

Port of Kennewick Commission Chambers will be open to the public during Commission Meetings.
However, the Port will continue to use GoToMeeting to provide remote access,
and Commissioners and the Port team will attend remotely.

To participate and make public comments remotely, please call in at: 1-877-309-2073, Access Code: 575-877-501

Or, join on-line at the following link: <https://meet.goto.com/575877501>

AGENDA

***Port of Kennewick
Regular Commission Business Meeting
Port of Kennewick Commission Chambers (via GoToMeeting)
350 Clover Island Drive, Suite 200, Kennewick Washington***

March 28, 2023
2:00 p.m.

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ROLL CALL**
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENT** *(Please state your name and address for the public record)*
- V. CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. Approval of Direct Deposit and ePayments March 17, 2023
 - B. Approval of Warrant Register Dated March 28, 2023
 - C. Approval of Regular Commission Meeting Minutes March 14, 2023
- VI. PRESENTATION**
 - A. Columbia Gardens Project Updates (**AMBER/MICHAEL** and Ron Swanby)
- VII. REPORTS, COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - A. Hybrid Work Plan (**TIM**)
 - B. Commission Meetings (formal and informal meetings with groups or individuals)
 - C. Non-Scheduled Items
(**LISA/BRIDGETTE/TANA/NICK/LARRY/AMBER/MICHAEL/CAROLYN/TIM/KEN/TOM/SKIP**)
- VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT** *(Please state your name and address for the public record)*
- IX. ADJOURNMENT**

PLEASE SILENCE ALL NOISE MAKING DEVICES



PORT OF KENNEWICK REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

DRAFT

MARCH 14, 2023 MINUTES

Commission Meeting recordings, with agenda items linked to corresponding audio, can be found on the Port's website at: <https://www.portofkennewick.org/commission-meetings-audio/>

Commission President Skip Novakovich called the Regular Commission Meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. via GoToMeeting Teleconference.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ROLL CALL

The following were present:

Board Members: Skip Novakovich, President (via telephone)
Kenneth Hohenberg, Vice President (via telephone)
Thomas Moak, Secretary (via telephone)

Staff Members: Tim Arntzen, Chief Executive Officer (via telephone)
Tana Bader Inglima, Deputy Chief Executive Officer (via telephone)
Larry Peterson, Director of Planning (via telephone)
Amber Hanchette, Director of Real Estate (via telephone)
Nick Kooiker, Chief Finance Officer (via telephone)
Michael Boehnke, Director of Operations
Lisa Schumacher, Special Project Coordinator
Bridgette Scott, Executive Assistant (via telephone)
Carolyn Lake, Port Counsel (via telephone)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Novakovich led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were made.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. *Approval of Direct Deposit and E-Payments Dated March 1, 2023*

Direct Deposit and E-Payments totaling \$69,504.92

B. *Approval of Warrant Register Dated March 14, 2023*

Expense Fund Voucher Number 104611 through 104654 for a grand total of \$160,014.72

C. *Approval of Regular Commission Meeting Minutes February 28, 2023*

MOTION: *Commissioner Hohenberg moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; Commissioner Moak seconded. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously. All in favor 3:0.*

PORT OF KENNEWICK REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

MARCH 14, 2023 MINUTES

DRAFT

PRESENTATION

A. *Mars Artwork at Vista Field*

Mr. Arntzen introduced teacher, Trevor Macduff and architect Chris Baugh, who will be presenting information on the Mars orbital marker and art installation for the Hanford Reach Solar System project.

Mr. Macduff presented the Hanford Reach Solar System project and a potential partnership with the Port of Kennewick (*Exhibit A*). Mr. Macduff outlined the current markers in the area and offered suggestions for a sculpture in Daybreak Commons in Vista Field. Mr. Macduff inquired if the Port is interested in pursuing a conversation with staff regarding an art installation.

Commission discussion ensued regarding the art installation at Vista Field.

Mr. Arntzen suggested staff work with Mr. Macduff to create a draft plan and believes this could be a project for the 2024-2025 Work Plan and Budget if the Commission is interested in pursuing the project.

Consensus of the Commission is for staff to move forward with Mr. Macduff on the Hanford Reach Solar System project at Vista Field.

REPORTS, COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. *Vista Field*

1. *TRIDEC Memorandum of Understanding*

Mr. Arntzen presented Resolution 2023-04 to the Commission for possible approval of a Memorandum of Understanding with TRIDEC, related to the recruitment of suitable businesses at Vista Field.

MOTION: *Commissioner Moak moved to approve Resolution 2023-04, approving the Memorandum of Understanding with TRIDEC related to the recruitment of suitable businesses to Vista Field, and authorize the Port's Chief Executive Officer to execute the agreement and take all necessary action to implement such agreement; Commissioner Hohenberg seconded.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were made.

Discussion:

Commissioner Hohenberg is very excited about this Resolution and thinks it's great for both entities, but more importantly, for Vista Field. Commissioner Hohenberg is fully in favor of this Resolution.

Commissioner Novakovich agrees with Commissioner Hohenberg and thinks the Port has established good relationship with TRIDEC and thinks Karl Dye is an excellent person to work with the Port and he fully supports it.

PORT OF KENNEWICK REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

MARCH 14, 2023 MINUTES

DRAFT

With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously. All in favor 3:0.

B. Commissioner Meetings (formal and informal meetings with groups or individuals)

Commissioners reported on their respective committee meetings.

C. Non-Scheduled Items

Ms. Bader Inglima reported that the community celebration for the Shoreline Restoration project is scheduled for May 12, 2023 at 2:30 p.m. Additionally, she is working on a nomination for our project and our partnership in developing the Shoreline Restoration over the last fifteen years for the Washington Public Port's Association spring meeting awards.

Mr. Arntzen recently attended a zoom meeting with Linda Lehman, Mayor of Benton City, Councilmember Sarah Funk and Mr. Peterson to discuss potential partnership opportunities for the South Sub-Area Master Plan. Mr. Arntzen stated the Port previously provided \$15,000 for funding for this Master Plan.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments were made.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

No comments were made.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to bring before the Board; the meeting was adjourned 2:36 p.m.

APPROVED:

**PORT of KENNEWICK
BOARD of COMMISSIONERS**

Skip Novakovich, President

Kenneth Hohenberg, Vice President

Thomas Moak, Secretary



AN ARTISTIC SCALE MODEL OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

HANFORD REACH SOLAR SYSTEM

TREVOR MACDUFF
SILAS EDUCATION

SILAS
Education





PROJECT OVERVIEW

- What if...?
- Why not...?
- What else...?





SO FAR



EXHIBIT A

I saw
Uranus



In
Benton City



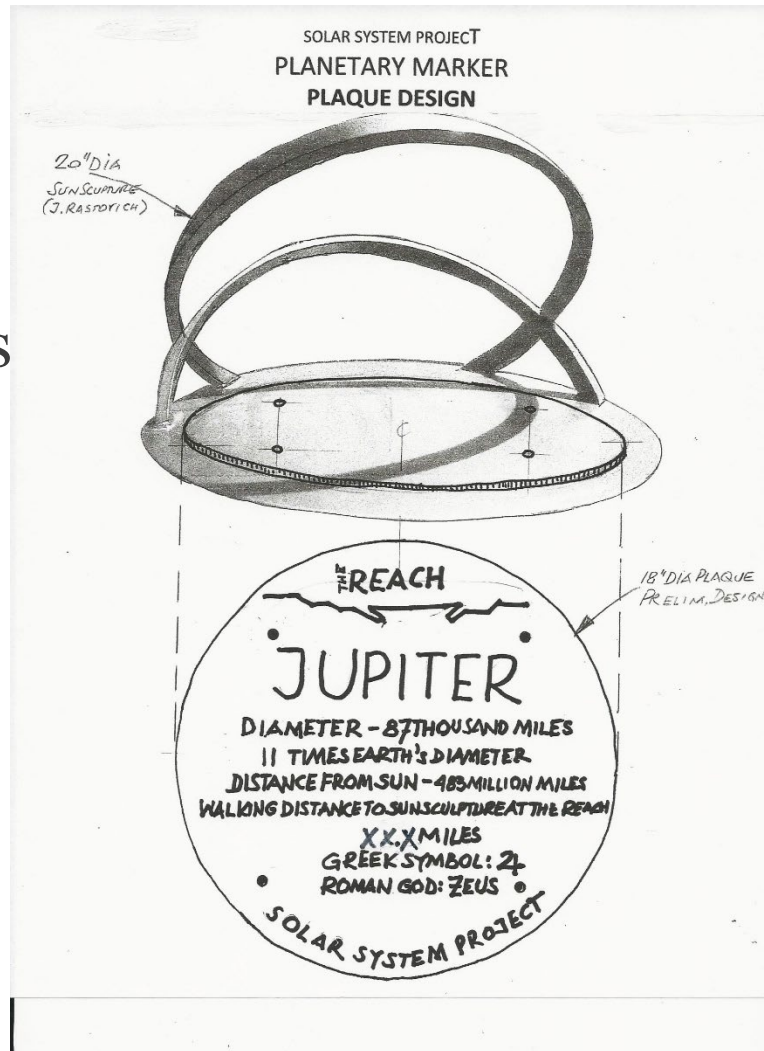
SO FAR



EXHIBIT A

MOVING FORWARD

- SILAS Ed.
- Solar Arches
- Materials
- Map
- Riverwalk





DREAMING..

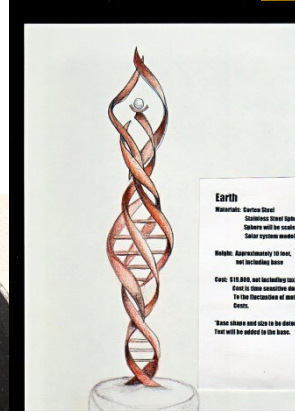
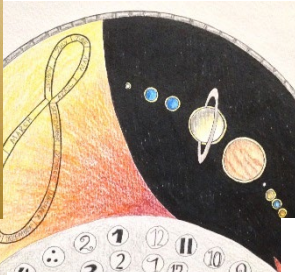


Jupiter Sculpture For River Walk With Moon Markers



Jupiter Sculpture At Var

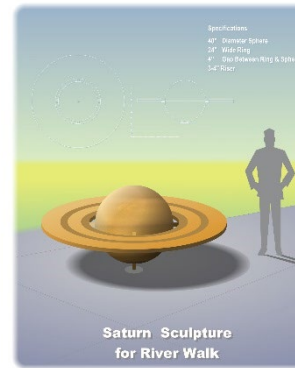
JOSEPH RASTOVICH
Creative Metalwork



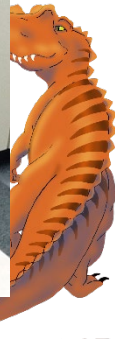
Earth
Materials: Carbon Steel
Dimensions: 10' x 10' x 10'
Notes: Approximately 10' tall, not including base.
Cost: \$10,000, including tax.
Due to time constraints due to the location of the sculpture, the sculpture will be added to the base.



Mars Sculpture Concept for River Walk Multi-Layered Steel Joseph Rastovich



Saturn Sculpture for River Walk

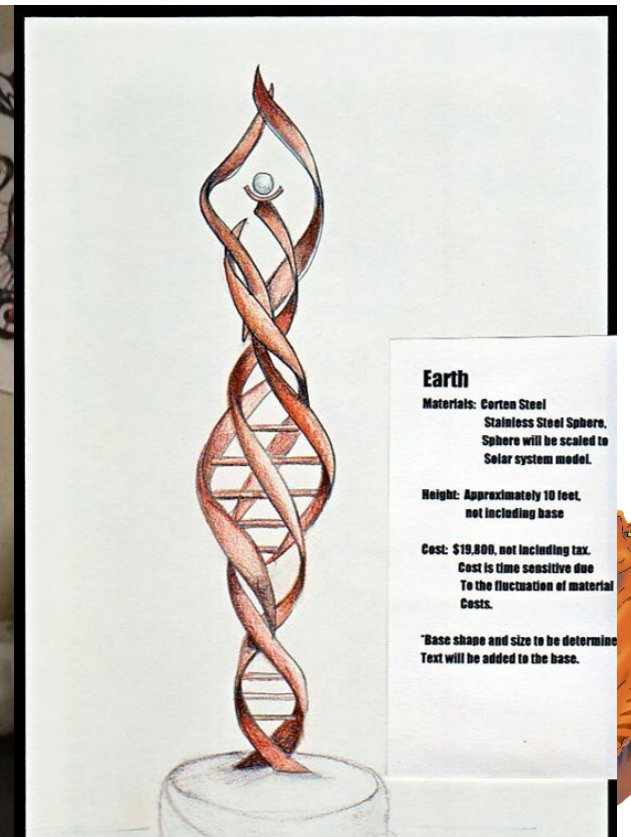
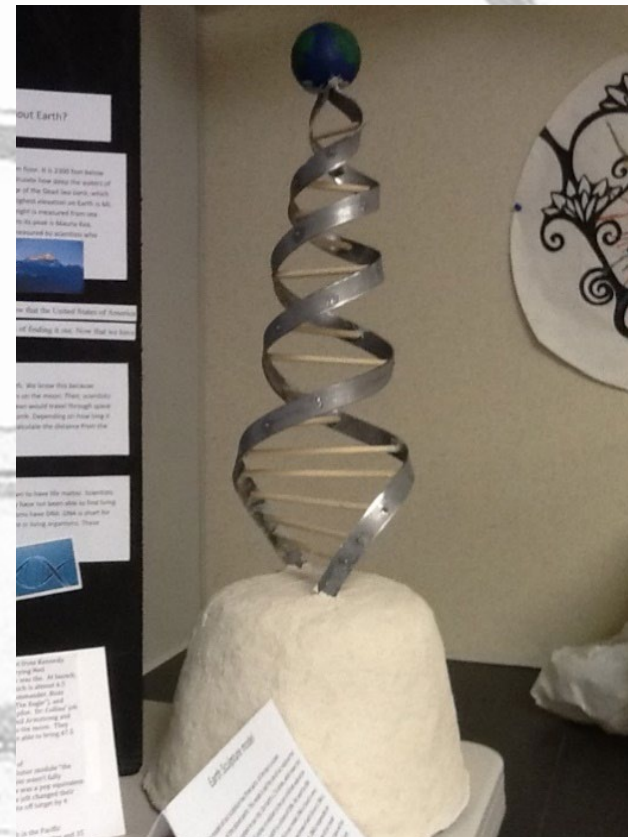


MODEL OPTIONS

Orbital Marker



Planetary Sculpture



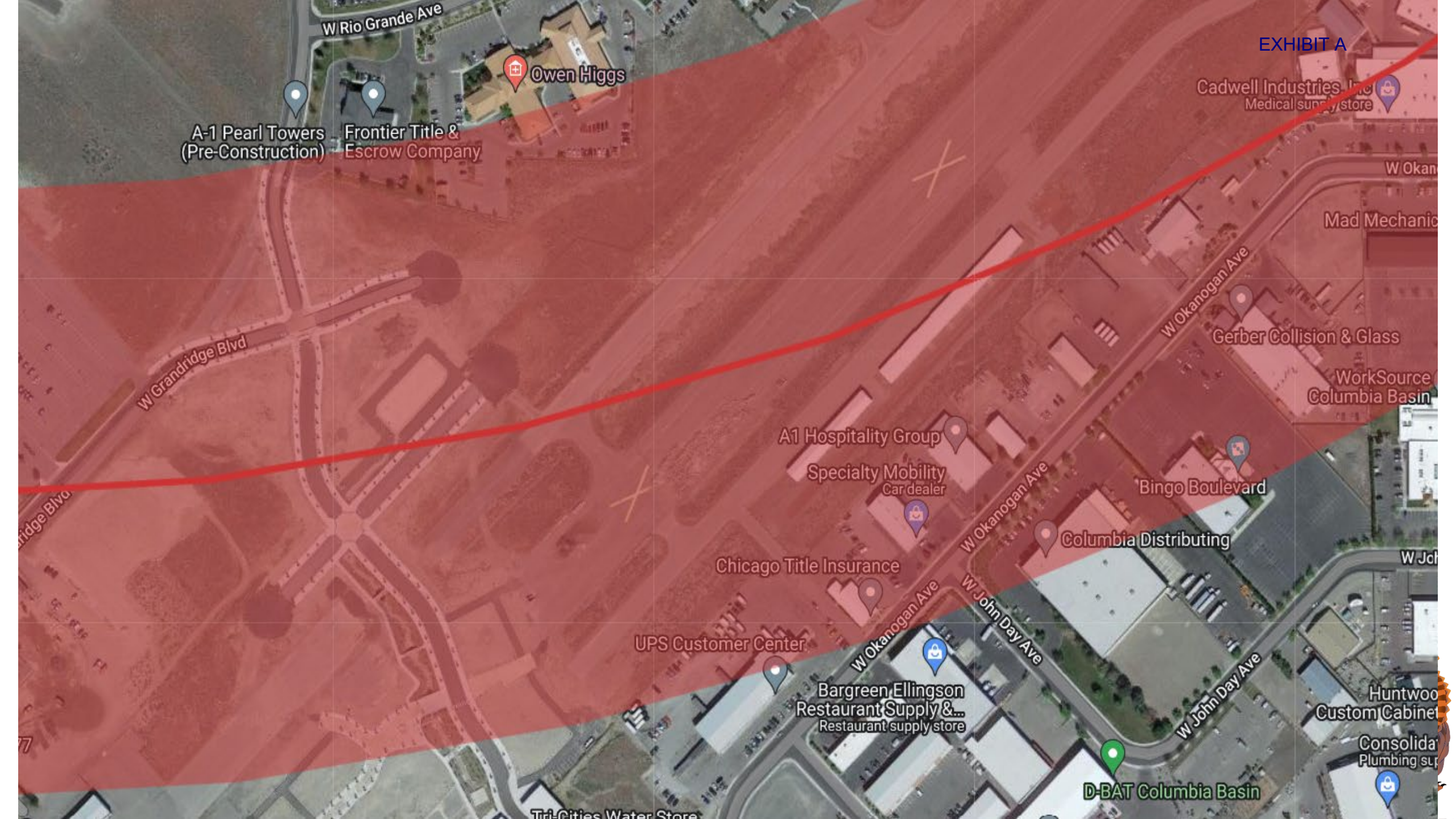


EXHIBIT A

A-1 Pearl Towers
(Pre-Construction)

Frontier Title &
Escrow Company

Owen Higgs

Cadwell Industries Inc
Medical supply store

Mad Mechanic

Gerber Collision & Glass

WorkSource
Columbia Basin

A1 Hospitality Group

Specialty Mobility
Car dealer

Chicago Title Insurance

UPS Customer Center

Bargreen Ellingson
Restaurant Supply &...
Restaurant supply store

Columbia Distributing

Bingo Boulevard

D-BAT Columbia Basin

Huntwood
Custom Cabinet

Consolidated
Plumbing

W Rio Grande Ave

W Grandridge Blvd

W Okanogan Ave

W Okanogan Ave
W John Day Ave

W John Day Ave

PROPOSED SCULPTURE

- 2.34" Sphere
- Military/Technological Journey theme
- Silhouette of exploration rovers
- Martian 'blueberries'
- Additional features:
 - Olympus Mons- Tallest mountain
 - Mariner Valley- Longest canyon
 - Red as tribute
- The 2 Moons are also included here



PROPOSED:

- A partnership between SILAS Education and the Port of Kennewick
- Develop a concept for a sculpture of Mars
- Continue discussions in October 2023
- Finalize plan with the July 2024 budget
- Cost sharing (\$10k/\$30k?)



NEXT STEPS

- Commission permission/discussion on desire for sculpture
- Discussions with Port staff to pursue parameters
- Wait for Daybreak Commons development
- Continue communicating with the Commissioners



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION...

- Trevor@silaseducation.org
- SILAS Education on Facebook
- 509.205.0557
- PO Box 5078, Pasco, WA 99302



PORT OF KENNEWICK

RESOLUTION 2023-04

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
PORT OF KENNEWICK APPROVING THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
WITH TRI-CITIES DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (TRIDEC) FOR
VISTA FIELD RECRUITMENT EFFORTS**

WHEREAS, the Commission directed staff to seek a joint project with TRIDEC and discussions have occurred to identify a project of mutual benefit; and

WHEREAS, the Port is developing Vista Field into a master-planned, mixed-use community; and

WHEREAS, the Port and TRIDEC each engage in economic development activities and wish to join efforts to recruit suitable businesses to Vista Field as described in the attached Memorandum of Understanding; and

WHEREAS, these joint recruitment efforts will benefit the economic and social welfare of the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of the Port of Kennewick hereby approve the Memorandum of Understanding with TRIDEC related to the recruitment of suitable businesses to Vista Field; and authorize the Port's Chief Executive Officer to execute the agreement and take all necessary action to implement such agreement.

ADOPTED by the Board of Commissioners of the Port of Kennewick this 14th day of March, 2023.

***PORT OF KENNEWICK
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS***

By: DocuSigned by:
Skip Novakovich
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SKIP NOVAKOVICH, *President*

By: DocuSigned by:
Kenneth Hohenberg
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KENNETH HOHENBERG, *Vice President*

By: DocuSigned by:
Thomas Moak
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THOMAS MOAK, *Secretary*

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
for
VISTA FIELD RECRUITMENT EFFORTS**

I. PARTIES

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into this ____ day of _____, 2023, between the PORT OF KENNEWICK, (“Port”), and the TRI-CITIES DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (TRIDEC), collectively referred to as the “Parties”.

II. BACKGROUND

The Port owns approximately 103 acres of bare land located at Vista Field, in Kennewick, Washington (Vista Field). The Port is developing the site into a master-planned, mixed-use community. Each party engages in economic development activities and each wish to join efforts to recruit suitable businesses to Vista Field. These joint recruitment efforts will benefit the economic and social welfare of the community and with this MOU, the Parties seek to memorialize their understanding related to their joint recruitment efforts.

III. COLLABORATION

The Parties will:

A. FORM A BUSINESS RECRUITMENT TEAM. The team will consist of the CEO of the Port, the CEO of TRIDEC and one employee of each Party designated by that Party’s respective CEO. The team will conduct the recruitment efforts identified below.

B. ASSEMBLE MARKETING MATERIALS. The Port has marketing materials related to Vista Field and will make those materials available to the Parties for recruitment efforts. Should other materials be needed, the Port will produce those materials at its cost.

C. UTILIZE THE PORT’S BUSINESS RECRUITMENT LIST. The Port has created a list of the types of potential businesses which it desires to recruit. The initial list is attached as Exhibit “A”. The parties will add to the list as appropriate. Using the list of potential business types, the Parties will work to find appropriate businesses that might be interested locating at Vista Field. Leads may be derived from:

Existing Businesses within the community. Leads may include existing businesses seeking an additional location or expansion. Recruitment efforts may include conversations and personal contacts with chambers of commerce, businesses, individuals and other economic development professionals.

Emerging Entrepreneurs. Leads may include home-based or garage-based businesses seeking a convenient location for their customers. These leads might include managers of existing businesses wishing to go into business on their own. The recruitment team will, as appropriate, work with city home-based business permits, commercial lenders, business schools, Small Business Development

Center (SBDC) counselors, Main Street program business specialists, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), chambers of commerce and other public or private small business professionals to identify these leads.

Existing Local or Regional Businesses. Recognizing that local or regional businesses, particularly those that have branch stores and are ready to expand, are often excellent prospects, the recruitment team will use appropriate sources to generate leads and will follow up as set out below.

D. CONTACT PROSPECTS. The recruitment team will focus on making personalized contact with prospects, conveying the message that Vista Field is a great location for expansion of a business or a new business location. By way of example, the recruitment team will:

Make Recruitment Calls. Initial contacts with a prospect can be made through a personalized letter, e-mail, phone call or other form of contact. In the initial contact, the recruitment team will explain why Vista Field would be an excellent place to do business. In these contacts the team will identify selected incentives (zoning, public infrastructure, amenities, etc.) and discuss relevant market data that would interest the prospect.

Refer to Exhibit “B” for a summary of benefits of the Vista Field site.

The team will provide recruitment and marketing materials and any other information to demonstrate the pro-business character of the site.

Offer to Host Prospects in the Community. Prospects will be personally invited to tour the Vista Field site and the community. Site visits/FAM (familiarization) tours will be organized and conducted by the Port. TRIDEC representatives are invited to attend.

E. FOLLOW UP WITH PROSPECTS. After the visit, the recruitment team will be prepared to promptly answer follow up information requests. The team will continue to stay in contact with the prospect. If the prospect is interested, the team will follow-up with an action plan and necessary assistance. If only marginally interested, the team would schedule follow up based on projected future interest/potential.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

This MOU will be administered by each of the respective CEOs or their respective designee. Working in partnership and on behalf of their respective agencies, these individuals shall be responsible for providing periodic progress reports and monitoring progress. Except as otherwise provided, the obligations of each Party shall be performed at the sole expense of said Party.

V. TERM AND EXECUTION

This MOU shall expire on December 31, 2023. The person executing for a respective Party has been duly authorized to and does execute the MOU on behalf of that respective Party.

PORT OF KENNEWICK

Date: _____

By: _____

TIM ARNTZEN, Chief Executive Officer

TRIDEC

Date: _____

By: _____

KARL DYE, Chief Executive Officer

Uses

Categories have overlap as broader areas are specified in the plan and may be successful with uses from different categories, like a Wine Bar in both Food & Beverage and Boutique areas. This list is not exhaustive.

Anchor Areas

- Cultural Institution
- Museum
- Department Store
- Entertainment (theater, bowling, music)
- Grocery Store
- Library
- Pharmacy
- Other high pedestrian traffic businesses

Food & Beverage Areas

- Bar
- Brewpub
- Cocktail Lounge
- Coffee Shop / Cafe
- Dessert Shop
- Fast Casual Restaurant
- Fine Dining Restaurant
- Full Service Restaurant
- Gastropub
- Specialty Foods (tea, chocolate, health foods)
- Spirits
- Wine Bar

Boutique Areas

- Art Gallery
- Barber / General Hair / Salon / Nails / Spa
- Cocktail Lounge
- Cosmetics
- Dessert Shop
- Fine or Specialty Apparel
- Florist
- Interactive / Demonstration Art
- Specialty Foods (tea, chocolate, health foods)
- Specialty Gifts
- Wine Bar

Office

- Office
- Medical Office
- Shared Office

Service Areas

- All listed under General Merchandise below
- Bank
- Barber / General Hair / Salon / Nails / Spa
- Coffee Shop / Cafe
- Convenience Store
- Dry Cleaner
- Legal, Accounting
- Medical (stand alone like dentist, chiropractor, eye doctor)
- Office Services
- Post Office
- Fitness

General Merchandise

- Apparel Store, Shoes, Hats, etc.
- Bike Shop
- Books & Music
- Electronics
- Florist
- Furniture (limited square footage)
- Glasses / Eyewear
- Gifts
- Home Goods / Kitchenware
- Pet Supplies
- Sporting Goods
- Toy Store
- Jeweler

Residential

- Single-Family Detached
- Small Multi-Family
- Upper Floor Apartments / Condos

Lodging

- Inn
- Bed & Breakfast



VISTAFIELD

VISTA FIELD UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES

The Vista Field Redevelopment project has numerous unique advantages and when both site attributes and property entitlements are considered together there is no site in Eastern Washington, perhaps the Pacific Northwest that compares with Vista Field. These unique attributes include:

- ☐ 103 contiguous acres under Port of Kennewick ownership located in the heart of the community situated between two freeway interchanges and currently served by numerous arterial and collector streets and encircled by municipal utilities sufficient to serve the anticipated development.
- ☐ Flat land with no slope, soil, vegetation or habitat challenges with an EIS, Phase #1 Environmental Assessment & Historic & Cultural Resource Assessment all completed NO concerns identified.
- ☐ Urban Mixed Uses (UMU) zoning district specifically established for Vista Field which allows significantly greater on-site development than elsewhere within the community. These unique entitlements allow mixing of residential, office, hospitality, retail & service business, unlimited density/FAR {parking must be provided}, unlimited building height, no front or side yard setback and elimination of excessive parking provisions.
- ☐ Potential transportation impacts analyzed with mitigation threshold & responsibilities identified in a City of Kennewick Development Agreement which runs through December 2027.
- ☐ Located at the commercial & geographic center of the Tri-Cities, immediately adjacent the 6,000 seat Coliseum & Regional Convention Center with the 700,000+ s/f Columbia Center Mall, numerous major retailers and a cluster of business & tourism-oriented hotels all located within ¼ mile of the site.
- ☐ Phase #1 infrastructure {utilities, streets, sidewalks, landscaping & 850-linear foot water feature} completed in 2021 opening up the core 20 acres of the site; which has been platted into 38 recorded lots.
- ☐ Port of Kennewick functioning as the “master developer” following a community driven master plan who will provide future improvements such as joint use parking lots and public open space improvements to benefit those electing to construct buildings, establish their business and/or live in Vista Field.

Vista Field Redevelopment is based on the new urbanism (mixed use, pre WWII) development pattern which is new to the Tri-Cities, but becoming familiar and quite desired throughout much of the nation. Because this development pattern is new it was deemed important to turn as many of the variables in the development equation into constants. Therefore, all the “homework” {site, environmental, cultural, transportation, utility, zoning, master plan & property owners association} has been completed resulting in a truly Shovel Ready project.

Columbia Gardens Improvements

demonstration vineyard

restroom

wayfinding signage

Columbia Gardens Demonstration Vineyard



Cabernet-Sauvignon





Columbia Gardens Public Restroom
Work in Progress

Columbia Gardens Wayfinding Signage Work in Progress..





Memorandum

To: Port Commission
From: Tim Arntzen, POK CEO
Date: April 11, 2023
Re: Transitioning to a Hybrid Work Plan

Under various resolutions which have come before the commission, and in furtherance of a goal and objective the commission assigned to me, I have prepared the following DRAFT post-covid Hybrid Work Plan. A plan that I feel is focused on managing performance outcomes, intentional collaboration, and flexibility.

My thoughts set forth in this memo have been aided by robust discussion with port employees and legal counsel and a great deal of study regarding the evolving future of the workplace. I am deeply indebted to the port team and legal counsel for their assistance, and for the myriad white papers, articles, and current research focused on the evolving workplace and benefits of offering a human-centric work environment.

In fact, while researching the potential benefits and concerns of a work from home arrangement it became apparent that, beyond meeting necessary “life/health/safety” measures, a flexible work arrangement has notable benefits to both the organization and its employees, including allowing companies to attract and retain top talent more readily. And for those organizations with proactive and robust communications standards, working from home can foster a highly engaged workforce which performs better than those within a traditional office-only environment.

It was traditionally thought if a manager could see their employees in the office that meant they had productive employees; but *seeing people at their desk is just witness to their presence, not their productivity*. When managers are focused on goals and outcomes, employees can often be more productive working remotely. And when employees have fewer distractions (telephones, drop-in visitors, co-workers) they perform at a higher level.

Research has also indicated that employees will take fewer sick days if they are allowed to work from home: colds and food poisoning make going into an office miserable, but those who are mildly sick can still get work done most of the time if it means not having to go into the office. And those employees won't spread their illness with others if they stay home!

In preparing this plan, it became apparent that this should not be considered a “post-Covid” work plan as much as it is a “new way of doing business” plan. Yes, Covid forced the remote work environment. However, during the past three years, we discovered numerous efficiencies, and we engaged new technologies that have allowed us to successfully conduct the public's business and effectively run the port.

I am proud of the way the port responded to the Covid pandemic. As the port's legal counsel has advised the commission in past resolutions, I, as port CEO have a legal duty to protect employee health and welfare at all times not just during a pandemic.

And we did just that. In fact, during staff discussions, several employees indicated they directly benefitted from not being required to be physically present.

Our current remote work plan was focused on keeping our employees and the public safe. And we supported personal liberty by not requiring employees to submit to vaccinations as a requirement of employment—a position that offered flexibility and understanding, and ensured employees could sustain their own convictions in making personal healthcare decisions. It is important to note that there is now mounting medical evidence indicating significant negative effects related to Covid vaccinations in some people—which strongly supports the wisdom of allowing personal liberty related to personal health decisions. Again, this type of information must be considered when making decisions and formulating an evolving workplace policy.

The port has a camera in the commission chambers and full remote commission meeting accessibility. As observed by several staff members, “while the public can now attend commission meetings live, usually no one shows up.” People seem to enjoy the ability to “Zoom” in, and the ability to attend remotely has increased public participation in meetings. Given that people have embraced technology and the systems are already in place; and, given the commission’s desire for continued transparency, I believe there is an expectation that we will continue offering the ability to engage online. And I believe our employees feel a hybrid work environment will continue to benefit both them and the port.

In fact, some think we are more accessible now. As one employee shared, when he is on vacation, but needs to be “present” for an important topic, he can do that. Previously that participation wasn’t possible without the transition to remote work and the investment in technological improvements that have already been made.

Another person noted that the pandemic proved how dynamic the port is; staff had a week or two to figure out how to get everyone remote and we did that remarkably well. The port was, and still is, ahead of most agencies in its response to Covid. And because the port has learned much about doing business remotely, the question was posed, “Since we have the tools in place and we’ve been successful, why would we go back to the way it was before?”

Another observation was that the port received its greatest level of public participation—during Covid—for the Waterfront Master Plan—using technology to remotely engage the public via surveys and Zoom meetings. More than 2,000 comments were offered online versus the previous high-water mark of 200 in-person attendees for Vista Field master planning (which in itself was a record!)

Other team members shared, “Sometimes, it seemed we used to attend meetings for the sake of meetings, and now we don’t have as many random meetings”.

In addition, the commission will undoubtedly recognize that the employees’ comments cited in the Appendix to this memo are a testament to the enhanced feeling of personal medical safety under our current protocols.

On the downside of working remotely, there were some who missed in-person engagement, and some who missed small group in-person opportunities, and others who expressed concern about sustaining morale and our corporate culture remotely.

Conclusion:

Covid came upon us rapidly and unannounced. Our port was among the first nationally to recognize the potential severity of the approaching pandemic, and one of the very first organizations locally to cancel events and transition employees to a remote work environment. Our port instituted early and robust Covid compliance and social distancing procedures. These procedures were and continue to be designed to protect the commission, the staff, and the public at large. And truthfully, the port endured some early community criticism for taking such swift and proactive action. Ironically, those who initially criticized the port, eventually instituted similar measures to protect public health. They just did it later.

In the three years since the onset of Covid, and under our remote work plan, it has been demonstrated and accepted that Port of Kennewick has been as effective as ever. And there is staff consensus that, in fact, the port is more efficient now than it was prior to Covid. Technological advances employed by the port, together with increased employee productivity have created a “New Work Paradigm”. Instead of our port’s productivity suffering, it increased.

Our port has always been a leader in our community, whether it comes to its visionary public projects—or its visionary response to a global pandemic. Put bluntly, our port has been a leader, not a follower. And personally, I hope that our port will continue to be an innovator, and I hope that we recognize there are new ways of doing business. Surely there will be some who criticize. There always is.

Nevertheless, I believe that our formulation of a Hybrid Work Plan should consider our new knowledge. Therefore, in moving forward, a new paradigm Hybrid Work Plan could be something like this:

1. Return to In-Person Small Group Employee Meetings

Re-institute in-person employee conferences in the commission chambers. In person meetings will be on a voluntary basis with each employee having the sole and exclusive discretion to determine whether the person desires to meet in person (based on personal medical conditions). These employee meetings would take place on days that the port office is open to the public.

2. Implement Limited Open Office Hours.

While it has been undisputed that the port has remained effective and responsive to the public’s needs under the remote work plan, I suggest that the port establish some “open office” hours. Office hours could be designated as Tuesdays and Fridays from 9 am to 4 pm. These days have been selected because Tuesday would be consistent with commission meeting days, and Fridays are important to marina tenants, especially during spring, summer, and early fall.

For safety concerns I would require at least three port employees in the office during open office hours for safety and security reasons. And, to provide for continued safety of employees when a minimal workforce is on site, the port may choose to implement additional security protocols such as an interactive front door camera and bell.

3. Institute Fully Hybrid Commission Meetings.

A modified hybrid system could be employed, consisting of one commission meeting per month being conducted remotely, and the other conducted in-person. Commission attendance at in-person meetings would be on a voluntary basis. In-person commission meetings could occur under the following conditions:

- a. Each attending commissioner would be seated six feet apart from others.
- b. Employee attendance would be limited to one person to operate the equipment and one other employee, likely the CEO or his delegate.
- c. Public participation would continue to be either in-person or remote. For in-person attendance, seating would be limited as appropriate and consistent with Washington State Department of Labor and Industries guidance¹, with each seat six feet apart from other seats.
- d. All directors and other employees necessary for the meeting would attend remotely (audio and visual); and
- e. The above plan could be implemented beginning June 1, 2023, and would be re-evaluated on October 1, 2023, or as necessary.
- f. To ensure full transparency for the public in conducting such in-chambers meetings, and to accommodate the above requirements, the “start date” would be dependent upon making necessary audio-visual adjustments within commission chambers and addressing other technical logistics.

4. Provide for In-Person Employee Attendance at Select Meetings and Functions

Allow for in-person attendance at meetings and functions as approved by the CEO or his delegate on a case-by-case basis (willing participant).

5. Provide for Staff Work-Related Travel

Allow for in-person travel to meetings, conferences and events as approved by the CEO or his delegate on a case-by-case basis (willing participant).

6. Publish Plan Upon Adoption

The port will ensure significant publication and promotion of the plan upon adoption to ensure general knowledge of port open office hours, staff availability, and transparency in operations. This would include website, newsletters, media release, posting notice on front door, outgoing voice message, and direct notice via established mailing lists, etc.

¹ Washington State’s public health emergency proclamations for COVID-19 ended on October 31, 2022; however, COVID-19 is still a recognized workplace hazard that employers must address pursuant to Washington state Labor and Industries. <https://www.lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-topics/topics/coronavirus#requirements-and-policies>.

Appendix

Work Models Listening Sessions Summary Remote/Hybrid/Return to Office

Information Captured by Rochelle Olson | February 2023

Port Effectiveness During COVID/Remote Work Conditions

“The pandemic proved how dynamic the port is. We had a week or two to figure out how to get everyone remote. We were ahead of most agencies, thankfully. And the cyber event made us even more robust and prepared.”

“Just because COVID emergencies are over, did we not learn some lessons from this? How can we be most productive? Can we keep working online and not have a bunch of bodies in the building just because that is the way it’s always been done? Do we use the tools we now have or go back the way it was?”

“I think we’ve been extremely effective. Once everything was set up in remote offices, I spent all my day on the computer/phone and was as productive or more productive. There were missed opportunities like Chamber functions, etc., where we had past visibility.”

“I get up very early and start working. So now I don’t have to wait until 9 a.m. to begin work. As a team, we’ve found ways to adapt. The new phone system seemed like the final step we needed to fully enable remote work.”

“Facilities are 100% occupied. That shows that we’re still maintaining operations. I’ve been remote for 7 ½ years, it does increase productivity for me, and I’m not distracted.”

Accessibility to the Public/Tenants

“We now have cameras in our Commission room and other ways to engage with the public using the tools and lessons we learned over the past few years.”

“We found ways for bill payments and other functions. Everyone learned to do things differently. People can come to commission meetings live – but no one shows up. People still want to Zoom in, and the attendance is higher.”

“I think we are more accessible. I could attend a Commission meeting while I was on vacation to present on an important topic – that wouldn’t have been possible without the transition to remote work.”

“We had hardly anyone attend in person at 2 p.m. on a Tuesday afternoon. We have far more participation online by people who want to hear or speak on a matter for 3 minutes. We now have more public engagement, so why wouldn’t we keep the ability for people to join online?”

“With the front-door camera operating, we can speak with people who stop by the office.”

“With the new phone system, we’re able to answer and transfer calls and do all our normal business. We make appointments to meet people in person when needed.”

“Remote work is effective depending on the department. Tenants were still working in their offices. We could provide a lot of support over the phone, which worked out fine. Not many tenants needed to meet in person – lease renewals were done over the phone.”

“Ninety percent of foot traffic business could be done remotely. We set up mechanisms that allow business to be conducted remotely versus coming into the office.”

“More people engaged with and commented on the Kennewick Historic Waterfront District Master Plan because it was done online/differently during COVID.”

“We received the greatest response electronically and through surveys and Zoom meetings for the Kennewick Historic Waterfront District Master Plan – over 2,000 comments from people. The high watermark previously was 200 people who attended night meetings. But by asking for feedback online, we had unprecedented participation.”

Ways the Port Has Become More Effective/Productive Working Remotely

“We do DocuSign now, GoToMeeting, Zoom and WebEx/VOIP. So, a big increase in productivity. And soon, we’ll move to Laserfiche, which will make us more productive. We can better track signatures too.”

“Sometimes, we used to have meetings for the sake of meetings, and now we don’t have as many random meetings. And there are fewer community meetings to attend.”

“Consultants aren’t flying in anymore. We’re meeting with companies remotely. Remote meetings are easier to attend and give the public more access to the port. Remote meetings are also easier as employees to attend.”

“Few people could predict COVID or how impactful it would be worldwide. Big businesses, and small businesses, all around the world are facing the same issues we are. Many technologies we use today didn’t exist four years ago. These worldwide tech advancements are due to an emergent need. We’ve invented procedures, processes, and technologies that you can’t take away.”

“One change is the old-school management of people. I used to arrive at a certain time to be seen so the manager knew I was there. Now, we’re relying on the other employees to be out there and doing the work without micromanaging them. It’s a new culture. People can show up early and have more flexibility. At first, I had a hard time not having people know what I was doing – and no one checking in with me.”

“We are more green (environmentally responsible). We aren’t traveling as much, so with lower carbon emissions, we’ve reduced our carbon footprint. We could look at bills to see if they are cost savings for the port since we’re not there daily.”

“I can get and keep the best team possible by being as flexible as possible. We are far more competitive in attracting and keeping talent with these policies, but it’s also smart. People can go anywhere to make money. But it’s a competitive advantage for the port to let employees work and stay at home.”

Negative Aspects You've Experienced Related to Port Operations/Effectiveness Working Remotely

"After COVID, I realized I like people more than I thought I did. But I think the days talking around the water cooler about kids are behind us, and there just isn't as much time consumed talking because we're remote."

"The fading of connection with my coworkers as individuals. We can still talk about tasks or ask for updates, but there is something to seeing smiling faces and hearing about families. Having a little bit of a personal connection with co-workers is beneficial."

"We've lost some of the ability to be in a room and share ideas. There are about 10% of meetings where being in the same room versus taking the screen share back and forth would be good."

"The political pressure is a negative. As an elected official, you need to be aware of what the community is saying. Some ask why the port team isn't back in the office full-time. The question that must be asked: Who will decide if we will open fully or have a hybrid arrangement? Will the decisionmaker be the Commissioners or the CEO?"

"I experienced pushback at a local city council meeting. A city employee said, 'I heard you guys really locked yourself down.' So, there is some pressure."

"We're morphing from the old culture of managing desk time versus productivity. Tim has done a great job building a good corporate culture and a team that works well together. I worry about new people coming on board and if that will change with us all working remotely."

Return to Office Concerns and Effect on Some Port Employees and/or Family Members More Susceptible to the Negative Impacts of COVID

"Limited office space for new hires is a real issue if we're all in the office. And remodeling or adding new offices is expensive, which is a real problem as we slowly grow over time."

"Unfortunately, many of us have had to become caregivers. It's one hell of a commitment on the part of the employee. If we can make it easier on everyone, it benefits the port. People can be better – we can be better ports – if we loosen the reins and trust the employees."

"Returning to the office would make it very difficult to take care of my sick parents right now. I would have likely retired if I didn't have this flexibility to take care of family."

"I will be out of the office for six weeks, and I'm grateful to be able to work remotely."

"I appreciated Tim's conservative approach for the last few years. I had a parent with dementia in a facility that you couldn't go in if you had any sickness. I also have a 91-year-old mother-in-law who I want to keep seeing. It's been a blessing not to get sick. For the last few years, I haven't even caught a cold, let alone COVID. I appreciate your approach, Tim."

"I like knowing that the people I work with aren't negatively impacting their family members' health."

"Not being in the office and catching every bug reduces medical expenses for every employee. It's nice to be able to stay home and not get sick – because I'm a caregiver to ill relatives. Not

getting sick during the last few years was a big benefit and blessing. And I can still work remotely while caring for relatives, so I don't have to miss work." "I can't share your personal information with Commissioners. So, what is prudent under the circumstances? If we can create a uniform policy, that will benefit all employees. Based on what I know, I need to safeguard the work environment. I'm privy to some facts that tell me I need to take those obligations seriously."

Ideas for a "Covid Plan" or "Next 24-Months" Work Plan

"To me, it's not a COVID plan. We use the word "reopening," but there is far more involved than COVID. To me, the plan must have flexibility. We've put all these technologies and efficiencies in place, and it would be a waste not to keep taking advantage of them."

"I don't view it as flipping a light switch on and off because it doesn't need to be where we return to exactly as we were before COVID. I don't envision it being a hard onsite/offsite decision but more of a hybrid. I save 45 minutes of drive time that I don't have to do, so I have more productive hours."

"I don't think we should call it a COVID plan. Over the next 24-month period, I'd like to keep working how we are now. If I need to come in, I do."

"Let's talk about productivity as an organization and forget about that there is COVID or the seasonal flu/cold. Take the pandemic away and are we going to revert to the less effective model?"

"What we are doing now seems to be working well. I won't mind if we designate coming in for staff meetings because there are some teambuilding benefits to having people together on occasion. So, we should think about how to build in teambuilding and comradery, or we will lose that. Also, those times together would help our new team members and future hires transition into our culture."

"At most, limited office hours are open for our Marina tenants. Maybe Friday afternoons or whenever new Marina tenants are coming down to sign up for new slips. Retain a work-from-home practice generally, allowing people to come to the building if they feel safe."

"I'm hesitant to have doors unlocked due to safety issues."

"There are an increasing number of active shooter issues, and I'm hesitant to have the doors unlocked with unfettered access with just one employee here. Maybe a buddy system. We have a heightened duty to protect employees irrespective of COVID. Maybe we keep the office locked?"

"When I go to Richland's City Hall or my children's elementary schools, you can't just wander around."

"Only meet quarterly in the Commission room – but keep all Commission meetings online. And encourage our staff meetings to be in person every two weeks in conjunction with our commission meetings."

"I like the hybrid work approach we have now. I like that we can have everyone in person on occasion for meetings. And we have options. If you're not feeling well, you stay home. No questions asked. Before COVID, I wouldn't stay home."

"I'd still come in if I weren't feeling well, but not really sick yet. And we'd pass sicknesses around. Remote work has allowed us to be healthier and more productive, and we're not taking as much PTO off seasonally."

"Whatever our plan looks like going forward, considerations should include the following:

1. What is reasonable medically?
2. What have we learned business-wise and from employees?
3. What is feasible politically."

Thoughts on Making aPolicy Too Restrictive or Loose

"You can always ease up on restrictions. If we start a bit tighter/more controlled, we can ease into it. It's better to be cautious to start so everyone doesn't get sick. err on the side of caution."

"Let's ease up on prohibitions about not being able to attend meetings/presentations. Those concerned about their health don't need to do that. We can make accommodations. Those who want to give presentations or go to City Council meetings can. Maybe not 1,000 people at the convention center but go to City Council meetings of other partners."

"We must change with the times. If we require people to sit at desks for 8 hours a day, we'll lose people. Now I can walk Badger at lunch. I have flexibility, so I am more productive and can take care of my children in the morning."