

MINUTES

BOARD OF BENTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Board Meeting
Tuesday, December 7, 2021, 9:00 a.m.
Commissioners' Conference Room
Benton County Courthouse, Prosser, WA

Present: Chairman Pro Tem Shon Small
Commissioner Will McKay
County Administrator Jerrod MacPherson
Alt. Clerk of the Board Marilu Flores

Absent: Chairman Jerome Delvin (Vacation)

Benton County Employees Present During All or a Portion of the Meeting: Deputy Administrator Matt Rasmussen; Human Services Manager, Kyle Sullivan; Office of Public Defense Manager, Eric Hsu; Steve Hallstrom, DPA; Community Development Director Greg Wendt; Finance Manager Linda Ivey; Chief Deputy Clerk Elaine Osborne; Treasurer Ken Spencer; Robert Heard, IT Manager

Pledge of Allegiance

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of November 30, 2021 were approved.

Review Agenda

Administrator MacPherson added an executive session to review qualifications of an applicant for public employment.

Consent Agenda

MOTION: Commissioner McKay moved to approve the consent agenda items “a” through “i”. Commissioner Small seconded and upon vote, the Board approved the following:

Auditor

- a. Surplus and Disposition of Personal Property

Commissioners

- b. Appointment of Richa Sigdel to the Mid-Columbia Libraries Board

Human Services

- c. Grant Agreement w/Arc of Tri-Cities for Employment Services

- d. Grant Agreement w/Columbia Industries for Employment Services
- e. Grant Agreement w/Responding to Autism Services for Employment Services

Public Works

- f. Award of Contract to Siefken & Sons Construction for the Moderate Risk Waste Facility Project
- g. Ratifying Change Order No. 4 to Central Washington Asphalt for Bituminous Surface Treatment
- h. Interlocal Agreement w/City of Richland for Revision of Corporate Boundary

Purchasing

- i. Contract w/LexisNexis for Law Library @ the Jail

Public Comment

None

Special Olympics Update

Kyle Sullivan introduced Donna Tracy who provided an update on Special Olympics and presented the Board with a thank you letter. The Board recognized athletes who have participated as well as volunteered in Special Olympics. Ms. Tracy updated the board on the following:

- Fall tournaments
- Total of 380 registered athletes
- One-on-one training
- Greg Berg chosen to represent our community at 2022 Florida nationals in bowling
- New partnership with Golf Academy for coach recruitment
- Partnership with ESD 123 for participation in “Young Athletes” activities
- Gold medals for volleyball teams

Discussion on Adding Veterans Service Officer to Veterans Assistance Program

Kyle Sullivan, Human Services Manager, approached the Board regarding a veterans service officer position. Mr. Sullivan gave an update of past board discussions regarding the veterans program within Human Services. Mr. Sullivan indicated that he has been in discussions with the advisory board about approaching commissioners on supporting this position using the veteran’s relief fund. He further indicated that should the Board desire, the Washington Department of Veteran’s Affairs can come and do a presentation to talk about how a veterans service officer would help veterans file claims and bring additional federal funding to the community and sounded like a great program. He is in the process of getting feedback and putting together a bi-county advisory board meeting. He wanted to start having discussions again and answer any questions now that things are starting to open back up. Commissioner McKay indicated that he may go sit in on a Franklin County advisory board meeting and listen. Mr. Sullivan said once he gets more information in the near future, he will return to the Boards for direction.

Prosser Economic Development Association Quarterly Update

Neal Ripplinger, Executive Director for PEDDA, provided a PowerPoint presentation and updated the Board on the following:

- 2020/2021 Leadership Program ~ 10 individuals participated & graduated Aug. 2021
- Prosser Business Spotlight ~ have featured 50 businesses to date
- Grant Writer Program ~ part-time grant writer shared between four entities
- Covid-19 Business Resiliency ~ Prosser businesses have received 62 grants totaling \$944,590.29
- Wayfinding Banners ~ completed through grant funding
- Wayfinding Signs ~ additional signs to complement existing signage
- Transportation Committee & Improvements ~ evaluating gaps in service w/BF Transit & continue efforts to improve safety of SR-221
- Business retention, recruitment & expansion in the Prosser area
- TBEX North America – largest networking event for travel bloggers in April 2022

Office of Public Defense Grant Funding for Addressing Cases Pursuant to State vs. Blake

Eric Hsu, Office of Public Defense Manager, presented a grant offer from the State in the amount of \$224,000 to be used for public defense as a result of the Supreme Court's decision in *State v Blake*'s convictions of which need to be resentenced or vacated in a large volume of cases in Benton County. The State Office of Public Defense has offered a grant to support post-conviction relief efforts in 2021 and 2022. Mr. Hsu requested the board sign the state grant agreement as well as the line item transfer associated with the agreement.

MOTION: Commissioner Small moved to approve grant agreement #GRT22032 with Washington State Office of Public Defense in order to receive and expend public defense grant funding for addressing cases pursuant to *State v. Blake* in the amount of \$224,000. Commissioner McKay seconded and upon vote, the motion carried.

MOTION: Commissioner Small moved to adopt the line item transfer within Current Expense Fund No. 0000101, Dept. 115 to Dept. 136 as presented. Commissioner McKay seconded and upon vote, the motion carried.

Discussion: Commissioner McKay asked on OPD's continued efforts on finding counsel and outsourcing services. Mr. Hsu indicated that his office does not have the resources and is struggling. Commissioner McKay commented also on a recent incident wherein an employee was fired from his job for using his concealed weapon at a person who was later determined had 9 felony warrants and posed a threat at a business and asked how a person with warrants is out on the streets. Mr. Hsu indicated that this means the system is working because a warrant was issued. However, authorities then have to come across that person to be able to make an arrest.

Disbursement to the City of West Richland for the Cooperative Way Project

Adam Fyall, Sustainable Development Manager, presented via webex on a new rural county capital fund project proposed by the City of West Richland. Mr. Fyall said the project included construction of 820 feet of new urban roadway, widening of Keene Road at two locations, installing 3,155 feet of 12" water main, five fire hydrants and storm drainage appurtenances. Mr. Fyall is looking at the Board for approval of a disbursement agreement with the City of West

Richland to assist with funding the project in the amount of \$250,000 using rural county capital funds.

Commissioner McKay moved for the disbursement of Rural County Capital Funds to the City of West Richland for the Cooperative Way Project in the amount of up to \$250,000 and for the signing of the disbursement agreement. Commissioner Small seconded and upon vote, the motion carried.

Other Business

Commissioner McKay brought up public safety regarding shootings and what could be done about being proactive especially with individuals with current warrants. Commissioner McKay felt bad for the recent employee at the Walmart incident being fired for protecting the public and wanted that individual to be acknowledged for his involvement.

Commissioner Small wanted notification regarding Special Olympics be posted on the County website.

The Board briefly recessed, reconvening at 9:59 a.m.

Executive Session- Review Qualifications of an Applicant for Public Employment

The Board went into executive session at 9:59 a.m. for approximately 15 minutes to review qualifications of an applicant for public employment. Also present were Jerrod MacPherson, Matt Rasmussen, Doug D'Hondt, Lexi Wingfield and Marilu Flores.

The Board came out at 10:07 a.m. No decisions were made in executive session, but direction was given.

Executive Session – County's Position and Strategy In Union Negotiations

The Board went into executive session at 10:07 a.m. for approximately 15 minutes to discuss the County's position and strategy in union negotiations. Also present were Jerrod MacPherson, Matt Rasmussen, Steve Hallstrom, Lexi Wingfield, Linda Ivey and Marilu Flores.

The Board came out at 10:23 a.m. No decisions were made in executive session, but direction was given.

Vouchers

Check Date: 11/30/21
Warrant #: 224061-224386
Total all funds: \$2,657,527.61

EFT's #2029-2051
Transfers #11302101-11302104

Total of all Funds: \$549,527.76

Check Date: 12/03/21

Warrant #: 224419-224682

Total all funds: \$1,406,627.43

EDT's #2052-2057

Transfers # 12032101

Total of all Funds: \$41,072.25

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

Resolutions

- 2021-858 Surplus and Disposition of Personal Property
- 2021-859 Appointment of Richa Sigdel to the Mid-Columbia Libraries Board
- 2021-860 Grant Agreement w/Arc of Tri-Cities for Employment Services
- 2021-861 Grant Agreement w/Columbia Industries for Employment Services
- 2021-862 Grant Agreement w/Responding to Autism Services for Employment Services
- 2021-863 Award of Contract to Siefken & Sons Construction for the Moderate Risk Waste Facility Project
- 2021-864 Ratifying Change Order No. 4 to Central Washington Asphalt for Bituminous Surface Treatment
- 2021-865 Interlocal Agreement w/City of Richland for Revision of Corporate Boundary
- 2021-866 Contract w/LexisNexis for Law Library @ the Jail
- 2021-867 Grant Agreement w/WA State Office of Public Defense for State vs. Blake Cases
- 2021-868 Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept. 115 to Dept. 136
- 2021-869 Disbursement to the City of West Richland for the Cooperative Way Project

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:23 am.

Clerk of the Board

Chairman