

WEEKLY REVIEW

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
April 20, 2021



This document is a weekly review of the Board of County Commissioners meeting, Tuesday, April 20, 2021. Information related to agenda changes, Consent Agenda, and Public Comment are on the [County website](#).

Public Hearing

Columbia Irrigation District Franchise Application – Cristina Woods, Engineering Technician III

Benton County received an application to renew a Franchise Order and Agreement for an irrigation pipeline system and associated facilities located within Benton County road right-of-way from Columbia Irrigation District. Public Works recommended approval of the application, subject to the six (6) items listed in the report to the Commissioners. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the Franchise Order and Agreement with Columbia Irrigation District, subject to the six (6) items listed in the report to the Commissioners. Motion carried.**

Scheduled Business

Recruitment & Selection Process for Nonpartisan Elective Office Vacancies: Policy Update – Lexi Wingfield, Human Resources Manager

As part of regular operations, County policies are reviewed and updated as needed. The Recruitment and Selection Process for Nonpartisan Elective Office Vacancies Policy, originally established in 2009 and not updated since, has been updated to reflect current business processes and needs. Per [RCW 36.16.110](#), the County legislative authority shall fill the nonpartisan elective office vacancy by appointment during a regular or special meeting after being notified of the vacancy. Nonpartisan elective offices include District Court judges. Staff recommends approval of the update as presented. This updated policy will be utilized in June 2021, after the retirement of District Court Judge Steve Osbourne. Judge Osbourne has been a District Court judge since 2016, after serving in private law practice for 42 years. Staff presented a draft schedule, including detailed logistics information, for filling the vacancy. A special Board meeting for open public meeting interviews of the top three candidates will be held in June. **The Board moved and seconded to adopt the updated Recruitment and Selection Process for Nonpartisan Elective Office Vacancies Policy and rescind Resolution 09-103. Motion carried.**

Prosser Economic Development Association Update – Neal Ripplinger, Executive Director

The Prosser Economic Development Association (EDA) Executive Director, Neal Ripplinger, presented an update to the Board regarding various topics including business retention, recruitment, expansion, the Prosser Business Spotlight, a tourism study (paid through a USDA grant), the 10th annual Mustang Business Plan event (held virtually), and the upcoming [Prosser EDA Annual Meeting](#). **No Board direction or vote.**

Position Request: Temporary Housing Program Navigator – Kyle Sullivan, Human Services Manager

The Emergency Rental Assistant Grant was approved earlier this year, and in response, the Board approved the Department of Human Services hiring two (2) Temporary Housing Program Navigators. The expiration date of the grant funding was recently extended through September 2022 and, while the addition of the two (2) previously approved positions has been immensely helpful, it is apparent that additional help is still needed to manage and disperse the grant funds. Human Services is requesting one (1) additional extended Temporary Housing Program Navigator to help provide the community with the greatest assistance when administering funding as provided by the grant. Human Services will work with HR to assure the employee follows temporary help guidelines and does not continue employment beyond the expiration of the grant or December 31, 2022, whichever is earlier. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the resolution and attached Line Item Transfer (LIT) to create a Temp Housing Program Navigator. Motion carried.**

Finance Presentation: Current Expense 2019-2020 Year End, Current Expense First Quarter 2021, & Public Safety Sales Tax – Linda Ivey, Finance Manager & Matt Rasmussen, Deputy County Administrator

The Finance Manager and Deputy County Administrator gave a presentation to the Board of Commissioners as an update on the final finances for [2019-2020 Current Expense Budget vs Actuals](#), as well as the [First Quarter Current Expense Budget vs Actuals \(January-March 2021\)](#), and the [First Quarter Public Safety Sales Tax update \(January-March 2021\)](#). Links are provided for the detailed documents, as presented to the Board. **No Board direction or vote.**

Other Business

County Facilities' Reopening Plan – Matt Rasmussen, Deputy County Administrator

Commissioner Small requested staff provide an update on the status of reopening County facilities to the public. The Deputy County Administrator stated that he, Risk Management, and the HR Manager have been working on a reopening plan to determine the timeframe for reopening County facilities to the public and holding in-person meetings. This plan is still in development and will come before the Board for discussion at a later date. **No Board direction or vote.**

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