



The Port Commission selected Kathy Watson as new commissioner from a field of six candidates to serve Lyons term for the next eight months.

Kathy Watson replaces Commissioner Bill Lyons

She believes her past work experience, especially her skills in bringing people and resources together to problem-solve, will serve the port district well.

"Kathy was appointed because of her strong background in communications and collaboration," explains Port Commission president Sherry Bohn. "She is also experienced in helping stakeholders reach consensus during the framing of a project. She brings a synergistic energy to the board, and we believe her skills will help us build a stronger relationship with the city and citizens during the waterfront planning process."

Lyons, who had served on the Port Commission since 1998, cited two main reasons for stepping down from his post. Foremost was the opportunity to spend more time with his eight grandchildren, ages 4 to 15. Secondly, Lyons accepted a board position with Apollo Diamond, Inc., a Boston-based technology company. The company is launching three product lines: gemstones, and optical and semiconductor devices.

"I feel good about two different kind of things," relays Lyons regarding his tenure on the Port. "The first, mundane to some, was the establishment of realistic financial goals and a strategy to ensure they were met, and a strategic plan that is not static, but is updated and progress checked on actions twice yearly. The strategic and financial plans are the basis for the annual budget development, which includes doing a rolling five-year capital plan. This is the right way to translate policy to program and make sure it fits within the context of the overall goals and objectives of the Port. It will be used long after I've departed."

Bill Lyons resigned from the Port of Hood River Commission after serving nearly seven years, in part to spend more time with grandchildren. He's pictured here with oldest granddaughter, 15-year-old Dylan Burt.



Secondly, Lyons helped accomplish improved working relations with the City of Hood River. He was instrumental in the development of a new zone for the waterfront. Lyons also worked hard toward establishment of a Hood River campus of the Columbia Gorge Community College, "because education and training are two of the most important building blocks on which a sound, sustainable economic development policy are based," he clarifies.

In addition to serving on the Port Commission, Lyons also served on the Mt. Hood Economic Alliance Board, the Oregon Investment Board, Mid-Columbia Agricultural Research and Extension Center Advisory Board, Hood River County Economic Development Committee, Hood River County Building and Grounds Committee, and Hood River County Planning Commission. He continues to serve on the County Planning Commission.

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traffic delays each fall and spring, will be less common.

The new steel grid decking is noticeably more quiet than the old decking. Another difference associated with the project is the loss of rub rails on the outer edges of the decking, which resembled street curbs. Many truck drivers used these rub rails to guide them across the narrow bridge. The rub rails did not meet American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials structural and safety requirements.

"Everyone would have liked to have seen a wider bridge," comments Hoyle, "but with existing trusses, there was no way that could be accomplished."

The Port and its project engineer HNTB resolved the loss of rub rails with a rippled-metal thrie-beam rail system based on Oregon Department of Transportation standards.

The new steel-grid bridge deck is 19 feet, nine-and-one-half inches wide, measured between the thrie-beam rails. That is about two inches wider than the old deck.

Other improvements being reviewed include adding reflective material on thrie-beam surfaces.

The redecking project is the last of a series of projects recommended by HNTB Engineers in the early '90s. Other completed projects include the seismic retrofit for earthquake resistance; bridge strengthening for increased truckload capacity; widening of the curved portion of the Washington approach; and upgrading of the electrical and mechanical systems of the liftspan. Future projects may include tollbooth improvements.

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Fall 2004

The "Topping Out" of the Decking Project

The ironworkers who toiled the past months on Hood River Interstate Bridge held a special ceremony around midnight on October 27 recognizing the result of their labor. The ceremony followed one of the construction industry's oldest traditions, the "topping out" of a completed project.

Ironworkers have a custom of placing the top of a tree or a United States flag on completed structures like bridges and skyscrapers. Christie Constructors' ironworkers placed a U.S. flag on the final deck section prior to bolting it in place. This reflects the ironworkers' pride in their skills that led to a successful completion of a major project.



PORT OF HOOD RIVER

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By August, Christie Constructors' crew was installing up to three panels per shift, greatly accelerating completion.

Bridge Project Completed Well Ahead of Schedule



By the time bridge patrons read this newsletter, night closures on the Hood River Interstate Bridge will have ceased—a result of a well-managed, accelerated construction timeline. New steel bridge decking and guardrail installation concluded seven months ahead of schedule.

The last of 201 deck panels was placed on October 27, and since then a punch list of final project tasks has been completed, including paint striping on the bridge and both approaches, and assorted odds and ends. HNTB Engineers of Bellevue, Washington, performed the verification of completion to standards.

Port Executive Director Dave Harlan says credit for the early conclusion of the \$7.5 million project goes to an excellent team of engineers and contractors. Ed Hoyle managed the project locally for HNTB, while Christie Constructors, Inc. executed the construction.

"Christie Constructors performs exceptionally and organizes their work very well," relays Hoyle.

"We didn't have many unexpected hold ups, but the few things we had to take to the Port for decisions, the Port was expedient in responding."

Overall, weather had a positive impact, with only three nights of construction cancelled due to weather, mostly high winds.

During initial nighttime closures, which began early June, Christie Constructors installed a single deck panel each night, soon increasing to two. By August, Christie Constructors' crew was installing up to three panels per shift, greatly accelerating completion.

Preliminary surveying began in January, 2004, and construction began earnestly in March, requiring day-time single-lane closures. Overnight closures occurred Sunday through Thursday nights for the past six months. Under contract, the project was scheduled for completion in June, 2005.

Deck panels were fabricated in

Rick Nolen of Christie Constructors, Ed Hoyle of HNTB Engineers, and Dave Harlan of the Port of Hood River were present on October 27 to celebrate the final deck panel placement along with Christie Constructors crew members.

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and shipped to Universal Structures in Vancouver, Washington, where the panels were welded onto support stringers. Final work, including guardrail installation, was completed at the Hood River waterfront staging area before installation.

The Port of Hood River placed public information about the bridge project among its highest priorities, and regularly updated bridge patrons via its email notification list, web site, and toll-free bridge closure telephone line. As a result, there were relatively few complaints about lane and bridge closure schedules. "Public cooperation was key to this project's success," Harlan says.

While the public could not access the bridge during night closures, the Port and its contractors worked closely with local emergency responders to develop a plan to make the bridge passable for catastrophic or medical crises. Ambulances carried patients across the structure on three occasions during the overnight closures, with each of these crossings successful.

The redecking project replaces the 52-year-old steel deck, underlying stringers and guardrails, to enhance safety and reduce maintenance costs. Annual welding maintenance, which caused

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Columbia Gorge Economic Development Association markets region proactively

The Columbia River Gorge, as a bi-state, multiple jurisdiction region, presents some particular economic development challenges. The relatively small geographic area shares its workforce and some resources, yet has various economic development agencies representing specific interests. Though many areas have unique issues and assets, cooperative marketing has been key in representing the area as a whole for business development.

The Columbia Gorge Economic Development Association formed in 1996 in an effort to combine all the economic development agencies in the Columbia River Gorge, not only for efficiency and cost-savings, but to convey this geographically connected image.

The association facilitates coordinated efforts to establish new businesses in the Gorge, encourages growth and expansion of existing businesses, and recruits established businesses for relocation by marketing a wide variety of properties.

Members of the association share the overall goal of adding family-wage jobs to the region, thus creating a healthy economy and an improved quality of life for residents.

In the past year, CGEDA has been working with Humaira Falkenberg of Falkenberg Consulting on a number of new marketing tools.

The cornerstone of the marketing effort is a new image and slight name modification. The organization has shifted from the anagram CGEDA to Columbia Gorge EDA to emphasize its geographic location.

A newly-designed web site, which went live just over a month ago, replaced its initial web presence developed in 1999.

The new Columbia Gorge EDA site presents a fresh, professional look, with a more user-friendly navigational map.

The home page displays a map image of the Gorge's geographic location, showing Washington, Oregon, the Pacific Ocean with highlighting/ zoom-in capability of the Gorge.

"The site's home page features quick links to press releases from various ports," Falkenberg explains, "relaying some good things happening in our community

in terms of new business coming, and existing businesses expanding."

Brand new to the site is a link to current labor force information. This information is posted to the web site regularly from regional economists Scott Bailey and Dallas Fridley. The files are in downloadable Excel format for easy access by visitors to the site.

Other links include *Sites and Land, Resources, Business Information, Demographics, and Environment.*

Both the new Columbia Gorge EDA logo and web site were designed by Hanlon Brown of Portland.

Along with the web site, Columbia Gorge EDA is involved in a number of marketing strategies to carry out its objectives. The organization is creating a postcard to advertise the new web site, which will be mailed to contacts from various industry trade shows attended by Columbia Gorge EDA.

Falkenberg says the organization sends representatives to attend industry trade shows (including technology, manufacturing, and machinery), in the Portland/Vancouver Metro area to develop business contacts and convey its mission. It also works closely with the Portland Development Commission, which works with businesses seeking to relocate or expand. "The idea is if PDC can't find an ideal location in the Metro area, the Gorge is not far away," Falkenberg says.

Columbia Gorge EDA also purchases print advertising. Most recent is a full page ad in *Expansion/Solutions* magazine targeting value added

agriculture businesses. Another large ad ran in the *Innotech Conference* guide. "The ad for the Innotech conference is timely, targeting technology businesses," remarks Falkenberg. "The EDA was in the process of completing a region-wide technology study looking at needs and assessments of our area for technology. We developed a lot of good information to share."

Finally, Columbia Gorge EDA utilizes a fulfillment mail piece which contains customized information packages with which to respond to inquiries and prospective employers.

Ports and economic development agencies continue to market independently, in addition to cooperative efforts. Columbia Gorge Economic Development Association's membership includes the five ports in the Columbia Gorge (Port of Hood River, Port of The Dalles, Port of Cascade Locks, Port of Skamania, Port of Klickitat) as well as Klickitat County Economic Development Department, Skamania County Economic Development Council, and Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD). The City of Goldendale, which owns a large industrial/business park, is also a member, as is business partner Sprint.

"Sprint is an example of a public private partnership. Our goal is to encourage more private industry membership," stated Falkenberg.

For further information, log onto www.cgeda.org, or phone 1-888-760-3936.



The Columbia Gorge EDA's newly designed and enhanced web site offers useful information for businesses considering relocation, expansion or start-up in the Gorge.

Commission Revisits Port Strategic Planning

Recent weeks have brought good news to the Port of Hood River, which experienced a big achievement with the early completion of a bridge-redecking project while gaining support for its waterfront planning efforts.

The success of both projects is not happenstance. Rather, it is the result of a deliberate course of action outlined in the Port's strategic planning process. Adopted in recent years as an important planning tool, the strategic plan is an active document that is reviewed and updated twice yearly. The most recent strategic planning session occurred in early November, when the Port affirmed its commitment to major projects.

Airport Master Plan Drafted



Port Commissioners were excited to hear that the \$7.5 million Hood River Interstate Bridge redecking project was completed well ahead of its June 2005 deadline (see main article, Page One). Contemplated for the past 10 years, redecking was the final of a series of improvements designed to keep the link between Oregon and Washington available for the next two decades and beyond. The Port recognized deck replacement would require overnight bridge closures, greatly inconveniencing commuters. As a result, early project completion was especially satisfying to the Port Commission.

Commissioners were also glad to see fruition from another long-sought effort – Hood River City Council support for a Columbia River Mixed-Use Zone ordinance. The hoped for outcome of City Council action is improvements to the Port's barren waterfront that include a new shoreline park.

The mixed-use zone allows for recreational, retail, residential, office, commercial, civic and light industrial development of property developed by the Port in the 1960s. The zone creates an opportunity to transform Lot 6 – located between Luhr Jensen and Sons and Homeshield – into a community park while allowing the Port to develop Lot 7, where Homeshield is currently located.

Maintaining and enhancing aviation options in Hood River County is the top goal of a new draft master plan for the Port of Hood River's Ken Jernstedt Airfield. The Airport Layout Plan Update 2004-2023, in the works the past three years, is designed to address the airport's needs for the next 20 years.

The Port is developing the master plan in conjunction with Oregon Department of Aviation, planning firm Century West Engineering and its own seven-member Airport Advisory Committee. Main areas under exploration include potential property acquisitions, hangar construction, possible runway extension and airport security.

Federal Aviation Administration, which would fund the majority of these projects through its grant programs, must adopt the master plan's Airport Layout Plan, which has not occurred.

One of the draft master plan's main recommendations addresses a safety concern. The plan proposes moving the existing runway 550 feet to the east. This runway shift would likely mean abandonment of Orchard Road east of the airport, however.

The new runway alignment would ease safety concerns to the west along well-traveled State Highway 281, also known as Tucker Road, and to the east at Orchard Road.

The draft master plan also recommends purchasing property

Port Commissioners had to balance these success stories with some tough economic realities, however. Contrary to the strategic plan, commissioners learned Port activities are relying more and more on toll bridge revenues. Five years ago, 66 percent of the Port's revenues came from bridge tolls. Currently, 74 percent of Port revenues are generated by tolls.

Other Port properties – including Hood River Event Site, Hood River Expo Center, Marina Green and Ken Jernstedt Airfield – depend on toll revenues. Costs to maintain the 80-year-old Hood River Interstate Bridge are projected to increase, however. These areas may eventually need to pull their operational-cost weight or the Port may be forced to make difficult decisions, like implementing fees or closing property.

Other properties, namely Wasco Business Park, are performing as anticipated by the Port, however. Purchased in late 2001 and improved with infrastructure the following year, Wasco Business Park this summer saw ground broken on its first project, an office building for Humanities Software. Interest in the park has been strong, with local companies inquiring about sites this fall. Unlike most other Port lands and facilities, Wasco Business Park does not rely on bridge toll revenues.

along the airport's southeast corner, where a number of homes are located. This would allow development of a new taxiway south of the runway.

Both proposals – the runway shift and property acquisitions – are merely recommendations in the draft master plan. Even if the master plan were adopted, the Port would not undertake either project without the public's involvement. Moving the runway and closing a section of Orchard Road, for instance, would require action from the county planning department, and public meetings would be held. No property acquisitions would occur, meanwhile, without support of the affected land owners.

Indeed, a number of projects recommended in the master plan may not happen in the next 20 years. Including them in the plan would make them eligible for Federal Aviation Administration grant funds, as long as the FAA approves the plan.

However, federal authorization is not a guarantee the projects will actually be completed; the Port wants to ensure airport development matches community goals. For instance, a 960-foot runway extension is included in the airport's existing master plan, developed in the early 1990s. It has not occurred, though, because the Hood River community has not supported a longer runway.

When there is local support for airport projects, including them in the master plan allows them to be funded by federal resources and not simply by local revenues.

"It's not always easy to predict in 2004 what the airport may require in 2014 or beyond. At the same time, though, we want to be sure we can use federal dollars whenever possible. If the community believes these projects are needed, the updated airport master plan gives us the opportunity to tap into these federal funds," says Mike Doke, Port Marketing Manager who chairs the Airport Advisory Committee.



Port Commissioners served ice cream and root beer floats to attendees of the Hood River County Chamber of Commerce "Business After Hours" in September. Pictured from left to right are Commissioners Don Hosford, Fred Duckwall, Hoby Streich, and Sherry Bobn. Many business tenants also displayed wares and services at the event.

Other projects recommended in the Airport Layout Plan Update 2004-2023 include:

- Relocating the north parallel taxiway 15 feet further north to meet the FAA's 240-foot runway separation standard.
- Acquiring property north of the airport, if the owner is a willing seller.
- Moving future hangar and other development to the airport's north side.
- Removing or topping trees along approaches to the runway.
- Installing fencing along airport boundaries to limit unauthorized traffic and animal intrusions onto the airfield.
- Working with county and city planning departments to ensure cohesive and quality mapping with existing zoning.
- Adopting a pavement maintenance schedule to maximize useful life.

The Airport Layout Update 2004-2023 was developed following public meetings the past two years and with input from the Airport Advisory Committee. Community members on that committee include John Benton, Ed Drew, Richard Clarke, Dwayne Troxel and Felix Tomlinson. Port Commissioners Hoby Streich and Fred Duckwall also serve on that committee. Staff members include Anne Yannotti, Flightline Services, and Doko.

Any comments about the plan are welcome. Feel free to call Doko at (541) 386-1645 with input or email him at mdoke@portofhoodriver.com.