COLUMBIA PORT COMMISSION

Oct. 20, 2022 MINUTES

 MEETING:

COMMISSIONERS: DARRON MCGUFFEE, President; Bruce Frazier, Mark McKee, Monty Adams, Jr. DIRECTOR: GREG RICHARDSON

 Guest : Keith C, Winn

Meeting was called to order by Darron McGuffee, Port President at the Police Jury Meeting Room in the Caldwell Parish Courthouse.

READING OF THE MINUTES, **motion was made by Monty Adams, Jr. and seconded by Mark Mckee to adopt the minutes**

**Reading Bank Statements, motion was made by Bruce Frazier, and seconded by Mark McKee to accept the bank statements motion passed.**

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

* Capital Outlay, Greg discussed our 2023 Capital Outlay resubmits. Our top priority is the movement of the $2 million to complete the railroad spur. Greg request for Darron to sign the associated paperwork for the submittal of the Capital Outlay request. Greg also discussed why the delay of our Audit by Bosch has caused the hold up by DOA which has not released the requested funds to pay BHA for engineering with the design portion of the railspur. Greg submitted to the Commissioners an outline for a second Capital Outlay request, for the expansion of the Port of Columbia. Second Request to Capital Outlay provides the following benefits : expands port by 320 acres, facilitates the ability to sign a lease with Qcells to install a $50 million solar farm to provide 30 MW of power to the Port, lease 100 acres to Ryan Enterprises to develop a 2nd biofuel facility which will utilize agricultural waste to create aviation fuel, and the pursue of a grant application for a Truck Parking Area as a needed federal match of $4 to 5 million to assist with the proposed project. While each of these three parts of the project is viable, the project relies on Qcells and Ryan Enterprises ability to work with LGF. The owners of the identified expansion area have been contacted and the project has been explained in an attempt to obtain an option to purchase the 320 acres, however at this time one of the three owners in noncommittal. The port has offered to pay the going rate of $10,000 per acre. The expansion is a secondary priority, the railspur is still priority 1. The expansion project is highly unlikely. Discuss LaDOTD PPP and when we can request for additional funds. Should an option not be obtained, Greg proposes looking into what property the Sinope may have available for the port to expand. Mark McKee made a motion, seconded by Bruce Frazier to sign all capital outlay submittals.
* Eastside sewage, Greg gave overview of meeting with Eastside Sewage district, Caldwell Parish Police Jury and Cinnamon with McManus Engineering. The proposal was for improvements for the eastside sewage system would require a $5 million Capital Outlay grant to the Caldwell Parish Police Jury which would needs $ 900,000 match. The Port would provide $440,000 to be match money for the sewage project. Greg presented the reasons it was beneficial for the Port to provide the match based on cost estimates provided by the Port’s engineers to connect the Port to the Industrial Boards Sewage Pond ($300,000) Greg also pointed out we have already written the sewage system into federal grants which have been submitted. The Port’s position is that we believe the Port will be able to utilize USDA grants to assist with a federal match to assist the project. Our agreement to provide match is tied to LGF project development. Motion was made to commit to provided $400,000 to assist the Eastside sewage with the understanding its based on LGF project moving forward. Discussed Caldwell Parish 2mils dedicated to the Industrial boards sewage system, and was told by Mr. Black the Jury would look into the use of those funds. Greg reminded the commissioners of our commitment to the Eastside water district to provide matching funds as well. Greg told commissioners he informed Mr. Black with the Jury that the Port would like to see a full time fire department in the Parish and if the jury would take the lead the port would pledge for revenue generated from LGF to assist with that endeavor. Motion was made by Mark McKee and second by Bruce Frazier to pledge support to the Eastside sewage.
* USDA quarterly reports are due and I am working on submittals and learning their system. The initial response is that they intend on reimbursing the Port $184,400 for the project, however they are currently stating that reimbursements will be based on a percentage (8%) of invoices paid. The Port needs USDA funds to go towards Engineering fees hopefully we will be able to work this out.
* Greg told the MPDG Infra was denied, only 1 was awarded in the state. The effort of the grant will pay dividends in future submittals. The Port still has MPDG Rural application pending for $29 million and believe the awards will be announced prior to the election.
* Greg discussed the TIFA loan program and the benefits of pursuing the opportunities of securing a loan from the federal government for $15 million. The loan can be a line a credit and subsequently used as match should we spend our $15 million state funds prior to being awarded a federal grant.
* Discussed DRA Grant award/acceptance and the requirement of a sign and that we have scheduled a meeting with EDA on Nov. 2nd. DRA grant was provided to the Port for use to support Terral Riverservices.
* Still waiting to hear about the PIDP grant ($11.25 million) should be in October.
* Signed paperwork to accept DHS grant, having LGFs environmental engineering firm to assist with completing a EHP Screening Form which is required before we can start the project. Hopefully the information provided by eagle will be sufficient and additional environmental studies will not be necessary for the project. If additional information is required it will come with a cost associated with the project.
* Discussed upcoming Pal meeting in Natchitoches Nov 8 and 9, asked for volunteer to attend meeting. Ask if anyone was interested in attending to let me know.
* Discussed meeting with laded, me and John Holtz presented request for $250,000 to assist with the energy study need by LGF to Secretary Pierson and the potential to develop a green energy corridor the answer was no. Mark asked why wouldn’t we be able to work with Entergy to assist with the project and I should look more into what Entergy and the port could workout.
* Discussed conversation with PSC and how we could identify the proper people at Entergy to discuss green power.
* Discussed Letlow town hall meeting specifically her mentioning earmarks and what potential that might hold. Greg thanked the commissioners which were able to attended.
* Entergy is going to need write a check to Entergy to relocate power. Motion was made by Mark McKee and second by Monty Adams, Jr. to write a check to Entergy for the relocation of the power lines which are in the proposed construction.
* Discussed Qcells solar farm project.
* Eastside Water District and LGF’s engineer have taken the lead on relocation the Waterline which is within the right a way of the construction of Riverton Campground Road this should be completed within the next month prior to start of construction. Bell South is in the process of relocating the phone lines.
* Eagle asked about artifacts found on the Port property. It was agreed the artifacts will be returned to the Port for subsequent display at the future port office.
* Discussed potential availability of Limestone which has been used in scrubber at 3 facilities in south Louisiana to be given to the Port for free, however the port would be responsible for transportation of the material. We will continue to monitor the product and the possibility to reduce our cost with constructing roads and parking facilities.
* Discussed issue with federal ID, the Port has two federal ID. Our account has been able to identify the proper federal ID which the Port will utilize from now own and will work on ensuring all documents and accounts have the proper number. This has been resolved, now our accountant can pay my state and federal taxes. Discussed issue with auditors not completing our audit on time. The commissioners need to take an ethics and sexual harassment class prior to the end of the year.
* Greg Wilbanks appraisal submitted and request for payment. The appraisal was performed in preparation of purchasing land surrounding the Port. Motion by Mark McKee second Monty Adams jr. to pay Greg Wilbanks motion passed.
* Greg informed commissioners of upcoming meeting with Bond Attorney on Nov. 2nd to discussed the possibility of borrowing and additional $2.5 million for land purchase and engineering for phase 2 of the FOIK Infrastructure project.
* Motion made by Bruce Frazier and seconded by mark McKee to pay all outstanding bills presented to the commissioners motion passed.

**Motion was made by Bruce Frazier to adjourn the meeting second by Mark McKee motion passed meeting was adjourned.**

**1 PM held bid opening for Riverton Campground Road. Keith handled the bid opening. Four bids were submitted. The bids were opened and read outloud. The bids will be reviewed by BHA and low bid which has provided the required information will be identified by BHA.**