

WEEKLY REVIEW

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

October 11, 2022



This document is a weekly review of the Board of County Commissioners meeting, Tuesday, October 11, 2022. Information related to agenda changes, Consent Agenda, and Public Comment are on the [County website](#).

Public Hearing

Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan – Brian Malley, Transportation Planning Coordinator

RCW 36.81.121 requires counties to prepare and annually update their Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) pursuant to one or more public hearings and to file a copy of the adopted TIP with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the County Road Administration Board (CRAB). The TIP represents the County's priority transportation improvements and is a perpetual planning and project management tool for federal, state, and local governments. The TIP may be amended after it is adopted to add, delete, and amend projects to accommodate cost, schedule, scope, and funding changes. On August 10, 2021, the Board approved the County's TIP for 2022-2027. On August 2, 2022, the Board approved the County's TIP for 2023-2028. The projects proposed for amendment appeared in the County's prior (2021) TIP and were inadvertently not carried forward to the 2022-2027 TIP or 2023-2028 TIP. At this time, it is necessary to amend the County TIPs to include the proposed projects, so that the projects can advance through environmental requirements and receive obligations of construction funds. HSIP Funding (secured) in the amount of \$505,400 is reflected for both amendments, with a phase start year of 2022 and 2023, respectively. This proposed amendment to the 2022-2027 and 2023-2028 TIPs include: Guardrail and Guidepost – County Wide 2019; and Guardrail and Guidepost – County Wide 2021. **The Board moved and seconded to adopt the amendments to the 2022-2027 and 2023-2028 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Programs, to include Guardrail and Guidepost – County Wide 2019, and Guardrail and Guidepost – County Wide 2021. Motion carried.**

Scheduled Business

Line-Item Transfers, Fund No. 0010, Dept. 139 (ARPA) – Linda Ivey, Finance Manager

In May 2021, Benton County received grant funds through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The Prosecuting Attorney's Office has requested an additional two (2) Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys and the Office of Public Defense has requested an additional Legal Secretary IV position. The ARPA grant allows for hiring additional court staff or attorneys to increase the speed of case resolution. Funding for these positions would end with the conclusion of the ARPA grant on December 31, 2024. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the Transfer of Funds within Current Expense Fund 0010, Department 139 for the Prosecuting Attorney's Office (\$53,420) and the Office of Public Defense (\$20,840) as presented. Motions carried.**

2023-2024 Preliminary Budget Discussion – Linda Ivey, Finance Manager

The Finance Manager presented the preliminary budget for discussion by the Board, which are the compilation of the initial submittals received per the budget call letter (August 31, 2022) for baseline and new requests. There are a total of 33 new position requests and a total of 22 wage increase requests to existing positions (excluding new staff requests) In Current Expense, the baseline expenditures are \$2,672,642 over projected revenues with an additional \$5,585,887 in new requests. This puts the Current Expense budget at \$8,258,529 over budget and needing to be reconciled before final budget adoption. In Public Safety Sales Tax, the baseline expenditures are \$14,533,599 above projected revenues with an additional \$7,123,069.34 in new requests (internal and external) that came in through the RFP process. This over-expenditure is intended to spend down the current fund balance while ensuring we maintain a reserve of approximately 6 months of operating expenses. There are currently approximately 64 employees in Public Safety Sales Tax, with an additional 6 positions preliminarily approved through the RFP process. There are also three (3) Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) that are pending, which may need to be included in the baseline budget. Budget Workshops are scheduled for October 26 and 27 for Elected Officials and Department Managers to present their budgets. Adoption of the Final Budget is currently scheduled for November 29, 2022. **No Board direction or vote.**

Other Business

SECOMM Microwave System Upgrade Letters of Support – Shyanne Palmus, Communications Coordinator

At the recommendation of our federal lobbying team, Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Affairs, the County has prepared the attached letters addressed to Senator Maria Cantwell, Senator Patty Murray, and Congressman Dan Newhouse regarding the Southeast Communications Center (SECOMM) Microwave System Upgrade. This project was submitted to the Senate and House for FY23 funding in the amount of \$2 million. Unfortunately, the project was not included in the Senate appropriations bill, but was included in the House-passed FY23 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related agencies Appropriations bill. We are sending these letters to request inclusion of this project in the final appropriations package and to thank Congressman Newhouse for his support of the project in the House. Federal funding in the amount of \$2 million would complete the \$5 million project, with remaining funds coming from available capital funds and participating agency contributions. The project includes engineering design, equipment procurement, and installation services. **The Board moved and seconded to authorize the Chairman to sign the attached letters on behalf of the Board as presented. Motion carried.**

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant Update – Jerrod MacPherson, County Administrator

Additional American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars have been designated to Benton County in another round of funding from the federal government. The counties that received additional ARPA funding are those counties that participate in the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. The funding for Benton County will occur in two (2) payments of \$105,000 each - one payment in 2022 and one payment in 2023. These additional ARPA dollars have been designated to be put towards improvements at the Fairgrounds/Event Center property. **No Board direction/vote.**

###

Contact: Shyanne Palmus, Communications Coordinator

Shyanne.Palmus@co.benton.wa.us | 509-222-3760