

Port of Cascade Locks

The Port of Cascade Locks Joint meeting with the Port of Hood River was held Thursday, January 30th, 2020 at the City of Cascade Locks Council Chambers, Cascade Locks, OR 97014.

- 1) **Commission meeting called to order:** CP Groves called the meeting to order at 6:03pm
 - a) **Pledge of Allegiance**
 - b) **Roll Call:** Commissioners Jess Groves, Joeinne Caldwell and Brad Lorang were present. Commissioner Dean Bump was excused. Commissioner John Stipan was absent. **Present:** GM Olga Kaganova, Accounting Specialist Melissa Warren, Special Projects Coordinator Brittany Berge, Bridge Manager Ryan Vollans, Economic Development and Property Manager Don Mann, Government Affairs Director Mark Johnson, POHR Special Projects Manager Genevieve Scholl, POHR Development & Property Manager Anne Menanbach, POHR Bridge Replacement Project Director Kevin Greenwood, POHR Chief Financial Officer Fred Kowell, POHR Legal Counsel Jerry Jacques
 - c) **Additions & changes to the agenda:** Action item to Approve Extension for Diesel Engine
 - d) **Declarations of Potential Conflict of Interest:** none
- 2) **Public Comment:** none
- 3) **Special Presentations & Reports by outside resources, staff Government Officials:**
 - a) **Self-Introductions, background comments:** John Everett-POHR Commission President, David Meriwether-POHR Commissioner, Ben Sheppard-POHR Commissioner, Kristi Chapman-POHR Commissioner, Hoby Streich-POHR Commissioner, Jess Groves-POCL Commission President, Joeinne Caldwell-POCL Commissioner, Brad Lorang-POCL Commissioner.
 - b) **Port Initiative Update POHR, POCL:** GM Olga welcomed and thanked the POHR partners for coming. She reported that property in business park is gaining interest, pFriem building underway, The Renewal Workshop expecting to expand into the Business Park in a 40,000 SF building to be constructed. She stated that the Port of Cascade Locks is continuing with Tolling technology and related Legislative efforts are underway. ED Michael McElwee stated how helpful it is to meet together as Ports sharing the Gorge. Michael reported that the Port of Hood River Strategic Business Plan effort is underway and is meant to project 5-6 years out. This plan compelled Commission and staff to look at Port Activities and interests. Michael emphasized how critical legislative efforts are as they work on the bridge replacement effort. He stated that POHR is looking capital costs that are needed to invest to keep current bridge in safe operating. He also emphasized that Tribal outreach is growing in importance in terms of working with CRITFC. The Airport is becoming a large focus. The POHR received a Connect 6 grant but ran into some permitting challenges. However, that project is now out to bid. He stated that when POHR receives the bids, how they turn out will determine if that project will continue or not. He stated that the Lower Mill is effectively development-ready. He shared that POHR is looking at their Waterfront Lot 1 property and determining how much infrastructure is necessary to get it development ready. Michael briefed the Commissions of the background on storm drain issue in waterfront property. He shared that Commissioner Chapman and Kevin Greenwood going to PWNA Mission Trip to Washington DC. Michael then introduced the POHR staff in attendance.
 - i) **POHR Bridge Replacement update:** Kevin shared monthly update sheet with the Commission to update on the NEPA Process. He stated that the relationship between Klickitat

County and Port of Hood River improved over the Environmental Impact Study Group. He expressed excitement over partnership in the community over the course of the bridge replacement project. Other items to continue working on included, tribal outreach, working with tribe to work effectively through NEPA process. Kevin stated that POCL has been so successful creating a healthy relationship with the Tribes and looked to POCL Commission for suggestions of how to navigate. CP Groves encouraged staff to reach out to each individual tribe and participate in their council meetings to gain understanding of their operations. He suggested inviting Tribal Leaders to walk project with Port. Commissioner Joeinne Caldwell expressed the importance of inviting generational citizens to the conversation for Tribal leaders to get full expression of the community interest. CP Groves also suggested to find the cultural leaders that are prominent in the tribes. Greenwood stated he's experienced complications with Federal involvement of controlling government to government communication. POHR Commissioner Meriwether thanked Jess for his advice on the tribal process.

- c) **Tolling System Startup update:** Ryan Vollans and Fred Kowell reported that the Ports started working through the agreement about a year ago. Fred expressed his surprise at how smoothly the implementation has happened. He credited meticulous planning to ensure everything went properly. Fred reported that they've only experienced small issues, such as a need for additional reporting and accounts' misclassification of trucks. He shared with the Commissions that since the start date of Jan 6, almost \$31,000 in revenue through BreezeBy on Bridge of the Gods, which was over 70,000 vehicles. He estimated that 30% of customer base is now on BreezeBy. Ryan mirrored how smoothly implementation has happened. Ryan agrees that they had only experienced small issues; fog interfering with readings and truck misclassification. He reported that he was very pleased with partnership. Ryan stated that before the BreezeBy went live, the readers determined that 13% of Bridge of the Gods commuters already had transponders, and last Tuesday read 40% transponder usage for that day. Ryan complimented POHR Special Projects Manager Genevieve on marketing in effort to get correct information out to the community. He stated the benefits of this system will be that the workload of toll collector will improve, and the customer benefit is access to both bridges with same system. Ryan stated that Maria had been very helpful between training and also assisting with the burden of workload for POCL staff. He shared that the next big date is Feb 3, which will be last day of accepting local stickers, so staff are expecting another big push in transponder accounts. POHR Commissioner Streich asked what percentage of traffic is on BreezeBy on HR Bridge? Fred answered that it varied; winter is about 70%, but summer drops to 60%. Streich asked should POCL model their numbers closer to POHR numbers? Fred responded that the projected numbers are just estimates and after 12 months they should be able to get a more accurate estimate. Ryan asked how long the new system has been active on the Hood River Bridge. Fred responded since 2017. POHR Commissioner Meriwether asked if BreezeBy has affected the flow of traffic. Ryan responded that he has definitely been seeing improvement in morning and evening commuters and that lines have shortened and traffic is moving more efficiently. CP Groves mentioned the traffic issues that POCL has experienced in the past. He explained the possibility of a future lighted intersection at Wa Na Pa and Toll Booth Road, more transportation improvements the Port is trying to fund through a BUILD grant, and an extra lane in future projects. CP Groves also brought up the issue of ODOT issues and traffic rerouting traffic to cross the Bridge. In the past, the POCL has had to waive tolls to keep up with a safe flow of traffic. CP Groves stated that the Port's focus is now to get the trucking companies to sign up on the BreezeBy as they can be time

consuming transactions at the toll booth. CP Groves asked for a clarification on if the equipment can identify axle count. Fred responded stating that the equipment is a scanning classification vehicle system. Commissioner Caldwell stated that she brought BreezeBy applications to 22 local business to encourage employees, delivery trucks to sign up. She planned on doing this in Stevenson as well. She shared that her big take away was to reach out to ODOT and WSDOT Motorpools and encourage the state motorpools to sign up on the BreezeBy system. CP Groves added that the March ODOT Region 1 meeting is set to take place in the Cascade Locks Pavilion and encouraged everyone to attend. POHR ED Michael McElwee shared that there's been a request and need for transit systems to not be obligated to pay toll and that POHR commission has supported free tolling for public transit systems. CP Groves responded that this issue has recently come to the POCL as well and that the Port is beginning to think through this process. The Commission is in support of public transit systems, but are thinking not in terms of free toll, but in means of funding. Groves went on to explain the proposed toll assistance program on BOG, that Port would put a threshold amount of toll for a month. ED McElwee shared that POHR recently received letter from Yakama Nation in regard to right of passing on the bridge and working on response to that letter. ED McElwee asked about report on how customer base has enlisted, whether it was online or through app or in person. Ryan responded that the Port currently doesn't have that but can access that information. CP Groves asked if the Port is tracking complaints and where they're coming from. Fred responded that they are not tracking, but number one problem staff experiences is credit cards expiring. GM Kaganova asked if vehicle recognition tracking through DMV database is working with both states. Fred responded that yes, Oregon is done language on the vehicle registration, but he is continuing working with Washington Department of Licensing to accomplish the same. Once complete will cover about 90% of customer base. Fred added that he expects a couple more months until license plate recognition is fully ready to implement. There was a discussion on future of toll rates, given that the two Ports have historically not charged enough to accomplish what is needed on the bridges

- d) **Title 23 Waiver Status** – Mark Johnson gave a brief overview of the proposed Title 23 Waiver. He reported that Port of Cascade Locks tolls are used for a variety of other purposes to support economic development. He went on to explain that Pacific Crest Trail crosses the Bridge of the Gods, creating increasingly more pedestrian congestion. The Port of Cascade Locks has proposed to create a Bike-Ped lane attachment to the Bridge of the Gods. Port staff has applied the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area model to this effort by making capital requests to both Oregon and Washington for \$500,000 each to fund the design and engineering for the Bike-Ped path. Mark reported that OneGorge Advocacy Group has been engaged with the Gorge Commission's 2020 Management Plan Update specifically regarding land use policy. He expressed that the Gorge Commission needs to start seeking out economic sectors to pull insight from to ensure the process works for all. Mark expressed that Urban Growth adjustment process needs to be refined. OneGorge is the right voice to speak into that process.

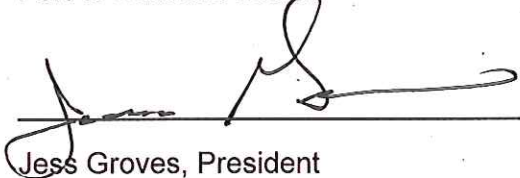
4) Discussion

- a) **Other Possible Joint Venture** – GM Kaganova requested that POHR involve POCL in their strategic planning process for an opportunity for POCL to walk through the process with them. GM Kaganova also requested that both commissions keep aware of opportunities that may bring the Ports together and collaborate for economic development needs in the region. CP Groves

mirrored that statement, expressing that anything the Ports can do to benefit one another should be explored.

- b) **Real Estate clientele and partnership** – GM Olga expressed benefit of partnership will get us further than where we could get individually. POHR Development & Property Manager Anne Menanbach expressed helpfulness of working closely together and being familiar with each other properties and projects.
 - c) **NSA Progress on Economic Development Policy** – CP Groves stated that this was already briefed on earlier in the meeting.
 - d) **Lobbying Efforts** – CP Groves explained that POCL recently changed lobbying efforts to push heavier at the state level opposed to federal. He stated that POCL will be going to the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association Mission Trip to Washington DC this year.
- 5) **Wrap Up Comments** – CP Groves shared that the NOAA Salmon Recovery Task Force has recently published their Columbia River Salmon Recovery Process that took the organization over last 2 years to complete. He shared that the issue of dams is increasing. CP Groves reported that he's been adamant on the Herman Creek Cold Water Refuge project. POHR Commissioner John Everett thanked POCL for inviting and touring POCL facilities and expressed how critical it is to work together as a region.
- 6) **Adjournment: Commissioner Groves adjourned the meeting at 7:53PM.**

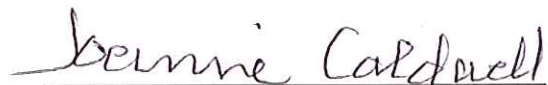
Port of Cascade Locks:



Jess Groves, President

Port Commission

Attest:



Joeinne Caldwell, Secretary

Port Commission

DATE APPROVED: 2-13-2020

Prepared by: Brittany Berge