PORT OF CENTRALIA
Established 1986

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Minutes
Regular Meeting of the
PORT OF CENTRALIA
May 24, 2023
Port of Centralia Administrative Office & Via Teleconference
3:00 PM

Attendees: Commissioners: Kyle Markstrom, Julie Shaffley, and Peter Lahmann
Executive Director: Kyle Heaton
Press: Owen Sexton, The Chronicle
Public: Gary Odegaard; David Nunn; Jan Banevich; Joe Gaylor; Dawn Merchant; Elizabeth Cameron; Cynthia Mudge, Centralia-Chehalis Chamber of Commerce; Brian Dow; and Bob Jackins
Teleconference: Five unknown callers

1) **Call Meeting to Order/Introductions:** Commissioner Markstrom called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2) **Approval of Agenda:** Commissioner Shaffley made a motion to approve the May 24, 2023, agenda as submitted. Commissioner Lahmann seconded the motion. The motion carried.

3) **Good of the Order/Public Comment:** Commissioner Markstrom opened the meeting to public comment and stated the rules regarding public comment.

Gary Odegaard, of Centralia, said that he lives in Precinct 10. He said that Commissioner Markstrom mentioned being compassionate for the community and said that they are, too. He said that some say those in the watchdog group are not compassionate about the community, but the Port has done a lot of good things and they appreciate that. He commented that it is tough to get information and they would like more transparency, as they have said before. At the previous meeting, he had asked who had authorized the investigation into Commissioner Lahmann and had asked if there was any discussion at the Port meeting about it. He said he was not asking for detail or whether what Commissioner Lahmann was right or wrong, but it would not take long for a short little answer. He also had asked who appointed Amy Graber the Port Auditor and if she would be the auditor forever, which would also be a short little answer. He said the Commissioner Markstrom would get back to him but had not. Commissioner Markstrom asked him for his email address.

Jan Banevich, of Centralia, said that Kyle Heaton provides updates on projects, but does not give the view from the other side to the eyes of the people living in the area. She said that this was their view. She said that although Midway has been very good at working throughout the winter months, they leave the roads in a mess and place detour signs where there is no need for detour signs other than to confuse people, and there are open fences that are not blocked off for safety. She said that as for how the work affects the neighbors living in the area, they have had their houses covered in dust, they have dealt with evacuations due to gas lines being cut, damage to

their plumbing due to water lines being broken, and pretty much every utility line being broken at least once. She said that many neighbors have had drywall in their houses crack from intense and prolonged vibration and shaking caused by the company's construction equipment. She said that some people have had Midway knock on their door with no prior notification wanting to remove part of a fence because it is in the way. She said that people have lost trees, rhododendrons, et cetera, without prior notice. They constantly have trucks with trailers filled over the limit with rocks or dirt on the streets and roads not designated for that weight or an upgrade. She said that they are not against businesses coming in as people have rumored, but getting there has and will continue to be one big headache for them. She believed that the Port and Midway are responsible for any damages to private property as a result of the construction work for this project. She said that she has had her damages taken care of by the City of Centralia and the bill was then sent to Midway, but others need to be advised where to submit a claim and how to do that. She asked Kyle Heaton if he would like volunteer to pressure wash the houses.

Cynthia Mudge, executive director of the Centralia-Chehalis Chamber of Commerce, announced a spring hiring event and several other upcoming Chamber events.

Brian Dow, of Centralia, echoed Gary Odegaard's comments regarding the investigation of Commissioner Lahmann. He said that what the auditor came up with seemed to be somewhat trivial things. He said that what Commissioner Lahmann attempts to do is help the veterans and he does not know why that crossed into a conflict of interest. He felt that Commissioner Lahmann was singled out and that there are other things that could be audited over the last couple of years that he has been attending meetings. He said that trips and reimbursements and things like that have been checked into and he did not want to bring it up to this point until Commissioner Lahmann was singled out. He said it was unfair.

4) **Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Lahmann made a motion to approve the May 10, 2023, regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Shaffley seconded the motion. The motion carried.

5) **Approval of Warrants:** Commissioner Shaffley made a motion to approve warrants 23119 through 23137 with an aggregate amount of $60,118.70. Commissioner Lahmann seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Commissioner Markstrom mentioned that the Commissioners have in front of them a list of warrants with the payment dates, warrant numbers, amounts, who the payment was made to, and the purpose the payment was for. He said that the warrants are on the agenda and Commissioners are able to ask questions and comment on them. He said that the Port handles the warrant process similarly to other local agencies.

6) **New Business:**

a) **Executive Director Report:** Kyle Heaton reported on the ongoing issues with transient motorhomes trespassing in the Port and ongoing landscape maintenance projects. He gave an update on the I-5/Mellen Street Connector project for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 and stated that Midway Underground will have an upcoming change order.

b) **I-5/Mellen Street Connector Stage 1 - Pay Estimate #6:** Commissioner Shaffley made a motion to approve Pay Estimate #6 with Midway Underground in the amount of $964,525.58. Commissioner Lahmann seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Commissioner Markstrom opened the agenda item for public comment. There was no public comment made.

c) **Commissioner Reports:** Commissioner Markstrom said that he did not attend any meetings since the Commissioners last met but he did receive notification that there will be a North Lewis County Industrial Access study meeting on June 22, 2023.

Commissioner Lahmann asked Kyle Heaton if Midway Underground owned the crusher that it was using. Kyle Heaton replied that he did not know if it was owned or leased. Commissioner Lahmann announced an American Legion Memorial Day event at Washington Park.

Commissioner Shaffley reported that she attended the Centralia-Chehalis Chamber of Commerce board meeting and will be attending the Economic Alliance of Lewis County meeting board meeting later in the week.

7) **Adjourn:** Commissioner Shaffley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:18 p.m. Commissioner Lahmann seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Gita Lahmann
COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER