

WEEKLY REVIEW

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
December 7, 2021



This document is a weekly review of the Board of County Commissioners meeting, Tuesday, December 7, 2021. Information related to agenda changes, Consent Agenda, and Public Comment are on the [County website](#).

Scheduled Business

Special Olympics Update – Kyle Sullivan, Human Services Manager

Benton County has provided financial assistance in the past, using local mental health/developmental disability mileage fund, to The Arc of Tri-Cities for support of the local Special Olympics program. Program staff and Special Olympics athletes provided a brief presentation about the program and thanked the County for its continued support of the program. **Board direction or vote.**

Veterans Service Officer for Veterans Assistance Program – Kyle Sullivan, Human Services Manager

Staff discussed the possibility of using the Veterans Assistance Fund to hire a Veterans Service Officer to work with local veterans to access services, apply for benefits, etc. Benton and Franklin Counties each have their own Veterans Assistance Fund dollars, and the goal is to receive support from each County's Board of Commissioners and the Veterans Advisory Board to ensure seamless services for all veterans, regardless of where they live. Staff will return to the Board for direction at a later date. **No Board direction or vote.**

Prosser Economic Development Association Quarterly Update – Neal Ripplinger, Executive Director

The Prosser Economic Development Association (EDA) provided their quarterly update on various programs and projects throughout Prosser, including Prosser Leadership Class, business features, wayfinding, transportation, and business retention/recruitment/expansion. **No Board direction or vote.**

Office of Public Defense Grant Funding for State v. Blake Cases – Eric Hsu, Public Defense Manager

The Supreme Court's decision in State v. Blake, declaring the crime of Unlawful Possession of a Controlled Substance to be unconstitutional, has resulted in the need for resentencing or vacation of conviction ("Post-Conviction Relief") in an extremely large volume of cases in Benton County. To defray the costs of providing public defense services in such Post-Conviction Relief actions, Washington State Office of Public Defense has offered to Benton County Office of Public Defense a grant in the amount of \$224,000 to support such Post-Conviction Relief efforts, to be expended in 2021 and 2022. To accept and utilize the grant funding, it is necessary for Benton County to execute the Grant Agreement, with the Washington State Office of Public Defense. **The Board moved and seconded to approve Grant Agreement GRT 22032 with Washington State Office of Public Defense for Blake funding in the amount of \$224,000. Motion carried.**

Rural County Capital Fund for Cooperative Way Project – Adam Fyall, Sustainable Development Manager

The County has received an application from the City of West Richland for use of Rural County Capital Fund for the Cooperative Way project in an amount not to exceed \$250,000. This project would include 820 linear feet of new urban roadway (Cooperative Way), widening of adjacent Keene Road at two locations for left-hand turns, installation of approximately 3,155 linear feet of 12-inch water main, installation of five fire hydrants, emplacement of 115 linear feet of 6-inch water main, and the associated curbs, gutters, sidewalks, streetlights, and storm drainage appurtenances within the project area. The Rural County Capital Fund contribution leverages other funding sources, with the project ready to begin in early 2022. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the disbursement of Rural County Capital Funds to the City of West Richland for the Cooperative Way Project in an amount not to exceed \$250,000, and to authorize the Chairman to sign the disbursement agreement. Motion carried.**

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