

VERMILION PORT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES

November 13, 2025 – 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Larry Drouhard, David Miklos, Jonathan Hauck. Absent: Heidi Riddle, Peter Corogin.

Present: Arron Bias, Port Operations Manager; Mayor Forthofer; Melanie Wood, Clerk of Council; Dannin Strittmather, Assistant Clerk of Council.

Larry Drouhard, Chairman called the meeting of November 13, 2025, to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Vermilion Municipal Court Complex.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

D. Miklos MOVED; L. Drouhard seconded to approve the minutes of October 9, 2025. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

CORRESPONDENCE/OPEN DISCUSSION:

Arron Bias reported he received a letter from one of their leasers at Exchange Street who is requesting a decrease in his dockage due to issues with parking and restrictions on his dock. The copy of the letter was presented to the board for review. A. Bias said his opinion is that they should not adjust it because he pays to rent a 30-foot dock which he can utilize as he sees fit as long as it is within the identified parameters. He is able to use all 30 feet of the dock, he is restricted from the beam a little bit because it is next to the boat club, but he was aware of all these restrictions when he committed to the dock and everyone else on Exchange has the same deal as far as the parking goes. L. Drouhard said he read the letter and agreed with A. Bias and there is a good waitlist there as well.

L. Drouhard said he received an email from Bill Everett which stated he is meeting with Mike Moes next week regarding dredging for next year and he will be attending the next Port Authority meeting.

FINANCIAL REVIEW:

Arron Bias, Port Operations Manager, reported on the Statement of Cash from Revenue and Expense for period ending September 30, 2025. The Vermilion Port Authority Special Revenue Fund 214 beginning balance totaled \$57,556.66. The following reported by A. Bias indicates the following: Net Revenue YTD of \$187,242.08; Net Expense YTD - \$130,795.83; an Unexpended Balance of \$114,002.91; Encumbrance YTD - \$15, 835.98; with an Ending Balance totaling \$98,166.93.

The Port Authority Capital Fund 411 beginning balance as of September 30, 2025, was \$47,573.50. The following reported by A. Bias indicates the following: Net Revenue YTD - \$33,251.66; Net Expense YTD - \$49,362.51; Unexpended Balance YTD - \$31,462.65; Encumbrance YTD - \$4,802.99; with an Ending Balance totaling \$26,659.66.

There was no change in the 463 Dredge Grant Fund with an Ending Balance totaling \$404.99. The cash position YTD is \$262,745.56. They are up significantly since last year due to donations and if you take out the donations, they are about on par with what they did last year.

Water Works Marina:

Dock revenue reporting shows a total of \$2,222.25 for the month of October with the YTD total being \$70,951.25. The three-year average is \$60,164.00 and with a difference from the three-year average they are up \$10,787.25(17.93%). A. Bias reported that in comparing 2025 to 2024, the revenue for Water Works Marina is up \$6,876.25 (10.73%).

McGarvey's Landing:

Dock revenue reporting shows a total of \$1,409.00 for the month of October. The Current YTD total is \$26,816.33. The three-year average is \$17,912.33 and with a difference from the three-year average they are up \$8,904.00 (49.71%). A. Bias reported that in comparing 2025 to 2024, the revenue for McGarvey's Landing is up \$7,530.33 (39.05%).

South Street Launch Ramp:

Dock revenue reporting shows a total of \$2,530.00 for the month of October. The YTD total is \$38,016.00. The three-year average is \$43,397.25 and with a difference from the three-year average they are down \$5,381.25 (-12.40%). A. Bias reported that in comparing 2025 to 2024, the revenue for South Street Launch Ramp is down \$3,141.75 (-7.63%).

Overall, they are up 9.05% compared to last year. J. Hauck said it looked to him like May and June started the season out slow at the Launch Ramp. A. Bias said November is not looking too great so far either. D. Miklos asked if they were trying to stay staffed through the end of the fall brawl. A. Bias answered yes, the fall brawl ends on November 30 so the dock will be pulled sometime in the last week of November.

Arron Bias presented the board with an exhibit of potential projects for 2026 along with budget components for the proposed 2026 budget along with the 2026 actual budget. He said the projected budget for McGarvey's is on the lower end compared to the past two years because they have completed a lot of major projects and including the kiosk this year, they have put in \$63,000 worth of work there so there are no planned projects at McGarvey's, so they won't need as much of a budget there. There are no planned 411 projects or fundraisers, so they threw in \$10,000 for whatever kind of fund-raising event they want to do next year. Minor Equipment is a new account in the 411 Account which they placed \$5,000 there mainly because they have the golf cart and pontoon which is struggling a little bit so that is extra funds they can use to make repairs on them. Overall, looking at the revenue and expenses, they are projecting to be -\$26,583.00 but keep in mind they have around \$136,000 in carryover projected to come into next year. They need to make some decisions on what they want to do with the dock repairs or extra projects they would like to do next year. All the numbers are based on actuals and will not change unless they nail down projects they want to do next year.

D. Miklos asked the biggest reason why the 214 projected expense is going to be less next year is due to less capital projects. A. Bias answered they haven't identified any large projects for next year. D. Miklos asked how easy it is to tweak and move the money around. A. Bias answered it is easy, next year they could get a budget increase if for whatever reason they pick up an additional project. D. Miklos said they have a carryover which should help them with some of that. B. Yancor answered yes, about \$138,000. D. Miklos asked what the carryover is from this operating year, he knows the total but what did they add to it this year? A. Bias answered \$106,000 this year. D. Miklos said he is comfortable as long as they have the ability to be a little bit fluid to react if they have to.

D. Miklos MOVED; L. Drouhard seconded to approve the 2026 budget. D. Miklos then decided to hold off to look at the other projects before they approve the budget.

Arron Bias said the main thing he wanted to talk about for project is dock repair for the two docks that were failing this year. They have two options to look at – the first option is the Romp’s option which would include a welder coming in to cut off the tank, weld the new bottom plate on, and then ultimately regardless of what they do they will need new floats and straps so he would also strap the new floats on which the Port Authority would supply. Additionally, they have to replace all the brackets for the dock posts because that sits on the tank so for the cutting and welding, he received two quotes: the first is \$2,535.00 per dock and there was another quote he received before this meeting from 1311 Fabrication which quoted \$7,269 per dock just for the welding and cutting. The floats will cost \$250 each and at 2 floats per dock they can figure it will be about \$500 per dock. D. Miklos asked if that was for new floats. A. Bias answered yes, they will need new floats regardless so they will have to spend that money. 1311 Welding would like them to flip the docks over, but he will have to confirm with the other quote to see if they would like the docks flipped over as well. A. Bias said they also had their welder come look at the docks to give his opinion and he suggested what they can do is a new bracing for the floats to be strapped up and they do new floats regardless. He did that at the beginning of this year for dock 9 and 10 and after pulling them out and inspecting it seems like the only issue with why those docks are sinking is because the floats are failing. They need new floats in general. Even though there is some deterioration at the bottom of the tank, any water that gets in there is going to come right back out because of how they are angled. The docks are not sinking because they are retaining water, it just seems like they need new floats.

D. Miklos asked if the floats they would replace them with would be the same type of floats. A. Bias answered they would get taller floats so they would be bigger. D. Miklos asked if they would be composite or metal. A. Bias answered they are plastic with a foam core. D. Miklos asked if that is what is failing right now. A. Bias answered definitely because when they pulled them out, they were draining water for two days. D. Miklos asked the average life expectancy of those. B. Yancar said those floats have been under those docks for maybe 10-11 years. L. Drouhard said he was told they last around 10 years. D. Miklos asked if the taller floats would work. A. Bias answered yes, they already have other docks with the larger floats on them, so it is not a major difference.

J. Hauck asked which option A. Bias thought was best. A. Bias answered he would go with John and just do the supports because they already have it done on one dock so they would only have to pay to get it done on the other dock and then they get new floats and strap them up and they should be fine. L. Drouhard said the only concern he has after talking with Dave and Christy and John Gabriel, the way Romp’s does it is not a guarantee but a very good assurance that these docks will last for a few more decades because you are getting rid of all the rust, putting rust inhibitor on it, and encapsulating it and then putting new floats on it. It is putting a long-term fix on the corrosion if they do the more expensive option. J. Hauck said it is an extra \$1,700 to do that. B. Yancar asked if their decision was instead of a total replacement of the docks, they will go with these? They always thought they were going to go for grants at some point and completely redo all of those docks to something more current. D. Miklos said that is what they had discussed but at their last meeting, John Gabriel was here, and it opened their eyes to the potential of not having to do that if they could do something to preserve the top decking and right directly underneath it with what Larry is talking about. B. Yancar asked if they were looking to do dock 1 and 2, and 9 and 10? D. Miklos said they would be looking to do the docks that are sinking for sure. If they could do a couple a year to where they are preserving them. L. Drouhard said every 10 years they throw new floats on them, but they would last the rest of his lifetime. J. Hauck said they are talking about doing three docks if they are talking about the one that was done makeshift last

year. A. Bias said they will do two docks total. L. Drouhard said then they can plan to do a couple of docks every year with the same contractor. D. Miklos asked if their current welder could do that type of repair. A. Bias answered yes, but he wanted to give the other quote first because he didn't think doing all that work was necessary in order to keep them upright and floating. D. Miklos asked for how long, did he say? A. Bias answered not exactly, but the new bracing wouldn't deteriorate quickly. The only difference is he is not cutting the entire new tank off; he is just putting new welds where the floats are at. If the floats are supported, then the dock is supported. J. Hauck said he likes what Larry said and thinks they should preserve them for the future.

D. Miklos asked A. Bias his impression of the work that was done on the Romp's docks, he can tell he is leaning towards the less costly repair. A. Bias said he is leaning towards the less costly repair, but it doesn't mean that what Romp's did isn't working. D. Miklos said he hasn't put his eyes on Romp's repaired docks yet. L. Drouhard said there are some docks just north of the bridge that have just the strapping and they never encapsulated, and you can see the rust where the tanks deteriorated and that is what we are going to find ourselves with. What he found with docks he had was that the steel was so brittle and so thin you couldn't patch it up and the very next year there was another hole. A. Bias said all their docks at this point have holes in them, but it is the float that keeps them up not necessarily the tank. L. Drouhard said he is inclined to go with the full restoration. D. Miklos said if they repair two docks then they are looking at about \$6,000.00-\$6,5000 with the floats and asked when he received the quote. A. Bias answered it was within this month, but they will have to get it requoted in the spring. D. Miklos said if the work is being pushed to the spring, they won't necessarily contract this right now, they just need to put something into the budget. Now that the docks are out of the water, he would like to go look at them and they put the larger amount in the budget, and they can always come back and say they want to do it another way, but the money will be in the budget regardless. B. Yancar said what they are doing at Romp's is outstanding work, it is just a matter of the economy and long-term survival of the docks, and he thinks they would be highly satisfied with their workmanship and how they create the new tank by cutting the tank in half and resurfacing the bottom. It looks nice. L. Drouhard said if they can do it this year, go ahead and do it. B. Yancar said he doesn't know if they are in a position to be flipping docks right now because they are all together. A. Bias said he will have to confirm with the contractor to see if he wants them flipped or if he can do it. They will also need a quote from Valley Harbor if the docks need to be flipped.

L. Drouhard MOVED; J. Hauck seconded to approve \$7,000 in the budget for the repair of two docks in the spring. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

Arron Bias said he is also looking at asphalt repair for South Street, they are beyond cold and hot patching it over and over again. He spoke with the city's asphalt contractor, and it is even too far gone for cutting and patching areas, they should do a full replacement of it. They received a quote for \$7,500 for asphalt patching. The water heater at Water Works is pretty dated and he has a quote for that, the furnace at South Street is still running on one coil and somehow surviving so that is a potential for replacement as well. J. Hauck asked if the asphalt quote was for the loading area. A. Bias answered it would cover the whole launch area and all the holes there. Huron and Lorain are also redoing their launches and fixing the same kind of issues. B. Yancar said the city came down to patch the area three times and there are still a bunch of holes. J. Hauck asked if that was the only quote that they received. B. Yancar said that is who the city uses so they went with them. J. Hauck asked if they had to use the city's contractor. A. Bias answered no, it is not like they have to approve the contractor tonight, they just need to approve a number for that type of work for the budget, and they can work on other reports as well. A. Bias said they need to replace at least eight parking lights at South Street and he received a quote. He has cameras on

the list as well along with umbrellas for McGarvey's. Also, if they want to get rid of the remaining hydrant at South Street.

D. Miklos asked if A. Bias had a priority list. A. Bias answered the priorities would be the asphalt, umbrellas at McGarvey's and then the yard hydrant replaced at South Street which would give potable water there. L. Drouhard said he has a problem with umbrellas because from his own experience if no one is around and the wind kicks up; they are all ruined. He lost one last year and lost one this year and they were nice umbrellas. B. Yancar said they haven't lost anything at Water Works and those held up pretty good. J. Hauck asked if they had seen the permanent umbrellas down at Main Street Beach, they are fiberglass and do not move. A. Bias said he can talk to Marc about them and see what he thinks. J. Hauck asked if that would be a Lake Erie Shores and Islands Grant, they could work on. A. Bias said nothing has been announced for the grant for next year and usually they announce it by now. J. Hauck said he did a great job on it last year. Mayor Forthofer let the board know it was the Shore Thing who purchased the permanent umbrellas at the beach.

L. Drouhard said it sounds like they all agree that asphalt paving needs done. D. Miklos agreed and said the docks, asphalt and potable water should be considered.

L. Drouhard MOVED; J. Hauck seconded to approve \$7,500 in the budget for paving and \$600 for the plumbing of yard hydrants and \$5,100 for new parking lot lights at South Street Launch Ramp. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

Arron Bias asked if there was anything additional, they would like to look at before approving the budget. B. Yancar said it is the same process as always and they have the ability to work with finance to manipulate between the different accounts if they need it and if they have the proper revenue, they can petition to them to be adjusted. D. Miklos said this is a good start and hopefully with the new administration coming in they will have the same latitude to do some of this.

D. Miklos MOVED; L. Drouhard seconded to approve the 2026 budget with the additional add-ons previously discussed. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

Arron Bias reported the updated carryover projection has been updated with actuals from September, and they also received a donation for the second half of the kiosk so right now the carryover is looking to be \$136,713.00. As far as labor goes, they are still maintaining their man hours, and it looks like they will have no issues staying within the labor budget for this season.

ACTIVITY REPORT:

Arron Bias reported on the Vermilion Port Authority Activity Report as follows:

Waterworks Marina:

Arron Bias reported they received the second half of the donation for the kiosk which also included the roof on the utility building. He asked for approval to pay the total of \$19,052.14 using the donated funds.

D. Miklos MOVED; J. Hauck seconded to approve the \$19,052.14 payment using donated funds. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

McGarvey's Landing: No Report.

South Street Ramp:

Arron Bias stated the rebuild septic pump failed and they had to do an emergency replacement with a new pump. There is no way they could have put another rebuild in there because the city is looking for a new vendor for rebuilds. The new pump was the only option to go with. They will be credited for what they paid toward the rebuild so they just had to pay the balance of \$1,4000 and he will need approval for that payment. Strittmather was able to inspect, remove and replace the pump all in one call so he will need approval of \$600.00 to pay them for labor.

D. Miklos MOVED; L. Drouhard seconded to approve \$600 to pay Strittmather and \$1,400 for the balance of the new pump. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Clarion Drive: No Report.

Events:

Arron Bias said due to the lack of an event to pull a winner for the kayak; Mayor Forthofer can draw the winning ticket at tonight's meeting. J. Hauck asked if they decided not to have the event at the park. A. Bias answered they are behind with their contractor. The total ticket sales were \$1,480 and they sold tickets between the office and QR sales.

Arron Bias thanked Vito at West River Paddling and Jonathan Hauck and Peter Corogin for the joint donation of the kayak.

Financials:

Arron Bias said the water tower light needs replaced so they will need to have someone go up to evaluate to see if it is just a bulb that is broken or if it is the whole fixture that needs replaced. L. Drouhard asked B. Yancar how long the last set lasted, he believes they replaced them three years ago. B. Yancar said at one time it was the changing from bulb to bulb when one burns and they don't know if that is the issue. The other part is they identified a seal, and the parts were identified, and they have five bulbs. L. Drouhard said if they know what the fixture is maybe they will order a new one and replace it. B. Yancar said the last time they looked at a new one it was about \$3,500. L. Drouhard asked if he thought they should rebuild it. B. Yancar answered yes. D. Miklos asked if they had a time frame, he knows Garth used to go up and work on that before. B. Yancar answered he is not available any longer, don't forget Peter Corogin had one of his people as a safety guide who might be able to do it. L. Drouhard said they will touch base with Peter Corogin. A. Bias reminded the chairman to sign the leases. L. Drouhard confirmed he signed them.

Arron Bias said Valley Harbor is asking for a price increase. The last price increase was in 2017, and they are requesting a \$25 increase per dock which in his opinion is pretty fair. The total will go from \$5,000 to \$5,950 per year and it will be effective 2026. L. Drouhard said, with no price increases since 2017 it is well deserved. B. Yancar said that is only a small part of what he does for them with no charge. A. Bias agreed that he helps them out quite a bit.

L. Drouhard MOVED; J. Hauck seconded to increase the payments made for dock removal from \$5,000 to \$5,950 to Valley Harbor. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Miscellaneous:

Arron Bias requested the standard 150 hours to utilize in the off season which has been the same allotment for the past four winter seasons.

D. Miklos MOVED; L. Drouhard seconded to approve 150 hours for the Port Operation's Manager to utilize at his discretion over the winter season. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Forthofer pulled the winning ticket at the conclusion of the meeting. The winning ticket belonged to Russ Owens who will be contacted by the members of the board.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Forthofer said he knows there been some concerns about what was going to happen to the parking lot at South Shore due to the wastewater plant. The reality is they shouldn't sweat it. The city filed for a different type of compliance and what they are going with is a minimal effort at first and there are no extensive plans they have agreed to. You will all be retired at that time and will not have to worry about it so it will be a long time before any of that happens. Also, on December 7th at South Shore Boat Launch the Pearl Harbor Observation Day will take place and it will be a nice service.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairperson Larry Drouhard adjourned the meeting upon no further discussion.

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 11, 2025 – 6:30 p.m.

Location: Vermilion Municipal Court Complex, 687 Decatur Street, Vermilion, Oh.

Transcribed by: Melanie Wood, Clerk of Council