

MINUTES
PORT AUTHORITY SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2025
10:00 A.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Members Present: Commissioners Jason Baskin (appeared remotely), Geoff Smith, Kris Heichel, Jeff Austin, Michael Bednar, Lee Bjorndal, and Tim Ruzek.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Port Authority Executive Director Craig Clark, Port Authority Attorney Craig Byram, and Port Authority Secretary Tom Dankert.

Others Present: Holly Wallace, City Planning and Zoning Administrator (left at 10:30 a.m. for close session).

President Baskin called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Item #2. – Approval of minutes of the July 15, 2025 regular meeting: Motion by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Austin to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2025 regular meeting. Carried 7-0.

Item #3. – Brownfield Cleanup Grant: Executive Director Craig Clark discussed a proposed contract with Stantec Consulting Services Inc. for \$12,500 to help us write a grant for costs associated with cleaning up the 13.55 acres along I-90 that the Port Authority owns. Grant opportunities from \$500,000 to \$4,000,000 exist from different agencies, with the smaller grants being more likely to be received than the larger ones. However, we need professional help in order to apply for those grants. We do have an interested party in a portion of the 13.55-acre parcel, but again the land will need to be cleaned up first.

Commissioner Ruzek noted this would not be the right project that he would like to go all in on.

Commissioner Austin noted that eventually we will have to clean up the parcel in order to get any development on it. If we can get a portion covered with a grant, then sooner would be better.

President Baskin outlined the four options we are looking at:

1. Move forward with the development as is.
2. Do nothing.
3. Apply for the grants.
4. Do nothing until the full cleanup cost (estimated at \$2 million) is covered.

Mr. Clark noted he feels good about receiving the \$500,000 grant, and this bodes well for a match with the other available federal grants, but may not cover the full removal cost.

Commissioner Heichel noted that if the only grant we receive is the \$500,000 one, then the Port Authority would be responsible for coming up with the additional \$1.5 million for the clean-up cost? Mr. Clark noted that was correct.

Commissioner Bjorndal noted the Port Authority kicking in \$1.5 million for another truck wash is not ideal. Commissioner Heichel agreed, unless a mechanic's shop etc. were included in the development.

Commissioner Austin noted we have been sitting on this property for a long time. If we have a chance to remediate it now, then the property could be marketed better.

Commissioner Ruzek questioned why we have to clean it up if we are not the original polluters of the site. Attorney Byram noted because we own the site, even though it is clear we are not the polluters.

After further discussion, motion by Commissioner Bjorndal, seconded by Commissioner Austin to approve the \$12,500 contract with Stantec Consulting Services Inc. for the writing of the grant application. Carried 7-0.

Item #4. – Executive Director Report: Mr. Clark noted there were some additional trees that Carr's Tree Service removed from the Port Authority property, so the \$20,000 contract was increased for the additional \$5,000 in cost and we shall make that payment.

Item #5. – Any other business: None.

Item #6. Closed Session: Motion by Commissioner Austin, seconded by Commissioner Ruzek to close the meeting under Minnesota Statute § 13D.05 subd. 3(c) to develop or consider offers or counter offers for the purchase or sale of real property identified as 34.009.0080 at 10:30 a.m. Carried 7-0.

See DVD of closed meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Austin, seconded by Commissioner Ruzek to reopen the meeting at 10:47 a.m. Carried 7-0.

Item #7. Adjournment: With no further business, motion by Commissioner Austin, seconded by Commissioner Ruzek to adjourn the meeting at 10:48 a.m. Carried 7-0.

Approved: _____

President: _____

Secretary: _____