Regular Commission Meeting Minutes
July 8, 2026 – 1:30 pm
2 Marine Drive, Boardman, Oregon 97818

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

John Murray called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

Commissioners Present:	John Murray, Kelly Doherty, Joel Peterson, and Jerry Rietmann. Rick Stokoe was present on Zoom.
Staff Present:	Lisa Mittelsdorf, Mark Patton, Eileen Hendricks, Tim Helbig, Marcine Brangham, Jeff Wilson, Jeff Montgomery, Angel Aguilar, Jason Hendricks, Anna Browne, Brandy Warburton, and Erika Morton
Visitors Present:	Torrie Griggs, Deb Imus, David Richards, Brenda Proffit, Sara Taylor, Isavel Gonzalez, Beth Purves, Dave Radie
By Zoom Meeting:	(Staff) Jessica Esparza (Guests) Jared Tesch, Debbie Radie, Geroge Cress, Kim Cutsforth, Ryann Gleason, Sam Tucker, Emily Collins, Michael Miller, David Ulbricht, John Doherty, Jackie Iserman (joe), CHrinkvich, Michael Schrader, Morrow County, Aaron Palmquist, Valerie Ballard

Changes to the agenda: John removed the commission bylaws from the agenda today. All the commissioners agreed. He also added under new business, the CREZ III IGA. Lisa requested a change in order under old business to accommodate Jared Tesch, who has a meeting conflict.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Deb Imus read a letter from 12 Morrow County residents requesting a change of representation on the Morrow County Water Coalition Board. The letter is as follows:

June 25, 2026
Port of Morrow Commissioners
2 Marine Drive
Boardman, OR 97818

Subject: Request for Representation Change on Morrow County Water Coalition Board

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing as a group of concerned residents of Morrow County, some of whom actively serve on the Morrow County Water Coalition as Board Members or Advisory Board, as well as others who have participated in public meetings and discussions regarding water issues impacting our community. We respectfully request that the Port of Morrow consider appointing a different representative in place of Commissioner Kelly Doherty to serve on the Morrow County Water Coalition Board.

Our request is rooted in a shared desire to see the Coalition operate with a strong emphasis on collaboration, progress and unified purpose. Given the critical importance of water quality and sustainability to the health, economy and future of our county, we believe it is essential that all representatives actively support the Coalition's mission and work constructively with diverse stakeholders.

Specifically, we are seeking representation that:
- Demonstrates a collaborative spirit and fosters productive dialogue among stakeholders
- Supports the Coalition's mission and objectives in both meetings and the broader community
- Encourages forward momentum and avoids actions that may impede progress
- Advocates for the effective and timely use of available funding to achieve meaningful outcomes
- Works to bring people together in a solutions-oriented and proactive manner

The Water Coalition represents an important opportunity for Morrow County to address complex water challenges through partnership, transparency and decisive action. Representation that reflects these values will strengthen both the Coalition and the broader community it serves.

We appreciate the Port's leadership and ongoing commitment to addressing these critical issues and respectfully ask that you give our request your thoughtful consideration.

Thank you for your time and dedication to Morrow County.

Sincerely,
Deb Imus, Boardman Well Owner
Tom Imus, Boardman Well Owner
David Sykes, Board Member, Heppner Community Member, County Commissioner
Isabel Rodriguez, Advisory Board Member
Brenda Profitt, Boardman City Council
Evan Purves, Irrigon Community Member

Sarah Taylor, Boardman Well Owner
Deanna Camp, Boardman Community Member
Dave Radie, Irrigon Well Owner
Debbie Radie, Advisory Board Member, Irrigon Well Owner
Maryann and Bob Hancock, Boardman Residents
David Richards, Boardman Resident

If you would like to talk to any of these residents directly for any follow-up questions, please feel free to contact Deb Imus at 541-571-3706.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

A. June 10, 2026, Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

B. June 25, 2026, Special Commission Meeting Minutes

Joel made the motion to approve the consent agenda items. Jerry seconded the motion. No further discussion was had. The motion passed unanimously.
Rick Stokoe - Yes
Joel Peterson – Yes
John Murray - Yes
Kelly Doherty – Yes
Jerry Rietmann - Yes

III. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

A. State– Ryan gave the state legislative update. She noted that many updates she was tracking for the Port took place throughout June. She highlighted items that have statewide impact, including the retirement of the OHA director and Medicaid cuts. There is still no update on the Oregon Water Resources Department concepts. The PUC has approved PGE's rate increase for large industrial users. Data centers and tax breaks are a growing topic in the legislature. She also mentioned the $1.3 million grant application with Connect Oregon for Terminal 3. We are also working with Lisa and Mark for priority funding requests for 2027.

IV. OLD BUSINESS – *Agenda items A, B, and C were switched to allow Jared Tesch and David Ulbricht time to make appointments this afternoon. The original agenda item is noted in parenthesis.*

A. **(B) Morrow County Clean Water Consortium Update** – Jared Tesch gave an update. He has been speaking one on one with residents to gather information. He continues to research alternative solutions and expand his network, attend meetings, and look for additional funding resources. He said the drinking water roadmap project is wrapping up and should have a final report ready this fall. He gave an update regarding the West Glenn area in Boardman. He also is continuing research requested by the Boardman City Council so they can make a better decision. Conversations with West Glenn have been positive so far. To date, he's met with 14 residents, 13 of the homes were open to receiving water from the City of Boardman. There are potentially 130 households in that area to meet with still.

John asked for clarification regarding the public comment and asked to see the letter. He would like to better understand the issues. He read the names of people who signed the letter. He asked Kelly if she would like to say anything. Kelly responded that she doesn't think the people who signed the letter aren't affected residents. She knows the affected residents pretty well. A lengthy discussion followed regarding concerns stated in the letter, Port representation, cost estimates, forward progress, and what that should look like.

Jerry made the motion to remove Kelly Doherty from the water consortium and choose a new member. Joel seconded the motion. There was further discussion. Kelly remarked that she feels this is a personal vendetta against her. She doesn't feel she has done a bad job, has pushed for meetings the public can attend, and advocated for city involvement. She stated she is very connected with the residents, and she feels they have a different opinion than the Port commission. John commented hearing that 13 of 14 residents, who have been contacted so far, would be willing to accept city water is a pretty positive sign that this project needs to move forward. Rick stated that he has heard from other residents with concerns and believes Kelly represents ORA more than the Port of Morrow. Kelly said she is not a member or part of ORA. The motion carried with Kelly abstaining.
Rick Stokoe - Yes
Joel Peterson – Yes
John Murray - Yes
Jerry Rietmann – Yes
Kelly Doherty – Abstained

Second change to the agenda – David Ulbricht also needs to leave by 2:30.

B. (C.) Refinance Update – David provided an update for refinancing and answered questions. We have a financing plan in place to refinance outstanding notes for a three-year term. This creates as much flexibility for the Port as possible and other forms of financing that may be available for projects. We are on track for the finding and should be no later than mid-September. We are working closely with the underwriting group that helped last time and the Port's bond attorney.

C. (A.) CDA Update – Emily Collins gave a report for the CDA. The only remaining tasks on the road project are for ODOT right-of-way and striping. ODOT funding has been used and she understands that the Port is covering funding until the UEC grant is finalized. She also said purchase and sale agreements are moving forward. They hope to have them approved at the next CDA meeting. The auction is also proceeding with proposals from auction companies due July 21.

Joel asked if all invoices have been caught up. There was discussion regarding payments and the IGA. Lisa asked about the easements. Emily said the best course of action is to contact CTUIR, since it will be their property. She is happy to facilitate.

D. SIP IGA with County – Jerry said there isn't much to update. The County has proposed an IGA, but he feels it falls short. We need to draft an option and respond with a counter offer. We are slowly progressing.

E. Strategic Business Plan Update – Lisa said we had follow up questions and we responded with answers. The amount of the grant has not changed. We will be moving forward with an RFP. Our previous contractor has already provided an estimate for the economic impact. We are hoping to have this complete by the end of the year.

F. Commission Bylaws Update – Postponed until next month.

G. Executive Director Review – Clarification – We pursed the option legal recommended. We held a special session to follow the letter of law and appointed one commissioner to negotiate and execute with our executive director.

Kelly commented on the process and read a letter she wrote for the public record objecting to the previous decision made at the special meeting. Her letter is included below for the record.

> *Find this letter as a formal dissension to be placed in the public record:*
>
> *I object to the motion passed during the special meeting on June 24th 2026 which delegated final execution authority to a single commissioner. At our prior meeting I explicitly warned this Commission that having two commissioners meet to decide on this contract in private was a direct violation of Oregon public meeting law. Instead of returning this major financial decision to a transparent public forum this board reached out to legal counsel and chose a path forward in a loophole. A loophole in definition should never replace the intent of the law: ORS 192.660(4) the prohibition of final actions outside of open sessions. Bad faith and subterfuge is not a positive direction for the Port.*
>
> *As an elected port commissioner, I have a strict fiduciary duty to oversee the expenditures of public funds. An executive contract is a massive financial liability for this port. By stripping the five member Commission of our right to review, deliberate and vote on the final contract terms in an open session you have disenfranchised me, you have disenfranchised this board, and you have shut out the*

taxpayers of Morrow County.

I will not accept any legal or financial liability for a contract executed unilaterally by one Commissioner.

Therefore Mr. Chair; I move to rescind the motion passed at the special meeting and to strip Commissioner Reitman of the unilateral authority to execute the contract and require that the final negotiated contract and salary package be brought back to the full 5-member Commission for a roll call vote in an open public meeting.

John stated there is a motion on the floor. There was no second and the motion died for lack of a second. John asked if there were any comments by the other commissioners – a lengthy discussion followed regarding legality and process.

H. Other
No other old business was discussed at the time.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Ordinance 2026-01 – An Ordinance Declaring Intent to Create a Special Assessment District Pursuant to ORS 777.530 - First Reading – Eileen provided an overview of the ordinance. It would provide a local improvement district only for wastewater users and offers an alternative to pay for wastewater infrastructure improvements. There are 22 users who would be affected. Rick asked if we know what the boundaries for the district would be and Eileen answered. Michael Schrader was available via Zoom and helped to answer questions and offered additional information.

Kelly made the motion to satisfy the first reading by reading the title only. Jerry seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.
Rick Stokoe - Yes
Joel Peterson – Yes
John Murray - Yes
Kelly Doherty – Yes
Jerry Rietmann – Yes

John read the title. "An Ordinance Declaring Intent To Create A Special Assessment District Pursuant To ORS 777.530 For The Purpose Of Levying Special Assessments Upon Certain Properties Within The Port of Morrow That Will Benefit From the Port's Construction Or Acquisition Of Certain Local Improvements Including, Without Limitation, Construction Or Acquisition Of Certain Secondary Treatment Facilities As Part Of The Port's Existing Industrial Reuse Water Treatment Facilities; Providing Notice Of

A Local Improvement District Formation Hearing to Affected Property Owners; And Other Matters Related Thereto."

B. Other

CREZ III IGA – John asked what the next steps are to initiate the discussion. Lisa said we could draft language and send it to the CREZ III Board. John directed Lisa to do so.

Change of August meeting date – Lisa requested a change of date for the August meeting and suggested Monday, August 3, to accommodate vacation dates. Jerry said he will be traveling but could probably Zoom in. The date is clear for the other commissioners, although Rick can't check his calendar. The time will remain the same.

Agenda Packets - Kelly asked if we can make our agenda packets publicly available. Brandy explained that adding it to the website is doable, but last-minute changes means that it wouldn't be available until after. Kelly argued that the City and County both make it available. The commission agreed. Lisa said we are working towards a system that we can hot link the agenda and packet. Until that time, it will be added to the website and linked like the agenda.

VI. STAFF REPORTS

A. Project Updates – Tim Helbig gave a presentation regarding the Connect Oregon Grant for Terminal 3 and answered questions. The grant is being submitted for $1.29 million, and the total project cost is $1.8 million. The Port will provide a 30% match. Construction will be ready in early 2027 with project completion in 2028.

B. Maintenance Update – Jeff Wilson talked about the surface water treatment facilities, new booster stations, SAGE Center ADA ramp, road construction projects, improvements at the South Morrow Industrial Park, and water pipe installation at the Airport while Erika showed photos of the projects. John asked Angel to give a quick update for the SAGE Center.

C. Financial Update – Eileen gave the financial update. The auditors will be here in August.

D. Usage Reports – The commission reviewed the reports in their packet.

E. Other
No other staff reports were discussed at the time.

VII. OTHER REPORTS

A. WCVEDG – Kim gave an update. One of the homes is pending for sale and one of the houses is being rented by MCHD for their traveling employees. They have also been able to support Heppner Daycare and Willow Creek Terrace. John mentioned a press release from Gilliam County and talked about childcare statistics for Morrow County. He would love to see support for childcare boosted in our county through things like SIP agreements.

B. BCDA – Torrie talked about projects and support that BCDA has been involved with, highlighting housing, childcare, business incubator, and recreation. They allocate $30,000 each year to Families First Childcare, which comes from the CREZ agreements. They continue to see new homebuyers utilizing the grants – there have been 32 applications this year. They have almost exceeded their budget for that grant this year.

C. ICABO – Jerry said they take the summer off and there are no updates.

D. Other

VIII. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

IX. UPCOMING EVENTS:

July 10	4-7 PM	POM Employee & Family Appreciation BBQ
August 3	1:30 PM	POM Regular Commission Meeting

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

John read the executive session statement and adjourned the regular meeting at 3:37 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 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)

Submitted by:

JMurray

John Murray, Commission President

Lisa Mittelsdorf

Lisa Mittelsdorf, Executive Director

PORT OF MORROW

Regular Commission Meeting

July 8, 2026

SIGN-IN SHEET

NAME PLEASE PRINT	COMPANY REPRESENTING	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS (If we don't have it)
Deb Imus	—	541-571-3706	—
David Richards	—	541-571-5949	richardsd55895@hotmail.com
Isavel Gonzalez		541-571-6631	
Tomi Griggs			
Beth Purves		541-561-6289	bethpurves@msn.com
Brenda Proffitt		541-571-7642	proffittbrenda@gmail.com
Jeff Montgomery	Pomw	541-371-4971	
Angel Aguilar	POM/SAGE	541-371-1772	

Port of Morrow Commission
Public Comment Sign-in Sheet

PORT OF MORROW

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: July 8, 2026

FULL NAME:	PHONE:	TOPIC:
Deb Imus	541-571-3706	Req. for ~~Repres~~ Change to Water Coalition Board
~~Deanna Cam~~		
~~Sarah Taylor~~	~~541-403-3025~~	