

**Port of Skamania County
Minutes of the
Board of Commissioners' Workshop
December 3, 2002**

Call to Order: Board President Commissioner Judy Teitzel called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Attendance: Commissioner Judy Teitzel, Commissioner Doug McKenzie, Commissioner Dave Prosser, Executive Director Anita Gahimer, Business and Project Development Manager John McSherry and Acting Administrative Assistant Lynee Sapere. Members of the public attending the meeting included Keith Liggett, Valerie Kelly, Dennis Crow and Brian Adams. Port Attorney Ken Woodrich was absent due to an out-of-town seminar. Note: The meeting was audio-taped by John McSherry with no objections from the Board.

Public Statement by the Executive Director: Anita made a formal apology to John McSherry on behalf of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, and all Port Staff that John learned about the proposed changes in the 2003 Budget that would directly affect his position through public sources following the November 26th Regular Board Meeting rather than through her. As John had not been in attendance at the November meeting, Anita called his residence at 8:15 pm following the meeting to schedule a meeting to discuss the proposed changes but members of the public had already reached him by phone at another meeting he was attending.

Proposed 2003 Budget: Anita noted there were no changes requested for the Capital Budget but that the Commissioners had asked for further detail on the Wages and Benefits section of the General Budget. Anita highlighted the detailed report noting the original proposal included a 3% increase for the Facilities Specialist, a wage of \$13.50 for the Financial Specialist (new position), \$11.45 for the new Administrative Assistant, and \$12.50 for the Maintenance Technician, the amount requested by his supervisor. Anita also clarified that Jan's proposed overall increase in the budget under Commissioners' compensation was to cover the increased number of meetings. Anita made a request to the Board that should any decisions be made today on the budget that those decisions be finalized formally at the next scheduled regular Board meeting, December 10th per the plan previously published for the public.

Anita proceeded to provide a report that she and John had prepared at the request of the Commissioners outlining the functions of the major projects and responsibilities of the Business and Project Development Manager with specific assignments including man-hours. The report also compared cost differences

between providing these services by an in-house employee versus contracting outside professional services.

Commissioner Teitzel referenced a November 2000 document: "Position Description Summaries for Proposed 2001 Organizational Structure" which described the "Business/ Project Development Specialist" position as being developed to "meet the Port's needs as we move into the phase of developing and marketing our waterfront for business development, Parcel 2, and the 200 acre Wind River Nursery Site. We now have land on which to build and something to market." She then questioned whether the decision to take the Wind River Nursery project off the Port's project list then leaves enough need to support a full-time position. Judy indicated that some tasks should be in the hands of the Executive Director and others should be managed by someone with a construction background.

Commissioner McKenzie stated he is concerned with other dollar commitments on projects, such as the boat launch, and also feels that the loss of the Wind River Nursery project changes the Port's marketing needs.

Anita reviewed the properties that are now being marketed and future plans for waterfront development. She also reminded the commission that the position includes Project Management and Capital Improvement. John stepped in to offer to act as Project Manager on the Cascade Avenue Boat Launch and beachfront mitigation projects.

Public Comment: Valerie Kelly pointed out that the mission of the Port to develop resources and create jobs is filled with other projects, even without the Wind River Nursery.

Anita agreed that "assignments have evolved as the Port has grown". John mentioned the Discovery Building, Springwater (call center), and other lease-income-generating projects.

Dennis Crow offered his comments about the already taxing workload of the Executive Director. He said the 60-hour work weeks and stress level has made him concerned for Anita's health. He feels this is a poor time to consider staff reduction with so much going on.

Commissioner McKenzie said that no one has ever questioned Anita's dedication and workload. Anita pointed out that the Port would have to decrease the number of projects if we're decreasing staff. She feels she cannot work more hours but feels strongly that she wants to meet all the commitments.

Keith Liggett commented that universally "marketing is underrated and under-respected" and very stressful. It requires someone that understands the projects, is successful at public relations, and is adept as a member of the community. Some of the activities of a marketing person go towards building a foundation and are not seen on a day-to-day basis as accomplishments.

Dennis Crow added that the Port mission has included actions towards "incubation" of businesses to create and promote opportunities and the Port would lose that without this position.

Commissioner Teitzel stepped in to say that we should give 95% of the credit (for these types of activities) to Anita for existing tenants. Discussion followed regarding the source of leads for Gorge Delights, from a meeting Anita attended in Hood River, and the call center potential tenant was a referral through the EDC. John commented that networking generates leads. Anita noted that once a lead is generated, John runs with it developing it until Anita gets involved again with contract terms. John used Gorge Delights as an example, noting he showed the Discovery building to them six times and contacted the USDA to expedite the process of putting together a workable deal.

Commissioner Dave Prosser said that he's had conversations with former Commissioner Matt Masco who had many good things to say about Anita and her work except that she tries to "do everything" and needs to set priorities. Dave also expressed his opinion that the top five responsibilities of the Job Summary and Purpose of the Business and Project Development Manager position "have Executive Director written all over it". Dave said that John does a great job and always has, but he feels Anita can do the grant writing. Dave did comment that the "more manpower we have out there, the better we are as a Port".

At the request of the Commissioners, Anita then listed the areas of expertise where John's experiences exceed her own. She has been very impressed with his graphic arts skills and visual creativity and his work using Photoshop and Illustrator to produce the Marketing cut sheets. Anita said John's construction background is more broad-based than her own and he therefore can do a better job managing projects. She said it was a hard decision how to take pieces out of her job to delegate to the new position. Dave then commented that it appears that Project Management is a big part of the job.

Anita also pointed out that the County project would also be on John's plate too if the Port takes a role in developing the ____ acres currently owned by the County in North Bonneville. Anita does the negotiations, then passes the project to John or whoever is Project Manager.

Commissioner Teitzel then addressed the need to prioritize the projects for 2003. Judy listed the Fiber project, Cascade Avenue Boat Launch, and Fort Cascades Industrial Park as the top three.

Commissioner Prosser added that "if we have a full list and there's work for everyone, that's what we need." He said we need to know what direction we are headed.

Anita and John then outlined the progress on the Springwater call center. John indicated they are very likely getting their funding and will know soon and that Springwater has bought the underlying business with 30 jobs. Anita said they have a lease agreement on the table and that she will distribute their updated business plan in the Commissioner packets this week.

Anita then reviewed the evolution of Port projects over the past few years and how the Port has moved from gaining land assets to developing those assets toward providing jobs. She included examples of Parcel 2, the Discovery Building, and the opportunity to work on Wind River Nursery with its attractive number of proposed jobs.

Commissioner McKenzie questioned some specific numbers in John's report. He said of the six major projects listed, two are fixed and "the other four are possibilities". John touched on the progress on several of these projects and noted the existing marketing grant fund has not all been spent yet.

Commissioner Teitzel asked about the costs of relocating businesses if several are displaced due to the call center. Anita said the figures are not available at this time. She reminded the commissioners that reserve fund dollars do not appear in the General Fund Budget, only as cash-on-hand in the Financial Report.

The commissioners redefined the current priorities listing: the Fiber Project, the Cascade Avenue Boat Launch, Expansion of the Tichenor Building (on-going), Shoreline Improvement Project, and Fort Cascades Business Industrial Space.

John commented that he has recent project experience on the Drano Lake project while working for the EDC including getting all the permits.

Dave then asked John to comment on a portion of his job performance evaluation where it noted he "needs improvement". John indicated he feels he needs to work on personal contacts with the commissioners and with Deana. Dave asked if John was willing to work on this and John answered "absolutely".

John also stated that he feels we've made much progress and the workload is here, and it would be a shame to let personal differences affect that.

Members of the public made a few final comments. Keith Ligget feels that someone needs to be forward-thinking and plan for the future. He supports the call center and the number of jobs it would bring to the county and pointed out this type of business provides better "vertical flexibility" without the glass ceiling often found in many industries. Brian Adams feels that the commissioner's actions should represent their constituents.

Proposed 2003 Tax Levy: Commissioner McKenzie stated he summarily opposes any increase. Commissioner Teitzel felt a compromise in the amount of increased proposed would allow the Port to do our projects (50% of the \$9000). Commissioner Prosser noted the central portion of the district is more directly affected by the Port projects than the West or East end so he would support 30% of the potential \$9000 increase.

Anita referred to a Tax Levy chart for the past ten years and noted that we only have the information from the assessor's office to go on.

A meeting was scheduled for December 17th at ____pm to finalize both the Budget and Tax Resolution issues.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:10pm.

Commissioner Judy Teitzel

Commissioner Doug McKenzie

Commissioner Dave Prosser

ATTEST:

Lynne Sapere, Acting Administrative Assistant