

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Port of Whitman County

Date: 09/16/21

Observer Reporting: Carolyn Joswig-Jones

Length of Meeting: 1' 45"

Members Present: 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

~~Kalvin Johanson~~ - Special Projects

Seth Woolson / ~~Frank Chmelik~~ - counsel from Chmelik, Sitkin & Davis Attorneys at Law

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

Shaun Dareshi – Palouse Regional Transportation Plan

Steven Peterson – Assessment study for the Port, Professor of Economics at UI

Alex McGregor – The McGregor Company

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)

- Port is assessing the feasibility of profits made outside of the county to lower taxpayer levy.
- Eastern Washington Legislative Tour (EWALT) Agenda Update: October 10 – 12, 2021 – On Pause
- Port's Greenhouse Gas Policy

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

<https://portwhitman-web.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/meetings/agendas/2021-09-16/2021-09-16%20Agenda.pdf>

The commissioners and staff met **in person** at the Port office for the meeting. They put **masks** on for the meeting. They have a new “Owl” camera that gives a fisheye view of the people in the room, and it focuses on the person that is talking, also. Very cool.

Commissioner and Staff Updates:

Commissioner Webber spoke of the **Center for Inclusive Entrepreneurship**, a state funded organization that helps people develop business models and startup plans. It's a free service. Offers 4x2hour classes. Port may look to them for collaborative opportunities.

Commissioner Webber spoke of the **Job Skills Program** hiring a regional coordinator in Oct. This group helps companies in developing skills. Works with local companies like the Meter Group and others.

Sarah Highfield has been out on maternity leave but will be returning soon.

OLD BUSINESS:

10:30 a.m. - Levy Concept Economics Presentation, Steve Peterson

Mr. Peterson is a professor of economics at UI and has worked with the Port over the last 20 years. He presented an assessment of “a concept that could be used to evaluate the **benefit of projects that occur outside of Whitman County**,” a subject that Commission Webber presented during a past commission

meeting. Mr. Peterson stated that Ports touch on many regional industries and that by reaching outside of our county would be equivocal as the saying “rising tides raise all boats.” His assessment shows the Port of Whitman County to be a net tax generator and that it is growing regional economics statewide and outside of state beyond just agriculture and WSU as in the past. His assessment led into the **Levy workshop**. There are **some screen shots of the presentation attached below**.

2022 Initial Budget Workshop – Levy

Background – “As part of the budget process, the Port must establish the **amount of property tax revenue needed, otherwise known as the levy amount**. The levy amount is the total amount to be collected from the taxpayers by a taxing district.”

“The commission discussed the options for setting the 2022 Levy.”

1. 1% increase
2. If implicit price deflator (IPD) is below 1%:
 - a. Use IPD rate
 - b. Adopt a resolution of substantial need for the full 1%
3. Bank capacity for future years; determine portion to bank

See agenda for a more detailed explanation. There was some discussion about **possible rebate/reduction** or lowering the 2022 levy. The Port functions with taxpayer dollars and from generated profit. It was my understanding the Commission decided to stay with the normal 1% as usual until they come to understand more about all that was discussed. For future consideration, if the Port reaches outside of the county and makes money, the Port can lower the levy rate.

Public Works Board Broadband Application – Applicant Certification

Staff looking into more funding applications for broad band. Commission motioned to approve one grant application discussed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Greenhouse Gas Policy

The commission was presented with a draft and was to adopt a policy for strategies to “manage and reduce energy and fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.” The drafted policy is modeled after requirements the Port already fulfills but it needs to be adopted before some funding is released. Commission Kammerzell requested more time to review, and it will again be on the agenda for the next meeting in Oct. **Draft can be seen in the Port agenda using the link above.**

POWBAC Aviation Fuel Station

“Staff has been working with the new owners of Interstate Aviation to locate a fuel station at POWBAC. Interstate Aviation is the fixed base operator (FBO) at the Moscow Pullman Regional Airport. Interstate would like to partner on locating a fuel station at POWBAC and has completed preliminary work to put together a fuel station using an existing tank they own.”

Tekoa Mountain Fiber Build Bid Results

A motion was made and passed to award on the Tekoa Mountain Fiber Project for the final easement to Summit Utility Contractor.

Upcoming Meetings

- Pioneer Ports Meeting, 9/20/2021, Perkins House, Colfax, WA
- WPPA Environmental Seminar, 9/23-24/21, Union, WA
- POWBAC Fly In, 9/25/2021, 8:00 am – Noon
- PNWA Annual Convention, 10/19-21/21, Vancouver, WA
- WPPA Small Ports Meeting, 10/21-22/21, Leavenworth, WA

Screen Shots of some of the Levy Concept Economics Presentation by Steve Peterson

THREE INLAND WATER PORTS

WILMA

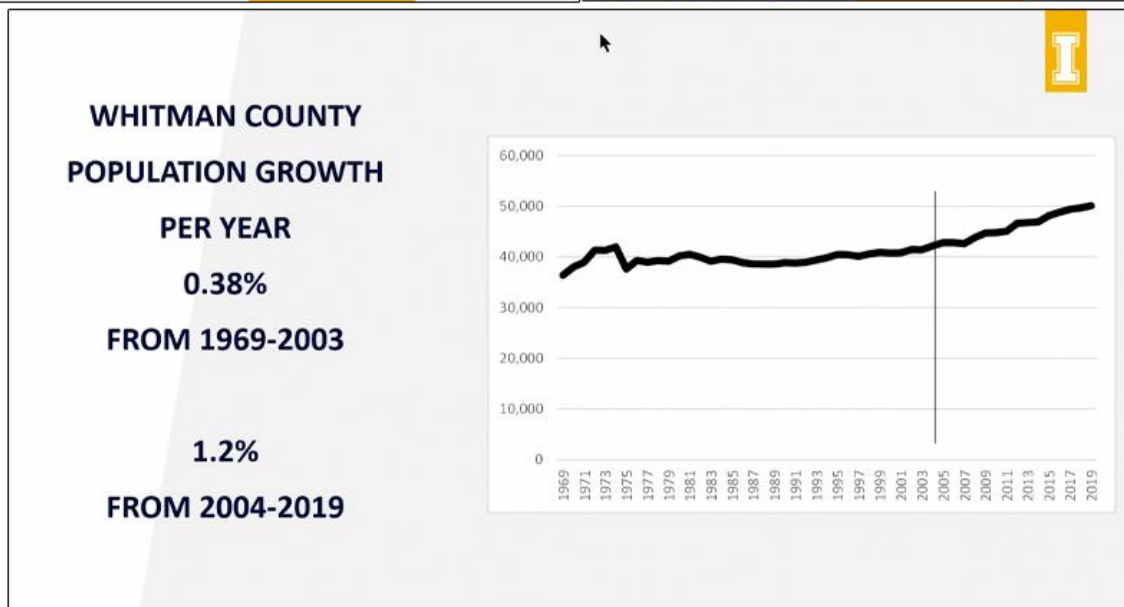
ALMOTA

CENTRAL FERRY

- Six Industrial Park Locations
 - Wilma
 - Almota
 - Central Ferry
 - Pullman Industrial Park-West
 - Pullman Industrial Park-East
 - Port of Whitman Business Air Center



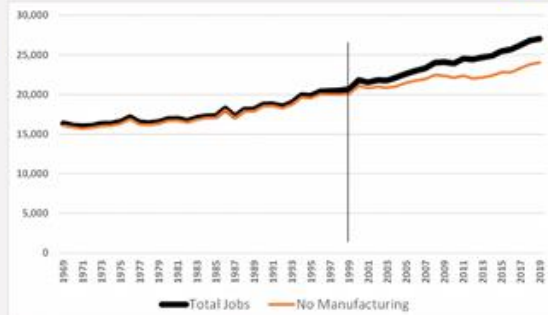

<p>A MODERN PORT</p> <p>Is a multi-dimensional multi-modal full-scale economic development agency</p>	<p>Provide "shovel ready" land and building capacity</p>	<p>Promote and encourage entrepreneurship</p>	<p>WHITMAN COUNTY HAD VERY LITTLE GROWTH FROM 1969 TO THE MID-1990S</p> <p>SINCE THEN, THE COUNTY HAS BECOME THE REGIONAL GROWTH LEADER</p>	<p>The Pullman Industrial Park and the other PWC industrial parks' growth with new businesses and entrepreneurs</p>	<p>WSU Student population increased dramatically in the 1990s on the Pullman Campus</p>
	<p>Port of Whitman County</p> <p>Build community infrastructure</p>	<p>Attract new businesses and expand existing firms</p>		<p>Whitman County's traditional industries such as agriculture have created a stable base for the growth of new and future industries.</p>	<p>The non-base supporting sectors of the county have grown dramatically.</p>



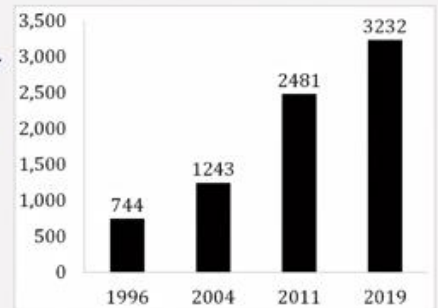
WHITMAN COUNTY EMPLOYMENT GROWTH PER YEAR

**0.85%
FROM 1969-2003**

**1.3%
FROM 2004-2019**



ENTREPRENEUR FIRM GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT TOTAL DIRECT JOBS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PORT OF WHITMAN COUNTY 1996, 2004, 2011, 2019



ENTREPRENEUR FIRM GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Direct Employment	1996		2004		2011		2019	
	Jobs	%	Jobs	%	Jobs	%	Jobs	%
Grain Handling/Storage/Transportation	173	23%	120	10%	117	5%	131	4%
Recreation	46	6%	33	3%	31	1%	28	1%
Agriculture Services	35	5%	15	1%	31	1%	52	2%
Basic Business Services/Products	23	3%	13	1%	66	3%	98	3%
Wood Products	183	25%	168	14%	101	4%	113	3%
High Technology Services/Manufacturing	245	33%	846	68%	2065	83%	2,693	83%
Professional Services	36	5%	43	3%	25	1%	18	1%
Port Infrastructure/Telecommunications	3	0%	5	0%	45	2%	99	3%
Total	744	100%	1243	100%	2481	100%	3232	100%

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS BY PORT/ACTIVITY INCLUDES THE DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND INDUCED EFFECTS (I.E., MULTIPLIER EFFECTS)

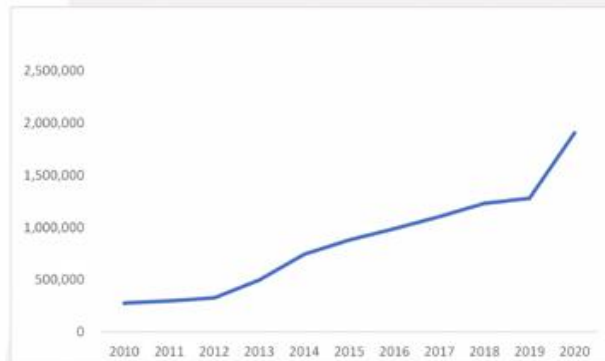
Port/Activity	Total	Output		Gross	Labor Income
	Jobs	Sales	Transactions	Regional Product	Payroll
Pullman Industrial Park	4,493	1,153,208,044		441,184,613	325,371,469
Port of Wilma	385	87,250,667		46,552,031	20,395,728
Port of Central Ferry	129	47,017,998		33,095,119	6,938,924
Port of Almota	22	4,966,491		2,638,913	1,207,769
Port of WC Business Air Center	34	5,132,001		2,252,428	1,530,171
Tourism and Transportation	122	17,523,757		7,909,119	5,266,676
Fiber Construction/Operations	125	31,492,360		11,214,321	5,521,154
Port Infrastructure and Operations	60	5,696,699		2,773,920	2,246,290
Grand Total	5,369	1,352,288,017		547,620,464	368,478,181

AVENUES FOR ENHANCING TAXPAYER RATE OF RETURN

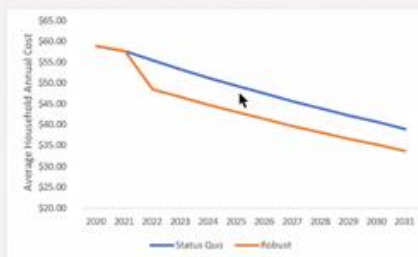
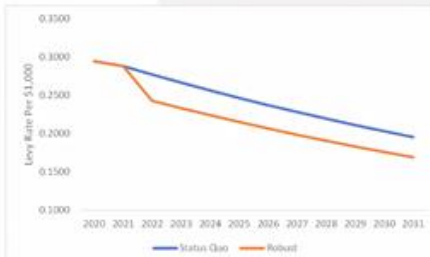
**CREATE NEW REVENUE
OPPORUNTIES WHILE
GROWING THE
ECONOMY AT THE SAME
TIME**

NEW TELECOM enterprises
AND INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS
CAN LOWER THE PORT OF WHITMAN
COUNTY LEVY RATE OVER TIME.

TELECOMM REVENUE



PWC LEVY FORECAST STATUS QUO VERSUS ROBUST



**THE PORT OF
WHITMAN COUNTY IS
A REGIONAL LEADER
IN INNOVATION**



**IT MAY SET AN
EXAMPLE OF
CREATIVE
ENTREPRENEURSHIP,
AND FOR DEVELOPING
NEW PROFIT
OPPORTUNITIES THAT
ENHANCE REGIONAL
ECONOMIES**