

**Lorain Port and Finance Authority**  
**Board of Directors**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Port Office**  
**Tuesday, November 4, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.**

**Board of Directors:** Mrs. Kiraly & Silva Arredondo; Messrs. Mullins, Scott, Veard  
and Zellers (6)

**Staff:** Tiffany McClelland, Interim Executive Director  
Tom Brown, Operations Director  
Yvonne Smith, Accountant  
Kelsey Leyva Smith, Office Manager

**Guests:** Jaret Glassman, Oasis Marinas at Port Lorain  
Michael Santa, Oasis Marinas at Port Lorain  
Nate Moyer, Oasis Marinas at Port Lorain  
Chris Haynes, Crow's Nest Digital Media

**I. Roll Call**

**A.** The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Chairman Brad Mullins with roll call indicating a quorum present.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Disposition of Meeting Minutes**

**A.** October 8, 2024, Bylaws & Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes: Mrs. Silva Arredondo moved to approve the minutes. Second by Mrs. Kiraly. Motion carried.

**B.** October 8, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes: Mrs. Silva Arredondo moved to approve the minutes. Second by Mr. Scott. Motion carried.

**IV. Report of Officers**

**A. Chairman**

**1.** Correspondence received:

**a.** None

**2.** Legal opinion: Mrs. McClelland turned the floor over to Mr. Brosky to provide the legal opinion the board requested regarding board member attendance. Mr. Brosky said he did some research. The Ohio Revised Code has a statue

that allows for the board to remove a board member that misses three consecutive regular meetings. The ORC also requires this to be in our internal policies, and upon reviewing our internal policies, our language mirrors the ORC. Mr. Zellers clarified the language says "may." Mr. Brosky said yes, it is a "may," not a requirement. Mr. Mullins clarified the language says, "regular board meetings." Mr. Brosky said yes. Mr. Scott asked if tonight was considered a regular meeting despite the date change. Mr. Mullins said yes. Mr. Brosky said any time you're going to remove a board member due to malfeasance, you want it to be as clearcut as possible. Mr. Mullins asked when Mr. Simmons joined the board. Mrs. Leyva Smith said May 2024. Mr. Mullins asked for Mr. Simmons' attendance record. Mrs. Leyva Smith said he was present in May, June and August for the regular board meetings. He missed July, September, October and November regular board meetings and the September special call. Mr. Simmons was at the October special call. Mr. Mullins asked for the board members' thoughts. Mr. Zellers said we have a lot going on and may not want to add to our load, but we shouldn't let this go very long. He believes the mayor spoke with him, too, and he is a little surprised Mr. Simmons isn't here tonight. Mr. Scott thinks a letter should go to Mr. Simmons and be filed as a record. Mrs. Kiraly asked if excused absences were included in our policies? Mrs. McClelland said that process is not outlined in our bylaws. Mr. Scott said he's been on boards that vote to accept absences or they're strict and say you can't miss more than so many days or you're out. Mrs. Kiraly agrees with sending a letter. The letter will be from Mr. Mullins. The letter will cite the ORC and note Mr. Simmon's absences. Mrs. Leyva Smith will confirm the attendance record for Mr. Simmons.

## **B. Executive Director**

1. ESID Update: Mrs. McClelland said the port authority operates the Energy Special Improvement District for the Lorain County area. It doesn't incorporate all cites, but we have a couple including Elyria. We recently closed out a \$400,000 PACE project with the City of Elyria for one of their manufacturers, Plastic Enterprises. The company is doing an \$800,000

upgrade to their facility and we were able to help facilitate financing \$400,000 of that. To date, that now brings us more than \$5,000,000 in financing for PACE projects.

2. Lorain County Visitors Center Main Stage Sponsorship: Mrs. McClelland said she presented to the Lorain County Visitors Bureau about two weeks ago and they have agreed to take the Main Stage Sponsorship for the amphitheater project at Black River Landing, which is \$750,000 toward the project. We have a press release prepared to distribute. The Visitor's Bureau is excited about being involved in the project and are also looking at additional opportunities to put dollars toward events at BRL. Mr. Mullins said the visitor's bureau is considering a marketing sponsorship that would be in addition to the \$750,000. Mr. Zellers mentioned talking to Mr. Robert Maschke or Mr. Jack Bialosky about getting the Visitors Bureau's logo on the stage. Mrs. McClelland said that is a great idea. Mr. Mullins said this is a five-year deal. Mrs. Kiraly asked about sending a letter to the Visitors Bureau thanking them for the sponsorship. Mrs. McClelland said that will certainly go out. Mr. Mullins said he thought Mrs. McClelland and Mr. Brown gave a great presentation. He is on the Visitors Bureau's board and had to abstain from the vote. Mrs. McClelland said she'll present a resolution next month for the board to approve and all board members to sign.

## **V. Report of Committees**

### **A. Contract Management Committee**

1. Lorain County Health and Life Insurance Agreement: Mr. Zellers turned the floor over to Mrs. McClelland. She explained individual health insurance plans are expensive, so Ohio Revised Code was passed decades ago to allow small government entities like a port authority to go under a county or city health plan. We have been under the county health plan since 2002. This is a three-year agreement and is identical to our last one. Mrs. McClelland said we hope to continue this partnership moving forward. Mr. Scott said this is a no-brainer. Mrs. Silva Arredondo asked if there were any changes? Mrs. McClelland said no, our current agreement expires this year.

Mr. Mullins presented:

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO RENEW THE AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY OF LORAIN FOR HEALTH INSURANCE FOR LORAIN PORT AUTHORITY EMPLOYEES AND TO PROVIDE ALL NECESSARY ASSURANCES.**

Mr. Scott moved to approve Resolution No. 2024-27. Second by Mr. Zellers. Roll call vote as follows:

**Ayes: 6                      Nays: 0                      Abstain: 0                      Resolution Passed**

2. Gas and Electric Rates: Mr. Zellers said we wanted to go with NOPEC for our utility rates, but they no longer service our area. We found out when Mrs. Smith tried signing up the port after the last board meeting. Today, we're paying 6.79 cents per KWH. Mr. Zellers is recommending going with Better Buy Energy for our electric rates. It will be a fixed rate for two years. Electric rates are pretty volatile right now. It's about 1 cent more than we pay today. There is no early termination fee. The rate would be 7.69 cents per KWH. Mr. Zellers asked Mrs. Smith if she followed up with AEP Energy to see if we could be a small business customer? Mrs. Smith said no. For natural gas, we are currently paying 6 cents per CCF. Mr. Zellers is recommending going with AEP Energy for a three-year term. The rate is a little less than we pay today and would be 5.57 cents per CCF. If we wanted to cancel, it's \$25. The caveat is we must be approved as a small business customer with Columbia Gas. If we're not, then the recommendation would be to go with Direct Energy Services. Their rate is 6.59 cents per CCF for a two-year term with no cancellation fee. Mrs. Kiraly moved to go with Better Energy for the electric rate and to go with AEP for the natural gas rate. Second by Mr. Veard. Motion carried.
3. Oasis Sublease Agreement: Mrs. McClelland said we have a lease with Oasis Marinas, and they want to enter a sublease agreement with a restaurant operator. Per our agreement with Oasis, this board does have to approve the sublease with the restaurant group. This is a formality unless there is some

reason to deny it. Mrs. McClelland said this is a great opportunity with a great restaurant group. The sublease has been reviewed by Mr. Brosky. Mr. Nate Moyer is here to talk about the details and answer questions. Mr. Zellers said our agreement with Oasis is for another 5 years. The sublease with the restaurant is for an initial term of 5 years with an additional term of 5 years. How will the renewal work? Mr. Brosky said there is a clause in the sublease between Oasis and the restaurant that says if Oasis doesn't renew their lease, we can continue with restaurant group or set them free. We can choose to but can't be forced to renew. Mr. Moyer said the background is Oasis has been working with a commercial broker for about 18 months to find the next restaurant operator. About 2 months ago they were introduced to Jason and Heather Brooks, the owners of Sweet Pork Wilson's at the corner of 117<sup>th</sup> and Madison in Cleveland. They are a full-service BBQ restaurant. They've been operating for about 18 months and have developed a nice following. Over 60 days of getting to know them and vetting the vendors, it became clear Jason and Heather were the right partners. Mr. Moyer said there were other interested vendors but what they liked about Jason and Heather was their passion for making this work in Lorain. Some of the other vendors saw this as more of a side project, but Jason and Heather have already rented a condo in the city and very clearly want to be here. Mr. Mullins asked if they would continue at their initial location? Mr. Moyer said yes, this would be their second location. No rent would be charged in the first six months as they get the space built out. A soft opening is set for April 1, and a targeted grand opening is set for May 1. Mr. Zellers asked if May 1 would be the effective date? Mr. Moyer said it would be effective upon signing. Mr. Mullins asked about what improvements would be made to the building? Mr. Moyer said he expects cosmetic improvements. The property will mirror their existing facility. The only major change is a staircase to first floor to serve down there. The liquor license will extend down to the boater's lounge. Mr. Scott asked about Jason and Hather's prior experience before their 18 months in Cleveland? Mr. Moyer said they had no previous restaurant

experience before opening their Cleveland location. Mr. Mullins asked if they're financially feasible. Mr. Moyer said he hasn't seen at a balance sheet. A personal guarantee is built into the lease to give them a level of confidence that they're committed to it. Mr. Brown said he was director at the beginning of this. He didn't think BBQ would be a good fit at first, but he became convinced the more he spoke with Jason and Heather as they did their due diligence. He was at the joint inspection with fire and building, housing and planning, and Jason and Heather didn't blink. They are expanding their menu and won't be just a BBQ place. They are known for their smoked ribeye. Mr. Mullins asked if they were chefs before? Mr. Moyer said he can make some mean barbeque. Jason was a general contractor previously. They were tired of the rat race and found this as their calling. Mr. Zellers moved to approve the Oasis sublease agreement with Sweet Pork Wilson's. Second by Mrs. Kiraly. Motion carried. Mr. Mullins asked if they would have lunch or dinner hours? Mr. Moyer said 11a through dinner. They're hoping to offer breakfast at some point.

## **B. Strategic Development Plan Committee**

1. Rentals: Mr. Brown said when he was executive director, he asked the board about discontinuing Train Station rentals because it is a lot of exposure for a little bit of money. He had Mrs. Smith run some reports and in 2022 our building rentals brought in \$3000. Last year was \$1,350 and this year was \$2,050. We're averaging \$2,100 a year in rentals, and we far exceed that in staff time. Because staff doesn't work weekends, what happens is the keys to the Train Station leave on Friday and aren't returned until Monday. Where this hinders us is we only have about 20 weekends during the summer months. Two of those weekends go to The Summer Market and International Festival. That leaves us with 18 weekends for concerts, which is the minimum for season and VIP pass sales. Food vendor contracts are for 18 dates. Mr. Brown is already talking about partnerships with the Palace and a couple of difference festivals or events that would be weekend-long. We don't want to clog up the schedule with a birthday or graduation party for \$800. Half the

time we end up paying \$200 on the backend to have the bathrooms cleaned. As an agency, Mr. Brown wants to suggest not renting to private parties. If we wanted to host an event that would be up to us, but he said the one-day rentals are not worth the time and effort. Mr. Mullins asked if we're too cheap? Mr. Brown said we have raised it, but he's not sure the amount we charge makes that much difference. If someone calls and wants to reserve a date, we're running out of weekends. Mr. Mullins asked if we knew how much we were losing? Mr. Brown said he would have to track the hours spent answering questions and reviewing applications. Mr. Mullins said his thought previously was to never say no. Maybe we charge so much that they say no. Mrs. McClelland said our thought process was to change the way people perceive us. Right now, someone can rent a pavilion for \$100 and be here all day long. What we want to do is change the perception of Black River Landing: you can't pay \$100 for a pavilion anymore. If someone wants Black River Landing, it's a full-site rental. In that case, the event is going to coordinate with Mr. Brown and there would be more oversight. Mr. Scott said what if we found what days would work and then do rentals on like a Sunday. Mr. Brown said we historically have not done back-to-back because we cannot flip the site, get dumpsters serviced, clean the bathrooms, etc. in that amount of time. Moving forward, if we have a Friday concert and the Palace wants to do something on Saturday, we're leaving the sound and tents up. Mr. Brown agrees with only offering full-site rentals. Mr. Scott asked what a full-site rental cost? Mr. Brown said \$2,600. We could charge as much as \$10,000. Mrs. Leyva Smith added that the nonprofit price is \$1,400. Also, Republic Services will not pickup dumpsters on Sundays. Mr. Scott suggested suspending rentals for a couple of years during construction and then revisit. Mr. Brown said one of his goals in his new position is more events, and he's already getting calls about graduation parties. Mr. Scott said he doesn't want to hold back Mr. Brown in his new position. Mr. Mullins agreed and said he didn't want to interfere with Rockin' on the River. Mr. Brown said the Palace gets about \$5,000 to open the doors, Ariel Broadway Hotel gets about \$4,000

for their event space, Shipyards is \$6,000. Mr. Mullins asked what Mr. Brown needs from the board? Mr. Brown said we can decide pricing later. He just wants to move to full-site rentals only. Mrs. Kiraly said for reoccurring events in the summer months, like BrewFest and The Summer Market, are we going to charge them \$10,000? Mr. Brown said it depends on the level of partnership. Mrs. Kiraly said going from \$2,600 to \$10,000 might be a startling jump for our regular renters. Mr. Mullins suggested a cost analysis. He is not opposed to doing only full-site rentals. Mr. Brown said at a minimum, he would charge \$5,000 to rent the site. Mr. Scott said we can revisit once we truly know what it will cost. Mr. Zellers agreed we need to do the due diligence to determine a fair price. Mrs. McClelland said this could go to Strategic Development Plan Committee for further discussion. Mr. Scott agreed. Mr. Zellers moved to temporarily suspend partial rentals at Black River Landing. Second by Mr. Veard. Motion carried.

### **C. Marketing and Public Affairs Committee**

1. Mr. Scott said he had no report.
2. Crow's Nest Digital Media: Mr. Chris Haynes started by reviewing the current Rockin' on the River website. He believes it can be better and deserves to be better. Then he moved on to the new Wix website he is designing for ROTR. They have almost 30,000 emails collected, so we are going to use to our advantage. If approved, this will be Mr. Haynes third contract with the port authority. He has grown tremendously and has the port, Buckeye Sports Center, Marine Center of Indiana, Sun Valley Sports, Lorain Ohio KartPlex, multiple restaurants, Rusty Oak Nursery, Kent State University as clients. For 2024, our most viewed post on Facebook was a livestream during the Labor Fest. We received 78,000 views in 8 hours. The most liked Facebook post was this October with the lighting strike photos. Mr. Haynes started working for the port in June 2022. His goal for 2023 was to get a Facebook reach of 1 million and we hit that and reached almost 1.2 million. We had over 100,000 views on YouTube. For 2024, we're already at a reach of 1.8 million on Facebook. Mr. Haynes goal was 2 million for this year and he thinks we're



going to hit it. YouTube continues to grow and is getting more popular. From June 2022 to October 31, 2024, we've reached 3.7 million on Facebook. We gained 6,200 followers and have grown 61 percent. We started around 10,000 followers and are up to over 16,000. We've had almost 500,000 views on YouTube. In that same time, Rockin on the River has had a reach of 2.2 million. They have over 50,000 followers. That shows how good we are at what we do. Some of the things Mr. Haynes wants to do for 2025: He wants to switch to Wix.com for the Rockin' on the River site. That would save the port about \$700 a year. He said he's been good at livestreaming sunsets, but he wants to talk about the organization and projects were doing. He plans to have regular meetings with Mrs. McClelland to better understand and stay informed about what is going on at the port. BRL is a big focus moving forward and marketing materials for sponsorship packages. He is working with Mrs. Sandy Early from Rockin' on the River to gain access to all those social media accounts. Mr. Haynes also wants to do more social media and event photo and video coverage for the concerts. He also wants to maintain a weekly email campaign about upcoming concerts. He can help Mr. Brown create content to attract sponsors. This year will include more content, better video and better photos. Currently the contract with Mr. Haynes is \$1,500 per month. He wants to commit even more time to help with Rockin' on the River and is asking for \$1,000 more per month to do the marketing, social media, help with the event coverage. The website is separate because he spent 40 hours putting it together. Mr. Haynes said the point he wants to drive home is for the extra \$1,000 a month that's \$12,000 a year. Take that divided by \$10 tickets, that's 1,200 tickets. Divided by 18 shows, that means if he does his job well enough, all he has to do is help sell an extra 66 \$10 tickets to pay for the additional \$1,000 per month he's asking for. He said that if he can't do that then he's doing something wrong. Mr. Zellers said he doesn't do Rockin' on the River currently? Mr. Haynes said he has done that for free since we're on a short timeframe to get everything rolling for the VIP passes. It was a favor. The website cost would be a one-time fee of \$3,000. Mr. Mullins asked

who would maintain the website? Mr. Haynes said that would be part of his contract with the monthly retainer. He'll do weekly updates and email campaigns, help with materials for sponsors and live streams on Fridays. Mr. Zellers said your business is growing. How do we know that we're still going to be serviced? Mr. Haynes said he is hiring staff in 2025. He can handle everything right now, but once the Lorain Ohio KartPlex opens he will need help. Mr. Zellers said who owns the cameras. Mr. Haynes said the port owns the two cameras. The cameras have been great and are holding up strong. Mr. Scott asked about the number of hours per week Mr. Haynes works for us. Mr. Haynes said it varies, but usually 15-20 hours per week. This is his life, and he enjoys it. He said even though he has higher-dollar clients, he doesn't forget where he started from, and he takes that very seriously. Mr. Scott asked if he would consider reducing the one-time cost for the website rebuild. Mr. Haynes said that's tough because that was a lot of work in a short amount of time. If we can come to an agreement on the monthly rate, he would take half off the website cost. Mr. Mullins sees Mr. Haynes work and he thinks it's worth it. He likes that we're collecting emails. Mr. Mullins said Mr. Haynes would cut the website cost in half to \$1,500 but wants \$2,500 per month. Mr. Scott said he thinks it's worth it. Mr. Brown said Mr. Haynes lives and breathes this. Mr. Zellers said he thinks \$3,000 for the website is reasonable. Mr. Zellers moved to pay the additional \$1,000 per month retainer and \$3,000 for the website. Mrs. Silva Arredondo seconded. Mrs. Kiraly aye, Mr. Mullins nay, Mr. Scott nay, Mrs. Silva Arredondo aye, Mr. Veard nay, Mr. Zellers aye. Motion failed. Mr. Scott moved to go with \$2,500 a month and the \$1,500 website fee. Mr. Mullins seconded. Motion carried.

3. Black Friday: Mr. Brown said Black Friday will be a big day for us with the ROTR Season and VIP Pass sale. They're the same price as last year. Ideally, we should bring in about \$68,000 in revenue. We've got to get more content out about that now. The sale will be November 29. We will sell out of VIP passes and that will be about 300 passes. Season passes, they usually sell more than 1,000. Both passes will be \$25 off on that day: \$110 and \$200

instead of \$135 and \$225. Mr. Brown said he wants Rockin' on the River to feel the same. We'll also have a partnership with the Palace. Season passes will be available until about the second week of the season. A software solution was found, so each pass will have a barcode so we can track who is coming each week. Pass holders will also have to checkout if they want to come back in on the same night using the pass, or else they'll pay the \$10. The people counter will be an online camera tracking how many people are coming in each of our gates. It's the same company Cedar Point uses. He also wants to have a better VIP lounge. Mrs. Silva Arredondo asked about people coming by boat? Mr. Brown said there will be a scanner there, too.

**D. Financial Planning and Audit Committee**

1. Mrs. Smith said she had no report.

**E. Bylaws and Personnel Committee**

1. Personnel Policy updates: Mrs. Silva Arredondo said the committee met today before the regular meeting to talk about changes to the Personnel Policy and Bylaws. Mrs. McClelland said the updates include adding the operations director position so Mr. Brown is able to sign checks, use the credit card and the cell phone policy. We also updated the cell phone policy to better encompass all the staff as well as increase the rate. Mr. Veard moved to approve the Personnel Policy updates. Second by Mrs. Silva Arredondo. Motion carried.
2. Bylaws (Rules and Regulations) updates: Mr. Mullins said this is adding Mr. Brown to the credit card. Mr. Silva Arredondo moved to approve the updates. Second by Mr. Veard. Motion carried.
3. Mrs. Silva Arredondo said the committee also recommended that employment agreements be prepared for the Operations Director and Executive Director. Terms are to be negotiated and drafted by Mr. Brosky. Mrs. Silva moved to accept the committee's recommendation. Second by Mr. Zellers. Motion carried.

**VI. Other Business**

- A.** Reminder: Board Training is Thursday, Dec. 12 at 2 p.m. at Savage Axe Society.

**VII. Public Comment**

A. None.

**VIII. Executive Session: Property Disposition and Personnel**

A. Mr. Veard moved to enter executive session. Second by Mrs. Kiraly. Roll call vote:

**Ayes: 6                      Nays: 0                      Abstain: 0                      Motion Passed**

Mr. Scott moved to exit executive session. Second by Mrs. Silva Arredondo.  
Motion carried.

**IX. Adjournment**

A. There being no further business to come before the board, Mr. Scott moved to adjourn. Ms. Bonilla seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.



Brad Mullins, Chairman



Tiffany McClelland, Interim Ex. Director