

MINUTES

BOARD OF BENTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Board Meeting
Tuesday, February 4, 2020, 9:00 a.m.
Commissioners' Conference Room
Benton County Courthouse, Prosser, WA

Present: Chairman James Beaver
Commissioner Shon Small
Commissioner Jerome Delvin
County Administrator Jerrod MacPherson
Clerk of the Board Cami McKenzie

Benton County Employees Present During All or a Portion of the Meeting: County Engineer Matt Rasmussen; DPA Ryan Brown; Greg Wendt, Planning Manager; Deputy Clerk Elaine Osborne; Katie Gillies, Sheriff's Office; Commander Jon Law and Commander Steve Caughey, Sheriff's Office; Auditor Brenda Chilton; Lorene Roe, Auditor's Office; Kathy Mann, Sheriff's Office; Treasurer Ken Spencer; Captain Joshua Shelton; Deputy Assessor Adam Morasch; IT Manager Robert Heard; Human Services Manager Kyle Sullivan; HR Manager Lexi Wingfield; PA Andy Miller.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of January 28, 2020 were approved.

Review Agenda

Commissioner Small requested to add two executive sessions to discuss a response to a union grievance and review the performance of a public employee.

Consent Agenda

MOTION: Commissioner Small moved to approve the consent agenda items "a" through "p". Commissioner Delvin seconded and upon vote, the Board approved the following:

Auditor

- a. Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0111-101, Dept. 000
- b. Updates to Cash Drawers

Board of Equalization

- c. Notice of Approval to Hear Property Tax Appeals

Commissioners

- d. Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept. 115 to 107
- e. Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept 115 to 125

- f. Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0305-101, Dept. 000

Human Resources

- g. United Employees Benefit Trust Participating Agreement for Juvenile Detention

Human Services

- h. Purchase of Bus Tickets and Passes From Ben Franklin Transit

Planning

- i. Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept. 116

Public Safety

- j. Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0148-101, Dept. 135

Public Works

- k. Request for Public Hearing for Vacation of a Portion of Clodfelter Road
- l. Purchase of Two 2020 Ford Police Interceptor AWD SUVs From Columbia Ford
- m. Traffic Control on Certain County Roads: Speed Limits
- n. Purchase of 4000 Gallon Tank, Pump and Plumbing for Chassis From Ochoco Mfg. Corp.

Sheriff

- o. Contract w/Advanced Aircraft Services for Removal and Installation on Cessna 182 Garmin GDL w/GPS Transmitter
- p. Modification of Memorandum of Understanding w/United States Marshal for Joint Law Enforcement Operations Task Force

Public Comment

Kathy Wold, Pasco, said she was an employee for the Benton County Sheriff for 21 ½ years and when she retired, she did not receive a plaque, even though it was up to the Sheriff's discretion; she said she would like to receive a plaque.

Strategic Planning for County Offices

PA Andy Miller and DPA Ryan Brown said they wanted to discuss and remind the Board and current elected officials about the laws and requirements regarding the location of County Offices and Departments and the requirement to have a functioning government and maintain offices and services in the County Seat. Mr. Brown said the County defended its decision approximately 16 years ago to locate multiple offices in Kennewick, in addition to offices in the County Seat, in the Washington State Supreme Court.

The following elected officials were present for the discussion: PA Andy Miller, Treasurer Ken Spencer, Auditor Brenda Chilton, Elaine Osborne (representing Clerk Josie Delvin), Adam Morasch (representing Assessor Bill Spencer), Coroner William Leach (via/Skype), District Court Judge John Ziobro, Commander Law and Commander Caughey (representing the Sheriff's office).

Commissioner Delvin said that certainly some things moved down to the population and it was their job to provide services all over the County, but they still provided services in Prosser. He said they were complying with the legislation and provided an office in the County seat but still could have an office in the remainder of the County.

Commissioner Small said he agreed with Commissioner Delvin and talked about how the County and its budget had increased but the quality of service was still being provided.

Brenda Chilton said she moved one function of her department to the Tri-Cities and was trying hard to balance of the needs of the citizens with the fact that Prosser was the County seat. She said she spent 60% to 70 % of her time in Prosser and still considered Prosser the main office. Additionally, she reduced her footprint by closing the Richland office and reallocated staff (two back to Prosser). She said she was currently looking at expanding the Elections Department in Prosser; it would be good to have it in Tri-Cities but it was not currently an option. She said she moved the accounting department to the Tri-Cities since 95% of who they serviced was in the Tri-Cities but reiterated she did not plan to do anything other than consider Prosser to be the main office and County seat.

Ken Spencer said he had offices in both the Courthouse and the Annex. He indicated that tax collection was mostly in Kennewick and finance and accounting in Prosser, but they did maintain an office in Prosser for tax collection as well. He said he split his time about 50/50, as did his deputy, and they were trying to serve the people with the best service they could.

Commissioner Small commented the Commissioners would be expanding the board room here in Prosser to accommodate meetings.

Chairman Beaver said the vote of the people was to maintain the County seat in Prosser and that is what they were doing. However, they were trying to care for a large population where that population by providing the employee base to deal with the population and retaining Prosser as the County seat.

Recovery Coalition Feasibility Study

Gary Long, Commissioner for Kennewick Public Hospital District, said they were looking for a central location in the Tri-Cities for a recovery center. He said they were asking Benton County to support and share in the cost to determine if it was feasible to turn the old hospital into a recovery center. They were looking to see if the hospital would structurally meet the needs and reviewing the overall costs and capital expenses. The cost of the feasibility study was \$46,000 to \$50,000, the district would pay half and they were requesting Benton County to contribute an amount not to exceed \$12,500; Franklin County was committing the same amount if Benton County agreed. If the cost went over \$50,000, the hospital would be responsible for the remainder. Upon completion, the full feasibility would be available for review and they could do a presentation on all aspects.

Commissioner Delvin said this was something he always wanted and as a police officer, it was something he wished was available where a patrol officer and emergency services could bring someone to get evaluation and/or treatment and they did not have to take them to jail. He said there were currently models for this type of facility and it was his dream to have a facility like that in this area.

Commissioner Delvin said he was in favor of the County putting \$12,500 into the study and the old hospital was a community asset and seemed a good purpose for that property.

Commissioner Small said he was also proactive for mental health services and had been involved in a multitude of facilities that were built and serving the public right now. He said he was specifically concerned about housing and secured detox and wanted to make sure that was part of the RFP. Additionally, he wanted it to include revenue and expenses but wanted to know who was going to run this facility. He said he was in favor of spending the money if all the aspects were included. He expressed concern about the state sending over individuals and dictating how it was run and said he wanted it to be locally ran.

Mr. Long said conceptually the coalition would be an advisory board, but they would hire a management firm to manage the facility.

Kyle Sullivan said he had agreed to assist the hospital district to make sure it met the needs of the County and protected the County's interest.

Chairman Beaver said he was intrigued by the partnership and that this discussion started many years ago. He said he was in favor of moving this forward and excited they could get behind a common goal.

MOTION: Commissioner Delvin moved to allocate up to \$12,500 from the Human Services Fund to participate in a feasibility study with the Kennewick Hospital District and Franklin County to convert the Auburn property. Commissioner Small seconded and upon vote, the motion carried.

Position Requests and Discussion

HR Manager Lexi Wingfield said the HR Department had been contacted by numerous departments/offices about the need for additional positions. She said the County had continued to improve efficiencies in technology and had maintained lower levels of staffing. However, at this time, she wanted to start the discussion of overall County staffing needs to determine where needs were and how and when they could be appropriately addressed.

Commissioner Delvin said he wanted to see a plan moving forward and how to incorporate those positions into the budget process and how it affected the budget. He said he would review the three proposals today but wanted to see a bigger plan moving forward.

Ms. Wingfield said she could work on a process and policy and a plan going forward.

Commissioner Delvin said he wanted to include what was critical for now and what could be addressed in the future months, as well as how it impacted the future.

Commissioner Small said he met with Ms. Wingfield and Mr. MacPherson about these requests and was agreeable to hearing about them today.

Chairman Beaver said he wanted a plan that outlined incremental steps and budget impacts. He expressed concern about the impacts to the budget and wanted to be careful not to overspend. He

said he wanted to do that during the budget cycle because he did not have a picture in his mind what the next biennium looked like without that information.

The following three positions were being requested: HR Generalist (Human Resources), Information Systems Analyst III (Information Technology), and Administrative Clerk (Sheriff's Office).

HR Generalist and Information Systems Analyst III

Ms. Wingfield discussed these positions and said they were both service employees needed to address the increase in employees and new state requirements. She said her department was keeping afloat but missing out on opportunities to provide a better service and being reactive instead of proactive.

Mr. Heard said it was the same for his department and the new cost would be spread across the county; he said they had more critical services to support and it was important to have them in place. He said the funds were available in his budget and at this time it was just filling a hole.

Ms. Wingfield talked about the increase in employees from 620 to 660 in just over four years and HR should have one employee for every 100 employees. She said internal services were suffering as they tried to deal with these extra people with the current staff levels, in addition to the increase in public records requests.

Sheriff's Office Administrative Clerk

Commander Caughey and Commander Law presented for the position request in the Sheriff's Office. Commander Law said they would not be here at this point in the budget cycle if it was not critical and this request was budget neutral for this biennium. He said since the department was separated from the jail, they lost a payroll clerk and their contract management specialist. He said they completed a workload study (pre and post separation) and it clearly showed they needed two FTE's but they were only asking for one to assist with payroll, p-cards and vouchers. They were not asking for a grants person but absorbing these responsibilities. He said he believed that HR and the Auditor's office had expressed support and they were drowning and asking the Board to fill the position now.

Commissioner Delvin said he was willing to move forward with these three positions but wanted to look at tightening the budget when it was presented. He said they had been lucky to have cash carry forward, which was how they were able to pay cash for these buildings and not go out for bonds.

Ms. Chilton said she was in favor of that position in that it was important to have enough people to establish internal controls.

Brenda Chilton commented that she had a shortage in the Elections Department, it could not wait until July and she wanted to be able to address the Board. Ms. Wingfield commented that the Elections and Collections Departments were different budgets and also came with potential liabilities if they were not addressed.

Chairman Beaver said he was real sensitive to this issue and did not want to get in a situation where they could not pay these people. Commissioner Small also expressed his concern about that as well.

Commissioner Delvin said he believed they were now seeing the effects of a barrier that had been in place that was not allowing these positions to be approved.

The Board agreed to have staff create a plan for staff growth and impacts to budget and requested that the three positions brought forth today be tabled for further discussion and possible decision next week.

Kathy Wold said the community and needs were growing and more clerks were needed in the Sheriff's office.

The Board briefly recessed, reconvening at 10:35 a.m.

Executive Session – Union Grievance

The Board went into executive session at 10:35 a.m. for 10 minutes to discuss the County's position on a grievance with DPA Stephen Hallstrom. Also present were Lexi Wingfield, Jerrod MacPherson and Cami McKenzie. The Board came out at 10:45 a.m. No decisions were made in executive session.

Executive Session - Performance of Public Employee

The Board went into executive session at 10:45 a.m. with DPA Stephen Hallstrom for 15 minutes to discuss the performance of a public employee. Also present were Jerrod MacPherson and Lexi Wingfield. The Board came out at 10:57 a.m. No decisions were made in executive session.

MOTION: Commissioner Small moved to approve the employment agreement with Matthew Rasmussen as presented. Commissioner Delvin seconded and upon vote, the motion carried.

Tort Claims

CC 2020-05: Received on February 6, 2020 from Peter Felicijan

Account Payables

Check Date: 01/30/2020

EFT's #: 1110-1111

Transfers #: 01302001-01302006

Total all funds: \$70,398.69

Warrant #: 202741-202813

Total all funds: \$497,096.81

Check Date: 01/31/2020

EFT's #: 1112-1136

Transfers #: 01312001-01312004

Total all funds: \$175,736.37

Warrant #: 202814-202946

Total all funds: \$4,237.21

Warrant #: 202947-203005

Total all funds: \$195,185.36

Warrant #: 203006

Total all funds: \$1,553.70

Total amounts approved by fund can be reviewed in the Benton County Auditor's Office.

Resolutions

- 2020-105: Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0111-101, Dept. 000
- 2020-106: Updates to Cash Drawers
- 2020-107: Notice of Approval to Hear Property Tax Appeals
- 2020-108: Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept. 115 to 107
- 2020-109: Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept 115 to 125
- 2020-110: Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0305-101, Dept. 000
- 2020-111: United Employees Benefit Trust Participating Agreement for Juvenile Detention
- 2020-112: Purchase of Bus Tickets and Passes From Ben Franklin Transit
- 2020-113: Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept. 116
- 2020-114: Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0148-101, Dept. 135
- 2020-115: Request for Public Hearing for Vacation of a Portion of Clodfelter Road
- 2020-116: Purchase of Two 2020 Ford Police Interceptor AWD SUVs From Columbia Ford
- 2020-117: Traffic Control on Certain County Roads: Speed Limits
- 2020-118: Purchase of 4000 Gallon Tank, Pump and Plumbing for Chassis From Ochoco Mfg.
- 2020-119: Contract w/Advanced Aircraft Services for Removal and Installation on Cessna 182
Garmin GDL w/GPS Transmitter
- 2020-120: Modification of Memorandum of Understanding w/United States Marshal for Joint
Law Enforcement Operations Task Force
- 2020-121: Employment Agreement with Matthew S. Rasmussen – Deputy County
Administrator

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:58 a.m.

Clerk of the Board

Chairman