

Port of Cascade Locks

The Port of Cascade Locks held a Special Community Meeting on Thursday, April 30, 2015, at the Cascade Locks Marine Park Pavilion Center, Cascade Locks, OR 97014.

1. **Meeting called to order & Pledge of Allegiance:** Port Commission President Jess Groves called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.
2. **Roll Call:** Commissioners Groves, Cramblett, Mohr and Haight were in attendance Commissioner Caldwell was absent.
 - **Others Present:** IGM Paul Koch, Sally Moore, Melissa Warren, Mary Hutton, Ken Hutton, Joanne Wittenberg, Pat Albaugh, Patrick Mulvihill and Philip Watness. .
 - a. **Presentation by staff regarding Bridge of the Gods (BOG) operation and proposed Bridge Toll Technology** IGM Koch stated the purpose of the meeting was to bring people up to date and answer questions that the community may have. He presented the timeline of the BOG 10 year plan that includes operation and maintenance. Each year welding is done on weak spots of the bridge. In reviewing the 10 year Bridge of the Gods timeline; it shows 9 million dollars in costs over 10 years. IGM Koch reviewed the operating and maintenance budget. Tolling and bridge use sheet was reviewed. Attached was an ODOT presentation on the Bridge of the Gods, with its history and a diagram.
 - b. **Review of Bridge Fund** – IGM Koch stated the Bridge fund was created two years ago to save up for maintenance and repair and added at that time a 10 year plan was created for maintenance and repairs on the bridge. By policy, chunks of money are set aside for the long term. Currently there is \$40,000 in the 2014-15 budget and next year 20,000 will be added. The strategy was created to let the community know that the Port is serious about taking care of the bridge for the long term after its most recent repairs and restoring it to 80,000lb weight limit. He stated the bridge tolls have been kept down for the locals. He added in order to raise revenue for maintenance and repairs, the Commission may raise tolls for non-locals. There was a discussion about the Request for Proposals on new toll technology. The anticipated price for technology is at one million dollars. This technology will allow for a more accurate count of axles on larger trucks. There is no discussion through technology to rid of toll takers. Will still need toll takers for cash payers. Looking at some companies and bids for the technology. IGM Koch stated the decision has not been made only to seek proposals. They will be reviewed and then have some work sessions with the Commission to determine if they will move forward. Melissa stated revenue is up this year most likely due to the beautiful weather. She reviewed the Bridge Traffic and Revenue Comparisons. The highlighted yellow area shows 2014 revenue at \$13,429.50 and 2015 at \$33,256.00.
 - c. **Presentation of proposed toll technology**
 - d. **Future BOG enhancements and use of technology** – There was a discussion of possible implementation of toll technology by installing a new system that may have a transponder on the windshield, will read and the driver will be able to pass through, much like the Breeze by in Hood River. There were concerns expressed recently on Facebook and in the community, that the new technology will eliminate jobs. CP Groves stated this is not the case. The Port seeks to obtain state and federal funding to pay for gusset repairs in both 2019-2020.

- e. **Other issues related to Bridge of the Gods (BOG)** – IGM Koch reviewed the 10 year Bridge of the Gods plan it is developed into two tiers. He added the Engineer will change this year. HNTB is moving to the Seattle area. There is welding yearly in the plan. it is done twice a year by contract. The Port has partnered with ODOT and Port of Hood River to apply for 305 million facilities of a regional and national importance and added 240 million to build a new bridge in HR. 10 million for the BOG. The deck is very important. They have a life. M & C Mohr stated there are possibly one thousand welds a year. In order to keep things moving it will be incremental he stated. Engineers say grid style is very effective. Ken Hutton asked if the deck will hold up until 2023. Engineers assessed that stated IGM. A new engineer will assess this as the Port moves forward. Going to DC and lobby it is helpful to have a 10 year plan. If feds ever fund transportation it may help. It helps funding by Washington and Oregon DOT. Skamania County Pioneer Editor, Philip Watness asked at what point the bridge need to be replaced. CP Groves stated HNTB engineers stated that it may have a life span of possibly 50 or more years. But it needs to be maintained and this is what the 10 year BOG plan does. Commissioner Haight is the Wa side will pay for some repairs. IGM Koch said yes, it will not come in easy or quick. The Wa side took greatest hit when weight restriction was on. Yakima valley was hit economically. Neither state has come to an agreement comprehensively at this point. The feds have not come to an agreement either.

IGM Koch then opened up the floor for questions. A questions came up how the million came up. All companies stated around one million. There are different forms of payment with each company. Before going out with RFP, speed of cars and accurately counting axels. Increase rev 100 to 200 k per year by accuracy, reduces amount of cash in toll booth. There may be a swipe card a patron can load and then a transponder on the windshield would read it as the car goes by. Ken Hutton asked how long it will take to pay for it with revenues. CP Groves stated by raising tolls for non locals or tourists. Then he asked if toll takers will not be cut will not cut down labor toll taker tourists will question why they pay more. Igm Koch stated might have a reader where license plate is read and a bill is sent. Not decided yet. Next year budget transissions to more full time toll takers and less part time. Will need toll takers that can function at t higher skjill level. Object of tech cut down on labor. Ken stated no room for a breeze by. Raising tolls for non locals will raise revenue to pay for technology. Mary Hutton asked how it will work. Will report go to office daily? There are different options stated Pat Albaugh. Discount is built in with a transponder. For twenty five dollars you get 30 passes. Like a debit card, it will let you know when it is low at the hr bridge with a yellow light. Ken asked if a person has a transponder but funds are zero. CP Groves stated the transponder can be set to allow to charge up to a certain amount. You will also be able to pay with a credit card. There is currently a log for local persons who cannot pay “now” but will always pay up at pay day. It works, as people always pay up, there is rarely a problem. There are a lot of options stated IGM Koch, and they will all be looked at when the proposals are looked at. He stated that missing an axle is human and there is a clipboard for employees going to work that cannot pay now but will pay on “payday” . Joanne asked if any toll taker will have to look out the window at the large trucks, the treadles will count the axles. The end of the year is the target to decide stated IGM Koch. He added the Port Commission has decided not to eliminate jobs. Currentlty there are three full time and three part timers and one seasonal. So many hours to cover the bridge., becoming a full time is beneficial more bonded tot hee job, cp

groves stated. Most people that work at the bridge live in cascade locks he stated. He asked for opinion on raising tolls for non-locals. Ken Hutton said he pays 75 cents now and the tourists pay a dollar. He buys the discount book. CP Groves stated that the Commission desires the public to have input and as this moves forward there will be more meetings. Gyda asked if proposals will be reviewed at meetings. Pat will rank and do analysis and give input. CP Groves stated the decision will be made by the targeted date of December 2015. It is not in the proposed budget stated IGM Koch. At this poiht the commission has only authorized to get proposals or rfp. May pay 2 to 3 cents for every toll dollar received that comes through the bridge. That is one option.

4. Adjournment:

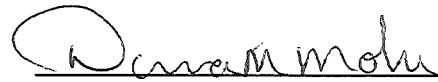
President Groves adjourned the meeting at 7:35 pm.

Port of Cascade Locks:

Attest:



Jess Groves, President
Port Commission



Donna Mohr, Secretary
Port Commission

DATE APPROVED: 6-18-15
Prepared by: Sally Moore.