PORT OF CENTRALIA
Established 1986

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Minutes
Regular Meeting of the
PORT OF CENTRALIA
May 10, 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: David Nunn; Gary Odegaard; Jan Banevich; Brian Dow; Bob Jackins; Bill Ralph; and Cynthia Mudge, Centralia-Chehalis Chamber
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 Lahmann made a motion to approve the May 10, 2023, agenda as submitted. Commissioner Shaffley 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 there is an article in The Chronicle about State Representative Abbarno introducing a bill to allow for more transparency and lower costs of public records requests. He said that State Representative Abbarno plans to work next session to get the bill through and added that people have the right to know how those decisions are made. He asked who authorized the investigation into Peter Lahmann and if there was any discussion or action taken in a Port meeting. He also asked who appointed Amy Graber the Port Auditor and if there was a discussion at a Port meeting on that.

   Jan Banevich, of Centralia, said that the right to represent yourself regardless of the popularity of your view is basic to a democratic society and that it needed to be recognized that if one person can be silenced, everyone can. She said that the Facebook group Centralia Citizens for an Open and Honest Government has over 755 members and is growing every day. She said that it should be asked why there are so many people interested in the administration of the Port. She said the Port does the bare minimum of what is legally required compared to other Ports and she opined that the Port's lack of transparency is appalling. She added that sneers, smirks, and eye rolling is not a good look for anyone and said that maybe it was time to start doing what they were put in those positions to do for the people and not themselves. She said it was the peoples' Port, they pay for it, and the Port does its best to exclude them.

Brian Dow, of Centralia, asked if the warrants can be added to the agenda so the public can see what the costs for the expenditures are and what they are for. He said otherwise the public hears the warrants being passed but have no idea what is for.

Bill Ralph, of Centralia, said that the Commissioners are actually employees of the public and as an asset they have the obligation to act in the public interest. He said that he also wanted to have a few words on the apparent ongoing efforts to "get" Commissioner Lahmann, whether it is getting him not to run or to resign, whatever it may be. He said he was pretty offended by it. He said that Commissioner Lahmann was one of the most honest, decent people he has ever known. He said that he has known Commissioner Lahmann for about 10 years and he has always been willing to donate his time. He has never heard him tell a lie about anything and said he is an incredible person and an incredible public servant. He is concerned that the latest investigation might have been timed to discourage Commissioner Lahmann from reapplying to run again and, if that is the case, it is disgraceful. He said the Commissioners should consider what they are doing, how they are doing it, and what their motivations are for these investigations.

Cynthia Mudge, executive director of the Centralia-Chehalis Chamber of Commerce, gave an update on the Top 25 Centralia and Chehalis students scholarship luncheon and announced several upcoming Chamber events.

4) **Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Shaffley made a motion to approve the April 19, 2023, regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Lahmann seconded the motion. The motion carried.

5) **Approval of Warrants:** Commissioner Lahmann made a motion to approve warrants 23077 through 23118 with an aggregate amount of $547,986.58. Commissioner Shaffley seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Commissioner Lahmann said that he would still like to see a report from Lewis Consulting to see what the Port is getting for its money.

6) **New Business:**

a) **Executive Director Report:** Kyle Heaton reported that there was no pay estimate from Midway Underground, but progress continues. He gave an update on the project for both Stage 1 and Stage 2. He also updated the Commissioners on the financial statements timeline and ongoing maintenance projects.

b) **Commissioner Reports:** Commissioner Lahmann thanked Kyle Heaton for providing the property list that he had requested. He said that House Bill 50 expanding apprenticeship utilization requirements is sitting on the governor's desk and it would require apprenticeship utilization on any projects the Port will have going forward.

Commissioner Markstrom said that he believed the Washington Public Ports Association was watching the bill closely. He updated the other Commissioners on meetings that he attended.

Commissioner Lahmann said that he is unable to attend the Regional Transportation Planning Organization Committee meetings due to scheduling conflicts and is hoping to get their

meeting times changed. Commissioner Markstrom replied that if he is unsuccessful they can appoint an alternate.

7) **Adjourn:** Commissioner Shaffley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:15 p.m. Commissioner Lahmann seconded the motion. The motion carried.

COMMISSIONER **COMMISSIONER**