COLUMBIA PORT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Date: November 21, 2024
Location: Caldwell Parish Library Meeting Room

Commissioners Present:

* Darron McGuffee Robert Frazier
* Charles Hearns Monty Adams Jr.
* Mark McKee

Port Director:

* Greg Richardson

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 AM by Chairman Darron McGuffee.

2. Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes:

A motion was made by Charles Hearns and seconded by Monty Adams, Jr. to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. (September, October meeting did not have a quorum. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Financial Report:

The financial statements for the period were presented for both checking accounts. A motion to accept the bank statements was made by Mark McKee, seconded by Charles Hearns, and passed unanimously.

4. Items Discussed:

4.1 Capital Outlay Request & Land Acquisition

Greg Richardson reviewed Capital Outlay Request and discussed getting the resolutions necessary for submitting the paperwork. provided an update on the upcoming capital outlay request for the next fiscal year.

4.2 Annual Meeting – Greg recommended that we hold our annual meeting to provide a review of events and activities at the Port during 2024. Greg requested approval to host a steak supper for the commissioners and guest. A motion was made by Robert Frazier and seconded by Monty Adams Jr that we should hold an Annual Review Meeting on December 13, at the Caldwell Parish Library from 530 till 8, motion passed.

4.3 Port Director's Updates:

* CV Power Tech Solar Manufacturing Facility:
Greg discussed meetings between CV PowerTech and Grow Nela and still working to assist them with meetings with USDA, DRA, LED, and CDBG to explore funding opportunities.
* LaDOTD PPP Grant Application:
Greg submitted a grant application to LaDOTD for a 5MW solar farm and a 20,000 sq. ft. warehouse. LaDOTD’s economist required some modifications to the grant application to improve our scoring for the grant. Greg was able to modify the grant reducing the requested amount and increasing the rent paid by CV PowerTech. Greg provided copies of grant modifications. LaDOTD PPP has approved the grant for funding and will have to wait for legislative approval.
* Louisiana Green Fuels (LGF) Project Update:
Greg provided updates on ongoing developments related to LGF. The Board discussed having Bob Meredith attend the next meeting to discuss rent payment.
* RAISE Grant for Truck Parking Facility (TPF):
The Port has contracted with Geosyntec to assist BHA with meeting NEPA requirements as part of the grant, in collaboration with LGF. Greg is working with LaDOTD and the appraiser to gain approval from LaDOTD to move forward with the purchase of the property. We still anticipate being able to close on the property prior to the end of the year. Wes, requested that we use James Mixon to handle the closing since he has been working with the Reynold party on behalf of LGF as well as provided the title opinions for the property.
* Rail Project:
BHA has contracted Hatch, LGF’s design engineer, to finalize the rail spur design for submission to Union Pacific. BHA is still waiting on Hatch to sign a contract to finalize the design of the railspur. Greg provided copy of amendment to BHA’s Engineering Agreement.
* MARAD Dock Project:
Greg informed the Commission that $25,000 in grant funds have been approved for the NEPA process. However, the contract award for the dock project will not proceed until the NEPA for the TPF is completed.
* EDA Grant & Engineering Services:
BHA was awarded the contract for engineering services. Greg is coordinating with DRA to determine the next steps for grant implementation. Currently waiting on james mixon to provide a title opinion on the Property owned by the port which is a requirement to proceed with the design of the ESA.
* Riverton Campground Road:
The project remains on hold due to permitting issues with Union Pacific.
* Security Fence Project:
Fencing Unlimited has started work on Phase I of the fence installation. All the materials have been purchased and stored at the sight. We are delaying the construction of the fence along the north west side of the property due to issues with proposed location. The security fence was relocated on the North East side of the property to work better with Eastside Water District. Eastside requested the installation of two gates in exchange for securing our security fence with their security fence. Phase I should be completed soon.

4.3 Tenant Updates:

* Guerrero Farms:
Has been given the approval to plant winter wheat on a section of the property.
* McClanahan:
McClanahan has not provided payment for July, August, September, October, and November.
* Terral RiverServices:
Terral has been granted approval to temporarily place cotton seed in the old grain elevator on a month by month basis for a monthly rate of $3,000 per month. Greg gave limited update on lock system.
* LGF:
LGF continues to push forward with dock design, permitting, and construction collaboration.

5. Approval of Invoices:

Greg reviewed all outstanding invoices. A motion to pay all outstanding bills was made by Charles Hearns and seconded by Mark McKee. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mark Mckee and seconded by Charles Hearns. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.