEL Governmental Relations?
Frank Chmelik – WPPA counsel called in towards end of meeting

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)

Business pertaining to League Positions or topics of interest:

(See below for full report of meeting)

- New commissioner, Karl Webber, news release attached below. (Not part of the meeting/additional info.)
- “Port of Whitman County aims to turn WSU steam plant into business tech center” article in Moscow-Pullman Daily News Oct 6th. (Not part of the meeting/additional info.)
- WSDOT to support equity in broadband access in Washington by giving people more choices / Petrichor Broadband fiber to the home project.
- The Port continues with fiber extensions crucial for businesses and residents in rural areas with funding asks and design plans in the works.
- Boyer Park campground (mostly always fully booked), the grill and store are achieving high standards. Onsite managers are doing a great job. Grill and store to close Nov 1st for the season.
- Port Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements and Report Card are coming along wonderfully thanks to Ms Highfield work on this project. Plan was reviewed on Monday Oct 5th and a draft was available through google share. The final draft will be available for public review starting Oct 19th. A public hearing will take place during the Commission’s November 5 meeting. Public meeting input will be discussed and incorporated into the plans during the Commission’s November 19 meeting. The plans will be adopted by the Commission December 8th.
- Land Transfer with Army Corps
- Updating Recreation and Tourism policy
- Port and County Commission cost sharing on Port of Wilma road work project

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

<http://www.portwhitman.com/about/commissionmeeting>

To view the Port meeting calendar:

http://www.portwhitman.com/pdf/Port_Calendar_2020.01.01-2020.06.30_Revised.pdf

The wording in these reports are a combination of copied and pasted items from the Port's agenda and supported material and hearsay listening in on the meetings.

Port of Whitman County Commissioners Meeting took place via **Zoom and teleconference**. Participation can be online, phone, or a combination of both. The commissioners and some staff are present with masks and are socially distanced. Public may not meet in person and are muted during the meeting except during public comment periods at the beginning and before the end of the meeting.

Commissioner Kammerzell ran the meeting.

Commissioner and Staff Updates:

Commissioner Kammerzell reported going to the **Carbon policy WPPA meeting** where there have been some hard discussions on carbon taxing, emissions and fuel issues. He stated that there may be a problem moving from diesel to electric in that there isn't enough green energy to sustain this move and questions how they would provide this energy. Forklifts are already being converted, the Port has been involved with some smaller businesses looking to do this, also. He feels the Port needs to be prepared to react to legislation as it changes. Also reported on the **Airport meeting** - the terminal is to be 8,500 sq ft with 3 gates, the minimum being 4,100 sq ft, planning for future growth. He said SWEDA reported it has pushed 2.9 million dollars out the door in support of over 224 businesses.

Director Poire reported the **Strategic planning packet** will be reviewed on Monday Oct 5th at 10am and then it will be available to the public for review. Further discussion and dates on the agenda.

OLD BUSINESS:

Policy Project: Resolutions 20-15 Investment Policy, 20-17 Accounting Practices, 20-18 Purchasing and Contracting

Ms Stav reported on adoptions and revisions for these resolutions. The commissioners moved to adopt Resolution 20-15 Investment Policy, Resolution 20-17 Accounting Practices, and Resolution 20-18 Purchasing and Contracting Policy.

RCO (Recreation and Conservation Office) Construction Grant Authorization – Resolution 20-16

The commissioners moved to go forward with the RCO Construction grant application which is due on November 1, 2020. This is for the **Boyer Park Dock Replacement Planning Design**.

2021 Budget Preliminary Review

A copy of the draft **2021 Budget** is attached below for preliminary review. The staff will continue to monitor and update the budget as needed and the draft will be presented again on November 5 noting any substantive changes.

Commission Service Board Assignments

The commissioners discuss and assign primary and alternate positions for the service boards. They took a 5-minute recess during this part.

Board	Commissioner	Position	Alternate
SEWEDA/ RTPO	Tom Kammerzell <i>Webber</i>	Non-Voting Member	John Love <i>Kammerzell</i>
PNWA	Tom Kammerzell	At-Large Representative	John Love <i>Webber</i>
WPPA	John Love <i>Meyer</i>	Board of Trustees	Kristine Meyer <i>Webber</i>
IPNG	Tom Kammerzell	Voting Member	Kristine Meyer
POWBAC ADVISORY BOARD	John Love <i>Webber</i>	Commissioner Representative	Tom Kammerzell
PCC BOARD	Kristine Meyer	Port Representative	John Love <i>Webber</i>
RTPO PIONEER PORTS	All Commissioners <i>meyer</i>	Members <i>non-voting member</i>	<i>Webber</i>

NEW BUSINESS:

City of Clarkston Fire Department Payment 2020 – Wilma Fire Protection Contract

The commissioners approved the annual payment for 2020 of \$10,000 for fire protection services with the City of Clarkston Fire Department for the District 14 area. The port bills the tenants at Wilma and then pays the yearly contract cost. The contract provides for annual inspections of hydrants and other fire protection infrastructure at the port and also provides a cost savings for tenants through a lower fire rating on their insurances.

Commission Photography

The commissioners choose option three for updating website photos. 3) The Commission and staff may update the group photograph and take separate professional headshots of the three Commissioners and Executive Director. Commissioner Meyer requested that the photo shoot be after an already scheduled hair appointment on Dec 4th. ☺

Commission Handbook

This is a new document the staff developed as part of the policy project to establish policy regarding the **governance of the Port of Whitman County**, including the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Commissioners. It was compiled from WPPA's New Commissioners and other Ports' handbooks and from policies adopted by our Port commissioners. The drafted was included in the supportive material. Section 13, "Commissioner Compensation" was discussed in regard to smart phones and decided to add in phones for the commissioners. This Handbook will be reviewed again at the next meeting. (Below is attached the Table of Contents to give an idea of what the handbook contains.)

Petrichor Quarterly Report

Ms Riebold reported on the 3rd quarter **Petrichor Broadband LLC**. Port is working with Washington State Department of Transportation (WADOT) for a statewide plan for a right-of-way to complete paths for broadband installations. Roger Millar, Secretary of Transportation, would like to form a committee with WPPA to team up to classify language for a legislative ask for this right-of-way. Also, in the works is an application to the Public Works Board (Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF)) for funding on this due Oct 29. For the full Quarter 3 Petrichor Report go to the Port agenda and supportive materials. This is a well written report. http://www.portwhitman.com/pdf_agendas/2020-10-15%20Agenda.pdf

Fiber Equipment Purchase Contract/ Telecommunications Equipment Lease

This is only the third equipment lease the Port has entered into, 2004, 2009 and now for the purpose to expedite fiber extension in choke-hold areas, Palouse, Farmington, Garfield and Tekoa. Ms Riebold was complimented by Director Poire for writing a "nice update" on this. Port staff proposed the purchase of telecommunications equipment in the amount of approximately \$30,000 for lease to Cascades Computing with the option to purchase over a sixty-month period. The Port has a good relationship with this company and it will be a good "return on investment." The commissioners approved the Telecommunications Equipment Lease between the Port and Cascades Computing.

Fiber Extensions Design Contract

Along with the Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) funded project to bolster bandwidth in Whitman County, the Port will build five additional mid-mile fiber backbone routes to strategic locations carrying broadband services out to rural areas. The commissioners approved to proceed with a contract for design with Outside Plant Maintenance for the total amount of \$97,532. Design completion date is Jan 31 with work to start in the spring.

Boyer Park Hours

The onsite managers, Mike and Monica Olmstead, met with Port staff and provided the off operating hours (see below) for the Commission's approval which they did approve. There was much discussion of how Boyer Park went from a medium usage site with mediocre standards to high standards and is mostly fully booked. Compliments went to the Olmsteads for their management. The campground is full every weekend through Oct and for the 4th of July, Labor Day and Memorial Day. The Grill and store will close November 1 for the season and reopen sometime in March depending on weather and reservations. The Snake River Festival is on the calendar for May 22, 2021.

Executive Session

None

Commission Workshop

Central Ferry North (HMU) Land Transfer

Port seems to be butting heads with the Army Corps of Engineers over trading property. Port brought forward 3 properties to the corps but all were turned down mostly because of noxious weeds along river banks. It was discussed to not approach legislative action at this time and to wait for a more opportune time. Not much is available on the river at this time. It was discussed to "prepare to paw" by "laying out a map, checking all the boxes and sitting down with legislators" to make a case for what the Port has done so far. It was said that there is a love/hate relation between the Port and the corps but only on this issue of land transfer. Both have made efforts to preserve the river system and the Port doesn't want to "burn any bridges" over this.

Port Planning Document Review

The Commission's changes, additions and deletions to the second drafts of the Port Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements, as well as the first draft of the Comprehensive Plan Report Card, can be seen at the following Google Drive link. The commissioners again complimented Ms Highfield saying these documents "look so good." Copy and paste into browsers to view.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FQaRL3yyatbnuBhITv9gVpyPjElw40Yu?usp=sharing>

*** A 25-minute lunch break was taken at 11:30. They came back from break but did not have audio for public to hear the discussion of the Recreation and Tourism section. They dialed back in and continued onto the Budget review.

Policy Project- attorney recommended review by Commissioners of Resolution 03-03 - Port's Support of Recreation and Tourism

Was not able to hear this section but I took some screen shots. I did follow up with a call to Ms Stav, Port Finance Director. It was explained that during this workshop the staff asked what the board needs from them to update this old 2003 policy. RCW – Revised Code of Washington. Ms Stav said there was nothing new to report at this time but there will be updates to come.

Port of Whitman County Policy on Monetary Requests for Tourism and Recreation Development Projects in Whitman County

The Port is primarily an industrial real estate developer measuring part of its success in terms of new jobs created and new tax base developed. Although significant to the Port, the recreation and tourism provider aspect of the Port's mission is secondary to the industrial and economic development aspects.

The Port District is authorized by State statute to develop and maintain water-related public parks and recreational facilities (RCW 53.08.260). The Port of Whitman County also is authorized by State statute to promote tourism. (RCW 53.08.255)

The Port of Whitman County has chosen these areas of emphasis in the promotion of recreation and tourism in Whitman County:

- Moscow Pullman Regional Airport
- Port of Whitman Business Air Center
- Boyer Park Marina, Campground and Recreational Facility

Please reference the Port of Whitman County Comprehensive Plan for the history and development of these facilities.

The Port of Whitman County commissioners recognize the value and benefit of tourism and recreation to Whitman County. The internal projects currently operated and supported by the Port of Whitman County satisfy the tourism and promotion aspects of the Port of Whitman County Comprehensive Plan. No other monetary requests for tourism or recreational projects will be considered.

The Port of Whitman County offers human resource time to all communities and organizations throughout the county from the Port Economic Development Office to assist with tourism and promotion projects.

2021 Budget Preliminary Review

There was talk about a “meeting of the minds” and the “obligation elements of contract” in regard to finances. It seems that this matter was about having the means to get the monies promised from the County Commission for a project already underway. The commissioners said again this also is an important partnership, not wanting to burn bridges, but Port doesn’t want to “appear flaky” during this financial recovery time. There is a County/Port Commission meeting on Nov 2nd at 3:00 pm. In a follow-up call with Ms Stav, it was explained that along with the CERB grant, the County Commission did a cost share for the road work done at the Port of Wilma.

There was a question brought up having to do with **salaries** in the budget in the category of merit. Frank Chmelik was called in for counsel to describe the difference between merit increases and bonuses for public employees under budget based management. Compensation to public employees for a job well done cannot be given retrospectively, as bonuses, only prospectively. Director Poire has delegated authority to manage assessment of merit for Port staff. Commissioner Kammerzell supports set amount for allocation, control vs reasonability, if needed to defend to the public how salary increases are made. Commissioner Meyer appreciated the “proactive questioning” in that it was “important to bring a fuller understanding” of this subject, merit/bonuses. Commissioner Webber supports “defend as a whole not on an individual bases,” staff vs employee.

Upcoming Meetings

- Pioneer Ports Meeting, October 19, 6:30 p.m., via Zoom Meeting
- WPPA Small Ports Seminar, October 22 & 23, via Zoom Meeting
- Inland NW Partners Virtual Fall Meeting, October 28, 9:00 -11:00 a.m. (If previously registered for the INP Spring meeting, you have been automatically re-registered)
“The Importance of Digital Inclusion”

Process & Protocol: This was a long meeting but a good one. I followed up with Ms Stav, Port Finance Director, and she was more than helpful at answering my questions. I am impressed with all the staff at the Port. They are hidden public employees doing many things in this community. I recommend at looking at their Port Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements and Report Card either for review if you have comments for change or when the final version becomes available. Draft version, copy and paste into browser: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FQaRL3yyatbnuBhITv9gVpyPjElw40Yu?usp=sharing>



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Media contact:
Sarah Highfield
Communications Director
Tel: 509-397-3791
sarah@portwhitman.com

Port of Whitman County Appoints District 1 Commissioner

Karl Webber Fills Vacancy Caused by John Love's Resignation

Colfax (October 2, 2020) — The Port of Whitman County Commission voted to appoint Karl Webber of Tekoa to the vacant District 1 Commissioner seat at its regular October 1 meeting.

Webber was appointed to a term expiring on December 31, 2021, which was left vacant when longtime Commissioner John Love resigned in July. Webber, one of four candidates to apply, brings a wealth of experience in business management and consulting for small to large companies. He currently holds positions as President/Principal Consultant of KB2 Performance Management Systems and President/Founder of Statera Fly Rods.

"I believe the Port of Whitman County is a valuable contributor to our way of life as residents," Webber wrote in his application. "As Port Commissioner, I would work to understand the needs and concerns of the residents, the business leaders and the governing officials, and I would take this information into account when making decisions about strategy, direction and policy."

The Port had 90 days to fill Love's seat. Three other candidates — Charles Petras, James Babb and Nathan Weller — were also interviewed at the October 1 meeting.

The three-member Port of Whitman County Commission meets on the first and third Thursdays of the month. Port Commissioners serve six-year terms. While all Commissioners are elected on a countywide basis, each must live within a specific district of Whitman County. The board's responsibilities include setting policy, approving expenditures and appointing the Executive Director.

###

About the Port of Whitman County

The Port of Whitman County is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all citizens of Whitman County through industrial real estate development, preservation of multi-modal transportation, facilitation of economic development and provision of on-water recreational opportunities.

Port of Whitman County aims to turn WSU steam plant into business tech center

Site could be used as business incubator on edge of campus

- By Anthony Kuipers Daily News staff writer
- Oct 6, 2020

Port of Whitman County is exploring the possibility of transforming a decommissioned steam plant on the edge of the Washington State University into a business technology center.

Port Executive Director Joe Poire said Monday the former coal fire steam plant, which was decommissioned more than a decade ago, could serve as a place where WSU professors and graduate students could remain close to campus while they incubate businesses based on their intellectual property.

"The location lends itself to a gateway of commercialization of technology," he said.

The port is now looking into how to rehabilitate the building and clean up any environmental risks at the site. According to documents for the port's strategic planning meeting Monday, the port could position itself to receive grant and cleanup funds from state and federal agencies.

Poire said during the past couple months, he has been putting together an analysis of what funding is available for a project like this.

"I think it's a great idea," he said about the business technology center.

A similar facility, the WSU Research and Technology Park, is located on Eastgate Boulevard near campus and offers space for entrepreneurs to grow their start-up companies.

One of the port's overarching goals is to seek out more land in Pullman for industrial use.

Poire said the port currently owns two 8-acre sections of industrial land in Pullman. The port recently sold 23 acres of formerly industrial land near North Grand Avenue and Albion Drive to a development company to build a student housing complex called Aspen Heights.

Pullman Planning Department staff opposed the zone change for several reasons. Among them, they said that land should be saved for future industrial developments.

Poire said the port wanted to sell the land because it was already surrounded by residential properties.

He said the port is looking for more industrial land that is attractive to businesses. He said that, currently, if a company needed 15 acres of land in one area of Pullman, the port would not be able to provide it.

Anthony Kuipers can be reached at akuipers@dnews.com.

PORT OF WHITMAN COUNTY
BUDGET 2021

DRAFT 10/15/2020

2,981,636	-	OPERATING RECEIPTS	
1,306,897	-	TAX RECEIPTS	
3,750,000	-	DEBT PROCEEDS	(1)
2,839,919	-	GRANT RECEIPTS	(2)
68,000	-	NONOPERATING RECEIPTS	
1,291,425	-	OPERATING RESERVES	
<u>12,237,877</u>		TOTAL RESOURCES	

1,324,750	-	OPERATING EXPENSES	
1,075,500	-	ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL EXPENSES	
59,500	-	NONOPERATING EXPENSES	
8,996,900	-	CAPITAL EXPENSES	(3)
181,164	-	RESERVE FOR LONG TERM DEBT	(4)
600,063	-	RESERVE FOR OPERATING EXPENSES	(5)
<u>12,237,877</u>		TOTAL USES & RESERVES	

(1) CERB Loans- Fiber and Wilma Rd. and Public Works Board

(2) CERB, .09 Funds, County reimburse Wilma Rd

(3) Fiber construction, Boyer improvements, Wilma Road, PIP Grading

(4) Reserved for loans: Pull-Mos airport fire flow, CERB ISR expansion C2005-170, Wilma Rail Crossing RRB 1118, CERB PIP West S12-790AO-028, CERB Wilma/CF rail S13-790AO-047, and CERB FTTH project RB2018-003

(5) Reserved for 3 months of operating expenses

Part of the Commission Handbook to show what it contains...

Table of Contents

1. Purpose	2
2. Washington Port Powers	2
3. Board Meetings.....	2
4. Absences and Excusal from Commission Meetings	3
5. Role of the Board of Commissioners	3
6. Role of the President of the Board of Commissioners.....	4
7. Role of the Vice President of the Board of Commissioners.....	4
8. Role of the Secretary of the Board of Commissioners.....	5
9. Board of Commissioners Code of Ethics	5
10. Public Disclosure Commission- Financial Affairs Disclosure	6
11. Board Training and Orientation	7
12. Board-Executive Director Relationship	7
13. Commissioner Compensation	8
14. Email.....	9
15. Equipment.....	10
16. Use of Port Vehicles	11
17. Office Closure Dates/Holidays	11

Boyer Park Restaurant and Store Hours.

SCHEDULE CHANGE

OCTOBER 12, 2020 – OCTOBER 31, 2020

CLOSED MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY

TUESDAY AND THURSDAY 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

SUNDAY 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

***** **NOVEMBER 1, 2020** *****

THE GRILL, STORE AND OFFICE

***** WILL BE CLOSED FOR THE SEASON *****

OUR CAMPGROUND WILL STAY OPEN FOR CAMPING

YOU WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE RESERVATIONS ONLINE AT WWW.KOA.COM OR
YOU CAN CALL THE OFFICE/LEAVE A MESSAGE AND WE WILL CALL YOU BACK TO
RESERVE, OR

YOU CAN USE OUR NIGHT REGISTRATION LOCATED AT THE SOUTHWEST
CORNER OF THE BUILDING BETWEEN THE
BUILDING AND THE PAVILLION.