

VERMILION PORT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES

October 8, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call: David Miklos, Larry Drouhard, Heidi Riddle. Absent: Peter Corogin, Jonathan Hauck.
Present: Marty Sekeres, Port Operations Manager; Bill Yancar, Assistant Operations Manager; Melanie Wood, Clerk of Council.

Meeting video is available on the city website at www.cityofvermilionohio.gov under Meetings and Ordinances.

David Miklos, Vice Chairman called the meeting of October 8, 2026, to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Vermilion Municipal Court Complex.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

H. Riddle MOVED; L. Drouhard seconded to approve the minutes of September 10, 2026. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

CORRESPONDENCE/OPEN DISCUSSION: None.

FINANCIAL REVIEW:

Cash Position

Operations Manager Marty Sekeres reported that the city had not provided information before the last meeting. As of the other day, the figures were current through July 31st, and the information he received on Monday would be more current going forward. The 214 account stood at \$67,424.07. The 411 capital account showed \$17,980.

Assistant Manager Bill Yancar noted the capital account was in the red. D. Miklos asked whether that was a negative balance. B. Yancar said it was, because the port was working with Chad to move the budget, and Chad had not yet moved the budget to cover the grant. D. Miklos said he understood. M. Sekeres said that would be different once corrected, and B. Yancar added that it would be covered.

M. Sekeres reported that the deposit recap position was \$222,902.65. For 2025 the comparable figure was \$222,774.16.

Water Works Marina

For Waterworks, the three-year average was \$63,604. The 2026 year-to-date figure was \$72,601.95. The difference was \$8,997.95, which M. Sekeres described as about a 14.5% increase. The comparison of 2026 to 2025 showed an increase of \$3,872.95, or about 5.64%. D. Miklos remarked that September had been a strong month, and H. Riddle agreed it was pretty strong.

McGarvey's Landing

For McGarvey's, the three-year average was \$19,821.11 and the 2026 year-to-date figure was \$22,363. The difference of \$2,541.89 represented a 12.82% increase. Compared to 2025, the figure was down \$3,044, or about 11%. M. Sekeres said this could have been a weekend of boats.

South Street Ramp

For the South Street ramp, the three-year average was \$37,704.25 and the 2026 year-to-date figure was \$35,526.64. The difference was \$2,177.61, or a little under 6% down. Compared to 2025, the change was about 0.11%. Looking at the total recap, 2026 was up 0.67% over 2025.

ACTIVITY REPORT:

Water Works Marina:

M. Sekeres reported that the new docks were being installed. He said the last one was coming down the river as he was leaving. The port would have three very nice docks. The kiosk had been rearranged so that the Shores and Islands partnership sign could be placed in it. He said it would be tastefully done and that everyone would be happy with how it looked. He added that it would add a lot, and that the boating community will like it as well.

D. Miklos asked whether the port had attempted to remove the screws in the decking at Waterworks. He noted that the project was listed for 2027 and had been discussed at the last meeting. B. Yancar said they had not. He said the earlier attempts were unsuccessful, because there was nothing to tighten the screws with to begin with. D. Miklos asked whether the screws could be removed to get the boards up without significantly damaging them. B. Yancar said he did not know that much would have to be done, and that the boards could be pulled around. M. Sekeres said the port had been able to do it, but it was a lot of work. Results would be hit and miss, because some sections might have holes and others would be sound.

McGarvey's Landing:

Mr. Sekeres said staff were getting ready for winterization to start. Some boaters would be there for the big walleye tournament, which would run into November, so there would be activity. D. Miklos asked for an estimated winterization start date. B. Yancar said no schedule had been set. It depended on when the boats started leaving and when owners started pulling their docks. He expected work to be done around mid-October, in a piecemeal fashion. At Exchange Street, two of the three boats were gone. One owner would bring his boat back but did not need utilities, so it would not interfere with the Exchange Street project even if he was there.

M. Sekeres said that at McGarvey's the port needed to address the kiosk. It was open, and he was leaning toward wrapping it, or using a better winterization solution if one was available. The goal was to avoid a mess in the spring and keep as much fall debris out as possible. D. Miklos asked whether everything on the kiosk was exterior-grade material, and L. Drouhard said it was. B. Yancar said the main concern was rain, ice and water, and that the kiosk was totally open. L. Drouhard said it would look newer for a lot longer if it was wrapped.

Mr. Sekeres said the kiosk had a nice counter and nice shelves. Water or debris getting in could cause a lot of damage. He thought wrapping should be looked at unless there were other suggestions. L. Drouhard said he did not think leaving it open to the elements was a good idea. He compared it to a boat, saying exterior-grade materials still do not last. D. Miklos asked Councilman Werley for his views. D. Werley said he was not one for spending extra money, but vandalism had been going around everywhere. He said people seemed to be less inclined to vandalize something that was wrapped. D. Miklos agreed that was a good point. L. Drouhard said

the kiosk was wide open and would be easy for people to rob or damage. He said the wrap was worth it if it kept the kiosk looking new for 20 years instead of 10. D. Miklos said he understood and was only asking.

B. Yancar said staff had looked at doing the wrapping themselves, but it did not seem very practical. The material cost \$235 for 150 feet and a heat gun cost about \$700. He said he was still waiting for a quote to compare. D. Miklos said a weed burner could do the job for a lot less. B. Yancar said he did not know how the material worked and he was waiting on one other quote to come in to compare what they have so far. M. Sekeres summarized that the kiosk would definitely be winterized.

D. Miklos suggested that a more permanent solution, such as canvas or something that could be put down, be considered in the future, though not this year. H. Riddle said that would be ugly. D. Miklos asked whether it was any uglier than blue shrink wrap. H. Riddle said to use the blue shrink wrap, because it was tight and would be there for the winter season. He said he thought it was a good idea personally. M. Sekeres and the D. Miklos agreed.

South Street Ramp:

M. Sekeres reported that the contractor had come in and done a great job repairing the deck, and it looked nice. The contractor had also cleared debris from the groove, which he had asked them to try to do. The remaining task was to stripe it. He said the port had also had a very successful day with Woollybear parking. Many good people attended, and the staff had a lot of fun. B. Yancar remarked that the port made money, and H. Riddle said that was a good one.

Clarion Drive: No Report

Exchange Street:

M. Sekeres said that, as discussed at the last meeting, the port was still waiting on the plumbing and for an official on the electrical. A meeting was scheduled for next Thursday, the 14th, at 9:00 a.m. B. Yancar confirmed the date. Corso's would be there to lay out their design, and the general contractor for the entire project would also attend. The port would gather as much information as it could and learn dates. It would then have to decide when to have its own work done. From what he understood about access, the contractor would use the port to move debris out as the condos were done first. He said he would keep the board updated.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Shores and Islands:

Mr. Sekeres said he had emailed Nicole of Shores and Islands to tell her the docks were in, and she had been invited to see the operation. She would come next week for a tour, to show her all of the port's operations. He said any suggestions she might have could create other opportunities to beautify the operation. He had also spoken with Parks and Rec, who were on board. He said it would be a nice time.

Waterworks Sign:

D. Miklos returned to Waterworks and the sign. He said he had spoken with someone at the water department, who suggested the port might want to look at replacing it. M. Sekeres asked whether he meant the white sign taken off the building, and D. Miklos answered yes. M. Sekeres said the sign had been power washed when it was removed, which took off much of the debris and soot, and it looked pretty nice. Over the years it has developed some cracks. Some pieces were attached but hanging, so staff could put a backer on it. A couple of spots had nicks that could be filled. He said it was worth saving, noting the difference between what one sees at five feet versus 30 feet. D. Miklos agreed.

M. Sekeres explained that the neighboring operators had installed a new deck and rail. The sign would not rest on the railing. Staff would make brackets and hang it so that it rested against the brick wall. Chris and his crew had helped load it onto a truck and bring it to Waterworks, where it would be stored for the winter. There was no reason to fix it before then, and the repair would be done in the spring.

Water Tower Light:

Mr. Sekeres reported that the tower light had arrived. It was wrapped in shrink wrap and bubble wrap in the back of the office and ready to be installed when they have the time.

Fundraising and 2027 Planning:

M. Sekeres said the port needed to identify events for 2027 and set targets for the dollars it wanted to raise. He said the \$3,000 raised was nice, but the port needed a lot more. Naming rights for the docks had been discussed and would be rolled out in 2027. He asked for any ideas from members.

M. Sekeres reviewed a list of potential 2027 projects:

- **Waterworks:** the price of docks, a restroom upgrade and surveillance cameras, which he called a spend the port needed to prioritize. The pavilion would have to be re-shingled, though that was a question mark, and the water heater was aged.
- **Clarion:** replacing docks, upgrading the plumbing to the pedestals, and upgrading the electrical with new pedestals.
- **Parking lot:** an upgrade, bumper replacement and new signage.
- **McGarvey's:** new umbrellas, a restroom upgrade, new trash cans and surveillance cameras.
- **South Street:** an aged heating and cooling system, which he called a big spend, and paving of the kayak area.

He also noted that the port had looked at adding another mother dock as a form of revenue so docks could be rented out. He praised Paul, as a remarkable individual who came up to speed quickly. He said the port needed three or four more dock masters. The port also needed to look at more grants and prioritize them, including whether to pursue those funded at 100 percent or those requiring matching funds. Grants could help with projects such as bathrooms. The budget process had started. This was the first year M. Sekeres was doing it, and B. Yancar was teaching him.

B. Yancar added that members had seen the forms the port had to submit to the city for City Council approval. Revenue and expense were the two components. The port needed to identify

events it might hold to raise money and a dollar figure for event funding on the revenue side. It also needed to know which projects it would pursue for the expense side. As with last year, the port wanted to pursue grants and had to decide how much to participate. The South Street restrooms which were done were not 50/50, they were done with cash from different organizations. He asked members to think before the next meeting so staff could present a version of the budget then. It was not a drop-dead date, but the port wanted to move along and might have to make decisions on projects and events. Last year the final budget was not submitted until mid-January, though earlier would be better. He asked members to start thinking about fundraising events. The projected carryover indicated what would come out of carryover if expenses exceeded revenue, which was why the port tracked it.

D. Miklos asked whether staff had a priority among the items, noting the master plan and that everything was in flux. He said Exchange Street was going to be there regardless, because of the contractors on site, which in effect forced the port's hand. He asked what else staff would identify as their priority for next year. B. Yancar explained that M. Sekeres was inviting Shores and Islands for a tour to build a relationship. The port wanted to go back to them and partner with Parks, as it did before, to seek a sum of money. It had not been determined whether the money would go to docks at Waterworks, or toward Exchange, perhaps newer docks there. These discussions were at an early stage, and staff would also give the board a priority as they saw it.

D. Miklos said that would be helpful. B. Yancar said the projects were listed only to start the conversation. D. Miklos observed that someone could spend a hundred thousand dollars in the blink of an eye on the list. B. Yancar agreed and said the figure had to be a practical dollar amount that balanced revenue and expense. He said the port had been pretty successful in the past, and staff would provide priorities and practicality. D. Miklos suggested that staff send the information ahead of time to Melanie so it could be sent to all members. B. Yancar said that was the plan.

Riverside Drive Leases and Slip Rates:

B. Yancar noted an acknowledgement regarding Riverside Drive. The board had discussed it earlier in the year and had already approved all the components, so no further approval was needed. It was now a one-year lease, handled as the port handles other one-year leases. The letter he would send to customers would state that they would receive no increases for five years, as the board had indicated. All leases would be going out, including those for Exchange and Clarion. The current rate was \$75 per foot per year. He recalled that the 20-year plan called for a \$5 increase in 2029 and asked for members' feelings.

B. Yancar said he had checked how the port compared to others. Upriver, rates ranged from about \$50 to \$60 per foot, rising to \$75 before the trestle where the port sat. Past the bend, Parsons charged \$80, and the power boat club charged \$95 and under, depending on circumstances. The yacht club was in that range, and he had not received information from some of the others. He said the port was in the middle when comparing what it offered to what others offered.

L. Drouhard said the port had a healthy waiting list. He said that if so, the board had to be fiduciaries of the port and raise the fee. He asked how long the rate had been \$75, and B. Yancar estimated four to five years. L. Drouhard suggested doing the math. B. Yancar said a \$5 increase would cost the average customer \$175 for a season, based on an average boat length of 35 feet. D.

Miklos asked whether that meant moving up by five dollars. B. Yancar confirmed it was 35 times five. He clarified that Clarion and Exchange were both at the same rate, \$75 per foot per season.

D. Miklos said his only issue was that neither location had restroom facilities. B. Yancar agreed and said the port offered them but that they were remote. D. Miklos said that was the big difference from other marinas, which all had restroom facilities.

L. Drouhard said he believed the port should set in stone an annual increase with inflation, a bare-minimum increase, so the port did not go another four or five years without raising fees. B. Yancar asked whether he meant three to four percent, and he said yes. He suggested a motion to increase based on CPI. D. Miklos asked whether this was meant to apply every year going forward. L. Drouhard said yes, until there was no longer a waiting list. B. Yancar said the alternative was to use the inflation rate this time and decide each year.

L. Drouhard said that because the port had not increased rates for four or five years, and he could think of two people trying to get on at Clarion who would love to be there forever, he did not think a larger increase would scare anyone away. B. Yancar asked whether he meant the official 2026 inflation rate. L. Drouhard said that if the port had been at \$75 for about five years, he thought it should go to \$85.

H. Riddle said that was a big jump. L. Drouhard said the port would still be full, and that it would not be a jump at all if inflationary increases had been applied from the start. H. Riddle said she did not think increases should be made every year. D. Miklos agreed and said he did not think an inflationary increase should be added every year. At some point the port would become the highest place on the river with no services or amenities. H. Riddle said the amenities were very limited.

D. Miklos said he was comfortable with a \$5 increase this year. He thought \$10 was a big jump, particularly with everything else going up to ten. L. Drouhard asked what else was going to ten. He said the port needed to make up for the last five years of no increases. H. Riddle said they could not make up for those years because nothing was done during them. L. Drouhard asked whether the members would agree to go up from \$75, where it was in 2021, to \$80 for next year. B. Yancar noted the port had just frozen Riverside for five years, but L. Drouhard said there was no demand there and no waiting list.

D. Miklos staff whether they had spoken with customers and how an increase would be received. B. Yancar said only one person had asked whether the rate would remain, and he had told that person he was presenting it to the board and made no commitment. He noted Parsons was at \$80 across the river, and he did not think Parsons provided many amenities either. D. Miklos said Parsons had a restroom and showers. B. Yancar said he did not know what they offered.

L. Drouhard MOVED; D. Miklos seconded to raise the slip rate from \$75 to \$80 per foot for Clarion and Exchange. Discussion: H. Riddle said she wanted to be sure the port would not scare people away. L. Drouhard said there was a waiting list, so people would not be scared away. H. Riddle said even with a waiting list, current dock holders who objected to going from \$75 to \$80 might leave. L. Drouhard said the rate had not been increased in five years. He said his insurance had gone up about 20 percent a year and he still paid it. D. Miklos said the only consequence would be some vacancies. L. Drouhard said there would not be vacancies, and H. Riddle agreed

there would not be, but said a current dock holder might be scared away. L. Drouhard said the board members were fiduciaries of the port, had to worry about the bottom line, and needed to do what was best for the port. H. Riddle said at least he had not said \$85, she would not do that. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Upon no further business, D. Miklos adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, November 12, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.
Vermilion Municipal Court Complex, 687 Decatur Street, Vermilion, OH

Minutes by: Melanie Wood, Clerk of Council 10/16/26 with assistance of Clerk Minutes