

OLD BUSINESS:

Public Safety Issue Regarding Building at Port of Whitman Business Air Center

The Port asked the Whitman County Commissioners (WCC) to see what can be done with the building hazard that exists on Lot 10 of Port of Whitman Business Air Center. WCC stated, "...the Port of Whitman has more power to solve this problem by acquiring that property through condemnation and then cleaning it up than what Whitman County can do." It was discussed, with the Port attorney present, that the Port must have an immediate public use need and acquire the property before they can do anything about the situation, RCW 53.08.010. Port cannot just knock the building down for safety reasons – only the WCC has the authority to condemn for safety reasons, remove the building and bill the owner. Port will put it back on the WCC and see what happens.

Rep. Simpson's Dam Breaching Proposal

"The proposal has been receiving national media attention for nearly two weeks now. In response, the Port issued a statement in conjunction with Pacific Northwest Waterways Association and published a blog post summing the reactions from Eastern Washington ports, river users and others."

<https://www.portwhitman.com/press-releases/pnwa-port-of-whitman-county-react-to-simpson-proposal-to-breach-lower-snake-river-dams>

Port's blog post

<https://www.portwhitman.com/blog/ports-river-users-respond-to-simpsons-dam-breaching-proposal>

Port budgeted \$2,500 for a second year to support NWRP's ad campaign, "Our Power is Water" which can be seen following this link. <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=WsvNVcdln4U>

The Port budgeted \$10,000 for the PNWA campaign funding requests which will be coming out soon.

There is an article in Capital Press, Feb 17, 2021, written in conjunction by Commissioner Kammerzell and PNWA https://www.capitalpress.com/opinion/columns/commentary-snake-river-dam-proposal-recipe-for-disaster/article_091134ce-70b7-11eb-9498-072258d634f4.html

Port Director Poire sees it being important to stay at the table with the economics of this proposal. He said that more groups are coming into this discussion and that there are not enough studies and not enough use of facts.

Palouse Knowledge Corridor Update (added to agenda at beginning of meeting)

Commissioner Webber gave an update and presented a workplan draft for 2021. There will be an open recruitment to hire a director. The Port will fund this project at a prorated amount of \$12,500 (6 months this year since it was not in the budget) with the option to continue funding after seeing a yearend annual report of progress. The workplan draft is attached below.

NEW BUSINESS:

COVID-19 Reopening Plan Phase 2

Port is following Phase 2 protocol; commissioners are meeting in person within their limited capacity and guidelines. Office is still closed to public and will continue to telework when possible.

Office of the Washington State Auditor (SAO) Data Breach

"The SAO contacted the Port on January 27 to confidentially discuss a data breach that compromised documents submitted by the Port to the SAO for the 2019 fiscal audit." There was a public notice released of the breach on February 4 and can be seen in the Port's agenda and supportive material. The Port seems be at low risk of being affected.

Pacific NW Farmer's Cooperative – Plans for new truck scales at Almota and Central Ferry

The Port approved this plan as it does not infringe on their lease agreement. The new scales will eliminate the trucks from having to backup to be tarred after unloading, a big safety improvement.

Upcoming Meetings

- Spokane Ag Show (Pacific Northwest Farm Forum), February 23-25 (revised date) via Zoom
- Pacific Northwest Waterways Association Inland Empire Regional Meeting, March 2 via Zoom
- Pacific Northwest Waterways Association Mission to Washington, March 15-18 via Zoom

More dam articles for your reading pleasure...

<https://www.waterwaysjournal.net/2021/02/15/new-proposal-to-breach-snake-river-dams-sparks-opposition-2/>

https://www.newsdata.com/clearing_up/environment/lower-snake-what-would-happen-without-the-dams/article_cf455b14-6d7b-11eb-8bff-0f41a1021449.html

Second Sub Senate Bill 5511 – Broadband Internet Service Access

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 43.330

22 RCW to read as follows:

23 It is a goal of the state of Washington that:

24 (1) By 2024, all Washington businesses and residences have access
25 to high-speed broadband that provides minimum download speeds of at
26 least twenty-five megabits per second and minimum upload speeds of at
27 least three megabits per second;

28 (2) By 2026, all Washington communities have access to at least
29 one gigabit per second symmetrical broadband service at anchor
30 institutions like schools, hospitals, libraries, and government
31 buildings; and

32 (3) By 2028, all Washington businesses and residences have access
33 to at least one provider of broadband with download speeds of at
34 least one hundred fifty megabits per second and upload speeds of at
35 least one hundred fifty megabits per second.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 43.330

37 RCW to read as follows:

p. 5

2SSB 5511.SL

Draft document. 2/15/2021

Palouse Knowledge Corridor: Workplan for 2021

The overarching goal of this year's work is to begin the process of refining and implementing economic development strategy designed for the nationally unique circumstances on the Palouse. Key to our success requires establishing an Executive Director within the Palouse Knowledge Corridor to lead efforts on this refinement and early implementation. We are at the point where we are ready to hire an individual to lead these efforts.

Current funding for this role and associated expenses includes:

Source	Amount	Notes
WSU / UI	75,000	Committed to 3 years at this level
Port of Whitman	25,000	Committed to 1 year at this level (can be renewed)
Whitman County	10,000	Committed to 2 years at this level
Latah County	12,500	Committed to 1 year at this level (can be renewed)
Total	122,500	

In addition to these cash resources, both WSU and UI have committed staff time to support the work of the Palouse Knowledge Corridor. A major part of this initial effort will be to get the Executive Director connected to the support structures within both universities and establish protocols for accessing resources within the universities. As such it is anticipated that expenditures in 2021 will largely be limited to salary and benefits support for the Director which is anticipated to be roughly \$90-100K and will depend on the salary negotiated with the hire. It is expected that this new hire will work with the Board and other stakeholders in the community to refine and begin to implement detailed workplans in the following areas:

1. The development of a place-based marketing regional and national branding strategy: aligning regional interests with research strengths and associated talent inside both universities.

The aim of this effort will be to communicate nationally the unique academic expertise we have on the Palouse which is aligned with industry need, especially in the areas of agriculture, cybersecurity and energy. These can be leveraged to articulate a regional value proposition that serves to attract business and investment into our regional economy and introduce educational opportunities for our students, research opportunities for our faculty and jobs for our community. These efforts will be informed by data and expertise in both the Offices of Research from WSU and UI. This branding strategy will be integrated throughout the activities of the organization and become the platform for regional and national marketing. Both the content and strategy for roll out of the marketing campaign will be developed in close conjunction with communications expertise from within UI and consultation with the relevant expertise at WSU. A specific effort to align with both city government and related economic development efforts in the region will be a critically important element of this effort.

2. Streamlined entrepreneurial process: Expansion of access to entrepreneurial training and support activities within both universities.

This is an area where KnowCo is already active. We are working with the expertise at WSU to expand and adapt the seamless runway they have developed to be made available to both universities and communities. The initial offering that the Knowledge Corridor piloted the *Business Pathfinder* program over May-June 2020 and again in October 2020. The work needed in this area is to begin the awareness campaign in both communities about access to these resources and solidifying robust routes for access. While these currently exist, work is needed to refine and improve. This will involve direct engagements with the Center for Entrepreneurial Studies and the Office of Research at WSU and the leadership of the Entrepreneurship program at UI.

3. Targeted regional support: for efforts focused on value-added agriculture.

Going forward, KnowCo will lead efforts to develop federal resourcing for activities that coordinate with expertise in the universities and align interests to develop access to instrumentation and expertise in the universities that can support commodity upgrading. To these ends much groundwork has been laid in the development of a USDA proposal. Depending on timing for the hire the director may participate in proposal refinement and the development of the needed match. If the director is hired post submission the work will involve exploring alternative routes to the access that would be outlined in the USDA proposal.