

Port of Cascade Locks

The Port of Cascade Locks Commission Business Meeting was held Thursday, April 7, 2016, at the City of Cascade Locks Council Chambers, Cascade Locks, OR 97014.

- 1) **Meeting called to order/ Pledge of Allegiance:** Commission President Groves called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.
 - **Roll Call:** Commissioners Groves, Caldwell, Lorang, Lipps and Stipan were present.
 - **Others Present:** GM Paul Koch, Port Attorney Tommy Brooks, Secretary Sally Moore, Marketing and Development Manager Holly Howell, Accounting Specialist Melissa Warren, Dan Yates, Owner of Portland Spirit, Jeff Caldwell, Portland Spirit, Casey Roeder, Director of Skamania County Chamber of Commerce, Pat Albaugh, Port consultant, Ray Cless, Nick Hogan, John McSherry, Patrick Nicholson, Mayor of N Bonneville, Carli McKee, Scott Anderson, Martin Hecht and camera operator Betty Rush.
 - **Modification, Addition & changes to the agenda:** None
 - **Declaration of Potential Conflicts of Interest:** Commissioner Lipps declared a potential conflict of interest in regards to the economic development updates Commissioner Caldwell declared a potential conflict of interest. Her brother is employed at The Portland Spirit.
- 2) **Public Comment (Speakers may be limited to three (3) minutes):** None
- 3) **Public Hearing under ORS 197.235**
 - a. **A public hearing on proposed toll increases – Commission President Groves opened the public hearing to take testimony on the proposed toll increase.** There was a discussion and opportunity for local citizens and other interests to comment on possible toll increases for the Bridge of the Gods. GM Koch said in the last 30-60 days there have been two meetings in Stevenson, meetings with the Public and the toll takers. He asked for direction from the Commission at the end of the meeting. He said this was the time to take public testimony on proposed toll increases. The Mayor of N Bonneville, Don Stevens stated that he would like the Port to eliminate all ticket books. This would reduce administrative costs; distribute a decal at the Port office for all locals, keeping tolls at \$1 for cars and trucks. He suggested letting the Federal Government take care of putting in the pedestrian bridge. He suggested a yearly pass at \$750. Patrick Nicholson, Superintendent of the Public Hospital District of Skamania County, Chief of Emergency and Rescue Medical services. He stated the toll takers are very friendly. Doing emergency services in Cascade Locks have a substantial effect of their operations. He asked the Commission to consider exemption of tolls in emergency situations in both directions. They respond in Cascade Locks a few times a week as Cascade Locks does in Stevenson. There have been times when in emergency, they have been stopped and asked for tolls. CP Groves stated that no emergency vehicle should be stopped for tolls; this is a Port Policy. The speed limit

does not apply to emergency vehicles there is an exemption. They have to drive with "due regard". Nicholson said that if they were driving at 50mph, he would like to know. Casey Roeder, Director for the Skamania County Chamber of Commerce commented stating that doubling the toll would negatively affect Cascade Locks and Stevenson. Casey stated on behalf of Skamania Lodge and their GM, Ken Daugherty; they will let guests know they can take SR 14 at no charge. Carli McKee, a business owner in Stevenson is concerned increased tolls will be detrimental to businesses and tourism on both sides of the river. She is willing to work with businesses to form a "crossing validation program" as an option to support tourism on both sides of the river. She said more tourists driving SR 14 is dangerous. Stevenson, City Administrator, Nick Hogan, stated the local sticker is very complicated and suggested raising all to \$1.25 and coupon book to \$1.00. Scott Anderson, President of the Chamber of Commerce and the Stevenson Business Association stated that \$2 proposal is better. Tourism will not remain number one, but is now. Initial visitors will pay the \$2 and will later go and enjoy the scenery on SR 14. He does not think it will have the intended increased revenue. He commented on the Movement for Solidarity; that this is one region that needs to work together. He received grief from toll taker on the way to the meeting, and it is not conducive to increasing tolls. CP Groves thanked all for their comments and stated the BOG needs to be maintained and the revenue needs to there to do this. The comments of the toll takers are not the sentiments of the Commission. There may be monies available (a grant), but this is not guaranteed. John McSherry stated to improve the bridge, monies need to be earmarked. The decals seem overcomplicated. Coupon books seem simpler. He reiterated that the Board for the Port of Skamania would like to help with writing grants, etc., and they will make their resources available. CP Groves stated Oregon grants are different; they will set up a meeting with the Port of Stevenson. The bridge is not part of the National Highway System at this point; however, the Port has applied to have it added. Martin Hecht, business owner is a big user of the bridge. He shuttles between Skamania to Hood River. He has choices of which bridge to cross. He has a "Breeze By" pass for the HR Bridge. He stated he is charged a different rate by some toll takers and would like to know how much he actually needs to pay. The Commission thanked all citizens for their comments. No action was taken.

4) **Special Presentations and Reports (By outside resources and staff)**

- a. **Annual report from Dan Yates, owner of the Portland Spirit and operator of the Sternwheeler Columbia Gorge. Discussion of mutual beneficial efforts and increasing revenue for both parties.** Dan Yates and Jeff Caldwell were present to give an update on the Columbia Gorge Sternwheeler and gave their ideas to bring mutual and beneficial revenue for both Port and the Portland Spirit. Dan stated he would like to make this a regular event. They make their prices a year and half ahead. They are finishing up a new software program that will give them better access to a "demand" model that will allow changing prices. This may increase bonus paid to Port. As partners, he recapped some of the ideas. He would like to increase the foot print of

the Grill to allow for more seating. There is a wind problem and they need to keep people out of the wind. There are 18 outside tables. Sometimes people leave because of the wind. They really like to see more bronze statues in the Park. They are willing to help promote more art in the Park. He would like to get rid of the roundabout in the Park as people drive through it and leave the Park. He would like a bronze Bigfoot on Thunder Island. He would like Yurts on Thunder Island. They would rent out at a real premium. The Port is researching Yurts at this time. He would like to see tour buses to be able to come into the Park. Wedding costs were discussed. There is an opportunity for growth. There needs to be renovations done in the Pavilion and on Thunder Island. It could be booked all summer long. It would take a significant commitment from the Port and the community to do this. They would like more signage on Wa Na Pa Street. CP Groves stated that ODOT controls the street. Dan specified signage on buildings would work as well. He would like to see a building on Wa Na Pa for artists to be funded for a year of two. Cascade Locks (CL) needs to develop an "identity" and create a destination for CL. He suggested a "free water Wednesdays", by having retailers give bottled water away in the summer. He would love to see more retail stores and hotels. They would like to remodel the Sternwheeler. He believes the décor is tired. Parking is affecting the Park. There is only one access point. CP Groves thanked Dan and Jeff for their report. No action was taken.

- b. Report on the SDAO conference – Accounting Specialist Melissa Warren attended the SDAO conference.** Melissa reported that in February, Don Mann and she attended the conference. There were some interesting breakout sessions. The seminars were Supervising within the Law, Ethics, Hostile Work Environment, generational diversity and at Will Employment. There are 300 new employment laws this year.
- c. Final review by the Commission on proposed toll increases –** GM Koch stated his report was prepared before the Public testimony. The schedule is to make a decision the first meeting in May. The other question he asked the Commission was to implement the increases July 1 or September 1. CP Groves stated he would like to set up a Special Meeting on the proposed toll increases. There was a discussion; the consensus was to hold a Special Meeting on May 2, 2016 at 6pm in House 3. GM Koch will gather more information based on the discussion and bring it to the meeting.
- d. Report by delegates on the Mission to Washington DC:** The Commissioners that attended were: Lorang, Groves and Stipan. Marketing and Development Manager Holly Howell also attended. CP Groves stated they met with Hal Hiemstra, Port Lobbyist with Summit Strategies. He had planned their itinerary and set up meetings with Legislators. They attended the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA) conference in Washington DC. They heard from the Army Corp of Engineers (ACE). The 1936 flowage easement is on a bill to be changed This may affect the Business Park land. This easement is 6 feet over Bonneville Dam. They spoke with Greg Walden and he considered getting this passed; like a Consent Agenda. It would take care of the entire Bonneville Pool. Commissioner Lorang stated that meeting face to face with Legislators is more effective. They met with Legislators from both sides of the river and discussed how to get funding for the bridge.

Commissioner Caldwell stated her father started this annual trip to DC to attend the PNWA conference. It is one of the best lobbying groups. The Legislators made time to listen to the Commissioners.

- e. **Recommendations regarding sick leave** – Port Attorney Brooks came back with a recommendation after being directed by the Commission, regarding the sick leave policy that was enacted January 1, 2016.. Brooks discussed the redline version saying now the Port has PPL and a bundled package. He recommended a standalone policy of 40 hours a week for sick time. This new sick leave policy has to apply to all employees at the Port. The current policy is a bundled PPL policy that includes vacation and sick leave. The Port has to meet a statutory minimum and recommends a standalone sick policy, It can be changed however, the Port must have a policy allowing 40 hours of sick leave for all employees. Commissioner Lipps stated he felt just taking 40 hours off total PPL and leave the remaining vacation hours. Employees have to be paid for vacation not sick leave. Tommy said that policy can be changed by the Commission. No action was taken. Port Attorney Brooks will come back with the recommended changes.

5) Commission Business Action Items

a. Action to approve a contract for the Security Master Plan and Implementation of the Security Plan

COMMISSIONER LIPPS MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT RECOMMENDATIONS A, B AND C TO APPROVE A NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD TO TEC PRO SOLUTIONS LTD. AND AUTHORIZE THE ATTORNEY AND STAFF TO PREPARE THE CONTRACT AND AUTHORIZE THE PRESIDENT TO SIGN IT WHEN FINISHED. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CALDWELL. The motion was unanimous. 5-0.

- 6) **Commissioner and Commission sub-committee reports** CP Groves stated that Economic Development Manager Don Mann through the Ed dev subcommittee is recommending that the Port build a second flex building in order to accommodate potential business owners.

7) Executive Session under ORS 192.660 (2) (f) Exempt Public Records

The Commission recessed out of Regular Session at 9:12pm.

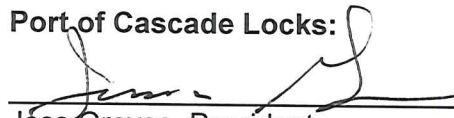
The Commission went into Executive Session at 9:15pm.

The Commission came out of Executive Session and went back into Regular Session at 9:40pm

- 8) **Any action as a result of Executive Session – No action was taken**

9) **Adjournment:** President Groves adjourned the meeting at 9:45pm.

Port of Cascade Locks:



Jess Groves, President
Port Commission

Attest:



Joëinne Caldwell, Secretary
Port Commission

DATE APPROVED: 5-19-2016
Prepared by: Sally Moore