COLUMBIA PORT COMMISSION April 18 , 2024

MINUTES MEETING:

COMMISSIONERS: Bruce Frazier, Charles Hearns, and Mark McKee (Darron McGuffee participated over the phone.

PORT DIRECTOR: GREG RICHARDSON

Meeting was called to order at 11:30 by Bruce at the Police Jury Conference Room

READING OF THE MINUTES, **motion was made by Charles Hearns, and seconded by Mark McKee to adopt the minutes.**

READING OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT**, motion was made by Mark Mckee, and seconded by Charles Hearns to accept the bank statements, and the motion passed.**

ITEMS DISCUSSED DURING MEETING Greg informed the Commission of activities since last port meeting:

* Greg informed the Commissioners of the work he was doing on behalf of the Columbia Port Commission:
  + Greg Informed board that our accountant had submitted all audit records to our new auditor as requested on April 15th.
  + EPA Clean Port Application for statewide Planning Grant
  + Decision to not pursue the MPDG grant application this year
  + CPIDB agreement to provide $56,000 in local match to secure our NELA/LaCRED grant for $500,000
  + Submittal of a $1.3 million dollar request to Congresswoman Letlow for an ESS system (1MW battery) for the Emergency Staging Area. Discussed potential issues with securing support letters from local entities.
  + Submittal of application to LaDOTD ports and waterways for two grants: $300,000 to assist with security fencing and $200,000 to construct a security guard station at the Port. This was a short notice one time grant opportunity.
  + Discussed the subsequent submittal of a FY2025 PSGP application if we are successful with our LaDOTD request.
  + Greg discussed successful meetings with LGF and have verbal agreement for them to support our ongoing grant applications, DRA CIF and LaDOTD PPP. This agreement includes commitment letters, support letters and a letter agreeing to $50/mwh should the port successfully secure a grant to construct a solar farm.
  + Greg provided award letters: DRA’s grant railspur project, CFA/Earmark (PIDP) dock project, EDA – Emergency Staging Area.
  + The port was unsuccessful with our Thriving Communities application, Grambling and Southern had developed a stronger multi-parish application in Madison/Tensas parishes.
  + Provided a Table of Awarded Grants which outlined all the grants the Port has been awarded and outlined the Port’s obligations. The purpose of this document was to illustrate that through the efforts of our Grant application program we have been able to increase our awards from $15 million to $38 million and that obligated Port’s funds have decreased from $3 million to less than $1 million.
* Greg gave an update on Port Tenants
  + Guerrero Farms, wheat looking good, still waiting on permit from Corp of Engineers to pursue construction of security fencing which will have an impact on acreage for soybeans this season.
  + McClanhan has not paid rent for last half of 2023 or any this year. Greg is to express the boards desire for payment.
  + Terral Riverservices is moving aggregate and doing a good job maintaining River Campground Road in the areas where the work has not been completed.
  + LGF appears to be willing to work with the port better since the Sumitomo partnership.
* Awarded Grants Update
  + LaDOTD PPP we are continuing working on completing the RC ROAD, the remainder of the grant is awaiting federal funding prior to starting
  + DRA Road – we received additional funds to assist with the road crossing but waiting on Union pacific.
  + DRA Railspur – awarded $1 million to assist with railspur, Port, LGF, LGF’s Engineers and BHA are working out the details to submit permits to facility construction of the Railspur. LGF has agreed to divide the railspur project into two components the railspur and the rail loading area. With the notification of DRA funds the port can write the permit fees to commence the process.
  + USDA Rural Development – funds spent grant award complete and closed out
  + DHS – Greg reported that permits were submitted to Tensas Levee Board and Corp of Engineer so we can develop the bid package to get this project started this summer.
  + RAISE - Greg reported we have an agreement with FHWA, however it must first be signed by LaDOTD, hopefully this process will be smoother than the Federal agreement.
  + EDA – We have had official notification of the award, currently awaiting them to follow up on the notification which said may take 30 days.
  + CFA – Earmark – approved with letter of notification, waiting on them to follow up with meeting associated with federal agreement.
* Pending Grants
  + RTEPF – grants should be announced by the end of March
  + Capital Outlay – Greg doesn’t look like it will get pushed up to Priority 1 this year.
* Greg gave an update on BHA’s efforts to complete our NEPA study for the TPF which scheduled for completion on May 18th.
* Greg instructed Greg Wilbanks to update our appraisal on the Reynolds property adding the Carr property, he said he had a surgery scheduled and that he would get to it ASAP.

Greg read over all outstanding invoices and requested a motion to pay bills. **Motion was made by Charles Hearns to pay all outstanding bills, seconded by Mark Mckee motion passed.**

**Motion was made by Charles Hearns to adjourn the meeting second by Mark Mckee motion passed meeting was adjourned.** **kimberly@theaccelerategroup.com** **kimberly@theaccelerategroup.com** **kimberly@theaccelerategroup.com**