

WEEKLY REVIEW

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
May 18, 2021



This document is a weekly review of the Board of County Commissioners meeting, Tuesday, May 18, 2021. Information related to agenda changes, Consent Agenda, and Public Comment are on the [County website](#).

Public Hearing

Vacation of a Portion of Right-of-Way abutting E 45th Avenue – Cristina Woods, Engineering Tech III

A portion of right-of-way abutting E. 45th Ave. has become an unusable remnant. Reportedly there were plans to expand E. 45th AVE. Those plans never came to fruition. The Board directed the County Engineer to prepare a report on the viability of such vacation via Resolution 2021- 340. The report has been completed and was provided for the Board to review. Public Works staff recommends the Board approve the right-of-way vacation as presented. **The Board moved and seconded to proceed as recommended with the vacation of a portion of right-of-way abutting E 45th Avenue as presented. Motion carried.**

Scheduled Business

Justice Center 2022 Tenant Improvement Project – Robert Blain, Dir. of Operations & Capital Programs

The completion of the Administration Building this fall will allow the County to consolidate several departments and services in one area, as well as repurpose space in the Justice Center that will become vacant. A study was completed in 2015 showing the need for additional office space in the Clerk's Office. The study evaluated the current Commissioner's Office, HR, and Administration spaces within the Justice Center as a good fit for the new location of the Clerk's Office. A project was budgeted in the Capital Improvement Plan to rework the Commissioner's Office area on the second floor to better accommodate the Clerk's Office functions. Along with moving the Clerk's Office, this project is proposing to address other identified needs within the Justice Center including: 1) Moving the Jury Selection Room from the second floor to the first floor; 2) Moving the Office of Public Defense (OPD) to the existing second-floor Jury Selection Room space; 3) Allowing additional office space for Superior Court; and 4) Moving the Therapeutic Courts offices to the space currently occupied by OPD. Altogether, the updates affect approximately 21,000 square feet of office space. The 2015 study identified needs and proposed potential solutions. A Request for Qualifications will need to be advertised to solicit an architectural firm to evaluate the current building layout to move this project forward. The selected firm will then work with County staff to determine the specific needs for each office and create plans and specifications for construction. **The Board gave staff direction to proceed with the project as outlined to solicit qualifications for architecture and design.**

Other Business

Office of Public Defense Request for Temporary Intern – Eric Hsu, Public Defense Manager

The Office of Public Defense (OPD) requested funds for Temporary Help to pay for a part-time, summer legal intern. OPD resources have been seriously strained by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the legal intern will provide much-needed support and assistance to OPD staff attorneys, especially with pending complex and serious felony cases. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the line item transfer for Temporary Help in the amount of \$2,000. Motion carried.**

Update to Face Covering Requirements in County Facilities – Matt Rasmussen, Deputy County Administrator & Adam Morasch, Risk Manager

On May 15, 2021 the Washington State Secretary of Health revised Order 20-03 exempting individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 from its face covering requirements, under guidance of the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC). Staff prepared a resolution that would rescind Resolution 2020-

437 (which required all persons to wear face coverings when inside a County building) to be consistent with the new guidance issued by the CDC and the State Department of Health. Effective immediately, the County will no longer require face coverings in County facilities for individuals who are fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus. Single-use masks will continue to be provided for individuals who arrive without a face covering for use inside the facility if they desire one. **The Board moved and seconded to adopt the face covering guidance issued by the Washington State Department of Health, under order of the Secretary of Health 20-03.2 and rescinding Resolution 2020-437. Motion carried.**

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