

**Regular Commission Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2025 – 1:30 pm
2 Marine Drive, Boardman, Oregon 97818**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

John Murray called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Rick Stokoe, John Murray, Kelly Doherty, Joel Peterson, and Danny Kerns

Staff Present: Lisa Mittelsdorf, Miff Devin, Jacob Cain, Tim Patton, Anna Browne, Angel Aguilar, Brandy Warburton, Jeff Montgomery, Chad Snyder and Erika Morton

Visitors Present: Aaron Palmquist, Gordon McKenzie, Walter Timmons, Karen Pettigrew

By Zoom Meeting: (Staff) Eileen Hendricks, Jessica Esparza, Mark Patton
(Guests) Kirby Garrett, Ryann Gleason, Kim Cutsforth, Claire McLeod Ruiz, Debbie Radie, City of Boardman, "Office"

John requested permission to discuss a few items not on the agenda: an update for the Kinzua Mill Site, a community meeting he can report on, and he would like someone to consider replacing him on the Solid Waste Advisory committee, which he has been on for 6 years. He also requested adding an agenda item for commissioners to declare a conflict of interest at the beginning of each meeting.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - None

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. September 10, 2025, Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

Rick made the motion to approve the consent agenda items. Kelly seconded the motion. No further discussion was had. The motion passed unanimously.

Joel Peterson – Yes

John Murray - Yes

Rick Stokoe - Yes

Kelly Doherty – Yes

Danny Kerns - Yes

IV. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

- A. State** – Ryann gave an update for Oregon State Legislative updates. The legislature is currently out of session. The senate was able to convene last week and pass the transportation package on a party-line vote. It continues to face opposition. Parts of the bill could potentially go before voters in November 2026. There are budget problems caused by a slowing economy and the passage of HR1 at the federal level, scaring Oregon legislators. Legislative Days was last week, and a common concern expressed was regarding the effect of the federal budget on Oregonians. There have been discussions in several committees about disconnecting Oregon from the federal tax code. Other issues pertaining to the Port are Water Resources Department rulemaking and work groups around public meetings and law changes. There also have been changes in Republican caucus leadership. John asked what it means to “disconnect from the Federal Tax Code”. Ryann explained that a few states use the federal tax code, but there is an option to “disconnect” select components of that tax code and tailor it for Oregon’s needs.
- B. Federal** – Kirby provided the federal legislative update. It is day eight of the government shut down. There isn’t really an end in sight. Republicans tried to pass a six-week continuing resolution that would have extended spending through Thanksgiving, but Democrats blocked it. They argue that any bill extending funding needs to include three things: 1) a permanent extension of Obamacare tax subsidies through the end of the year; 2) reversal of Medicaid reforms/cuts; 3) language that explicitly requires administration to spend Congressional appropriated funding on what they direct it towards. Neither side is budging.

He also gave an update that, although there had been rumors WIFIA would not be closing on loans, there has been one closure on a WIFIA loan, which is good news for us that it’s still moving ahead.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. CDA Update** – Joel gave a summary of the last meeting. He stated that the road construction will be moving forward. Finances were also discussed, including the current cost of litigation. The fiscal agent was discussed at length. John Schafer from Umatilla County wants to see the books before deciding if Umatilla County is willing to take on that role. Eileen received a request from Emily a day after the meeting and sent the information they requested. She has not received any questions. Finally, the litigation is still ongoing. Lisa remarked that there will be an update regarding litigation in executive session. She also commented that if there are excess funds for road improvements, she is hopeful it can be used to extend Patterson Ferry and provide access to the Morrow County side.
- B. WIFIA Update** – Lisa said there isn’t an update beyond what Kirby reported. We will continue to work with WIFIA as well as pursue other private financing. John asked when the funding was needed by. Mark responded by next September.

- C. CWSRF Update** – There is nothing new to report. Brandy said there is an information report in the packet from David.
- D. Morrow County Clean Water Consortium Update** – Kelly said the next meeting has been moved to accommodate an upcoming community meeting and a city meeting. The minutes from previous meetings are in the packet.
- E. Draft IGA for Management of SIP with Morrow County** – Edited redlined versions of the draft IGA are included in the packet for the commission to consider along with the original from Morrow County. Lisa started the discussion and answered questions. Joel asked about zones and Lisa responded that she drafted the agreement as if it was county wide with no zones. John shared his opinion and said he would like to see a side-by-side comparison of the enterprise zone and SIP. There was a lengthy discussion by the commission regarding potential competition between an enterprise zone and SIP and how SIP funds would be used. Lisa provided information regarding the pros and cons of each program. Lisa was directed to bring a side-by-side comparison of the two programs to the next meeting for the commission's review.
- F. Other**
John said there have been recent county meetings regarding the future of the Heppner Fair Grounds and how to make it more useable. He could not attend due to a conflict but wonders how the Kinzua mill site might potentially be used to help.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Customer Service Training – Angel** – Angel Aguilar gave a brief presentation and answered questions regarding the upcoming Guest Service Gold Certification training at the SAGE Event Center. It's a great opportunity with sponsorships available. We'd like to see as many people as possible participate in the training. Eighty-one participants are currently registered with around twenty still open. The training is designed for anyone working in customer service, no matter what industry.
- B. Other**
John requested someone replace him on the solid waste committee. They meet quarterly. Kelly said she would consider it and will let him know.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

- A. Project Updates** – Jeff Montgomery gave a report on warehousing, including staffing levels, palette positions, and the AIB audit. They will be sending some of their staff to the customer service training. Tillamook is changing their packaging, which will affect how many pallets are available. The warehouse is considering steel racking. He also answered questions from the commission.

Jacob highlighted projects at the airport, surface water treatment plants, and the lagoons at

Farms 3 and 4: testing will be October 25 at Farm 3, which is on schedule; Farm 4 is under construction with the electrical delayed by about two weeks. Silver Creek has started work in Heppner and progress is being made. Two-thirds of the erosion control is in place; excavation and demolition of existing buildings and infrastructure have begun. The project is expected to be complete by February 2026. The Kunze feedline project will be mobilized in November. The canal bore is also scheduled in November after the irrigation season is over. Bids will be opened for the Terminal 1 dredging project on October 23. Aqua Engineering continues to make progress on secondary treatment. RFPs have been released and will be opened on November 6. We are on schedule.

- B. Maintenance Update** - Tim talked about maintenance projects. Our crew just finished Farm 2 lagoon installation. They're working on the Sand Dune manifold this week. We have a new electrical station going in at East Beach. We broke ground for a tank at Pond 41. Ground crews are busy getting ready for fall and Christmas.
- C. Financial Update** – Eileen gave the financial update was available to answer questions. She provided more information about disconnecting between state and federal taxes and noted that it won't have an effect on the Port.
- D. Usage Reports** – The commission reviewed the usage reports in the packet.
- E. Other**
No other staff reports were discussed at the time.

VIII. OTHER REPORTS

- A. WCVEDG** – Kim provided an update for WCVEDG. The fall community enhancement grants are open for applications until next week. The small homes are complete and listed for sale. Outreach for their programs is going well.
- B. BCDA** – Torrie is out of town, but a report is available in the packet.
- C. ICABO** – Joel said the project is back on schedule and set to be complete next spring. Their Ed Foundation dinner was held and raised funds.
- D. Other**
No other reports were given.

- IX. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER** – Karen Pettigrew announced that there will be an emergency preparedness presentation for seniors later this month in both Boardman on October 23, and in Heppner. There will be “goodie bags” for seniors to help with emergency preparedness.

X. UPCOMING EVENTS:

November 12	1:30 PM	POM Regular Commission Meeting
February 5-8		SDAO Annual Conference, Seaside
December 12		POM Christmas Party at the SAGE Event Center

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

John read the following statement and recessed the open session at 2:45 PM.

The Port will hold an executive session meeting for the permissible reason(s) stated below under ORS 192.660(2). Representatives of the news media and designated staff and other persons shall be allowed to attend the executive session. All other members of the audience will be asked to leave the room. The public virtual Zoom Meeting link will be closed during the executive session as permissible executive session meetings are not subject to HB2560. Representatives of the news media are specifically directed not to report on any of the deliberations during the executive session, except to state the general subject of the session as previously announced. No decision will be made in this executive session. At the end of the executive session, we will return to open session and welcome the audience back into the room in-person and open the public virtual Zoom Meeting link again.

A. For the Purpose of Consideration of Deliberations with the Port's Executive Director and Other Staff Members Who Have Been Designated by the Port to Negotiate Real Property Transactions – ORS 192.660 (2)(e)

B. For the Purpose of Consideration of the following information or records that are exempt by law from public inspection pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(f)

C. For the Purpose of Consultation with Counsel Concerning the Legal Rights and Duties of a Public Body with Regard to Current Litigation or Litigation Likely to be Filed – ORS 192.660 (2)(h)

John reconvened the open session and asked if there were any other items to discuss.

Lisa and Mark will work with Sam to review our current non-disclosure agreement form, refresh it, and make sure it includes current law. On existing agreements, we would like to refresh those, even though it might mean terminating and entering into new agreements. Non-disclosure agreements are a common and frequent practice. If it's something commissioners are ever approached about, we will make sure you have a copy of those. Typically, it's Mark or Lisa speaking with a third-party consultant regarding a potential project and we may not even know the company name. Rick remarked that there used to be a form for the commission to sign acknowledging that there is confidential information through NDAs they may be discussing, and he would like to see us use them for all commissioners. He will find his copy and send it to us.

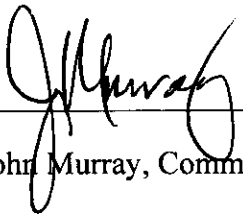
Regarding the CDA and the issue of fiscal agent - Lisa recalls that the Port of Morrow said we would carry the position until the November meeting. No one is taking that over before the

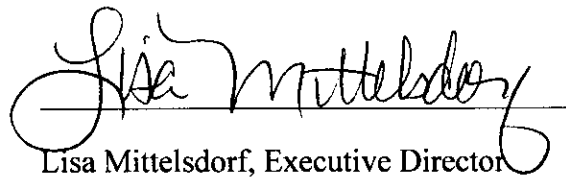
November meeting yet and we may need to discuss it in November and consider an extension. John said if there are pending agreements with the lawsuit and contracting the employees by then, it would be easier to make a more informed decision. Lisa agreed regarding the contract employees. The IGA states that one of the agencies must be the fiscal agent. Kelly suggested potentially rewriting the IGA. There was a discussion regarding state and federal grants and the need for a fiscal agent. Someone must be responsible for managing grant funds.

John requested on our next agenda to add proposals for land use at the CDA. There's been lots of thoughts about how it will be used, and he would like to know more, like the Patterson Ferry access. Lisa said we can have a general discussion, but as far as land use for the property she feels strategic planning is needed, which will be a multi-meeting discussion.

Nothing else was discussed. John adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by:


John Murray, Commission President


Lisa Mittelsdorf, Executive Director

Port of Morrow Commission
Public Comment Sign-in Sheet



If you are interested in addressing the Commission under the Public Comment portion of the Agenda, please sign-in below before the meeting starts. A copy of the Public Comment Policy is available to any member of the public who wishes to speak.

DATE: October 8, 2025

FULL NAME:

PHONE:

TOPIC:

PORT OF MORROW
Regular Commission Meeting
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SIGN-IN SHEET

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