

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **PORT OF CHELAN COUNTY**

Regular Meeting of the Port of Chelan County

Thursday, April 16, 2008

### **Meeting Highlights**

This was a brief meeting with only a few areas of discussion on the agenda. No specific commission actions were taken.

### **Wine Promotion Budget**

Commissioners Baldwin reported that she had been contacted by several winery owners expressing support for the expenditure of Port funds to help promote the emerging wine industry in Chelan County and North Central Washington. The Port has budgeted \$50,000 in the 2009 budget for this purpose, and none of these funds have been spent this year. The Commission expressed a desire to see wine promotion efforts coordinated with existing tourism promotion efforts, which have proven to be quite successful. It was noted that there are a variety of differing views within the local wine industry about wine promotion efforts, and that it is highly unlikely that there will be universal agreement about promotional strategies and efforts. The Commissioners directed staff to bring back a proposal for the expenditure of these funds at the May 7<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting.

### **Economic Development**

Ron Johnston-Rodriguez described staff progress in coordinating Phase II of the Plug-In Center PHEV (plug-in hybrid electric vehicle) Pilot Project. The proposed project would include the conversion of hundreds of cars into plug-in hybrids for deployment in government fleets throughout the State. Many, if not most of those conversions would be conducted by an alternative-fuel, vehicle company considering location of a satellite facility in the Greater Wenatchee area. The proposal also includes: the construction of multiple charging stations (in NCW and elsewhere), some equipped with "smart grid" technologies, as well as educational programs for technicians, secondary schools, and the general public. Wenatchee Valley College is playing a leadership role in the educational programming design and is assisting in the application for the federal stimulus funds, channeled through the U.S. Department of Energy, that are being sought to support most of the project elements.

### **Confluence Technology Center**

CTC Manager Laura Jaecks briefed the Commission on her efforts working with the Greater Wenatchee Technology Alliance on the recently held GWATA annual awards luncheon. She also discussed her interest and efforts to explore ways in which on-line social networking can enhance business retention, expansion and recruitment efforts

### **Next Meeting**

The Port Commission will meet in joint session with the Port of Douglas County as the Pangborn Memorial Airport Governing Board on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ at the Port of Chelan County office. At the conclusion of the governing board meeting other Chelan County Port items may be scheduled for discussion and possible action.

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