

WEEKLY REVIEW

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

November 2, 2022



This document is a weekly review of the Board of County Commissioners meeting, Tuesday, November 1, 2022. Information related to agenda changes, Consent Agenda, and Public Comment are on the [County website](#).

Public Hearing

Short Plat Vacation (SPV 2022-002) – Michelle Cooke, Planning Manager

On February 28, 2006, Short Plat 2932 was recorded under Auditor's File Number 2006-006201, creating three (3) lots on W 10th Avenue in the Kennewick area of unincorporated Benton County. The short plat also created a ten (10) foot utility easement on the east boundary of the short plat. The applicant, Paul Knutzen of Knutzen Engineering on behalf of Summit Storage, is requesting the vacation of the ten (10) foot utility easement on the east boundary of Lot 2 of Short Plat 2932. The applicants are proposing to replace the vacated easement with a new utility easement to serve the future power needs of Lot 3. Owners of property within 300 feet of the subject parcel and all concerned agencies were notified of the proposed vacation and no objections or concerns have been received to date. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the vacation of the ten (10) foot utility easement on the east boundary of Lot 2 of Short Plat 2932, as described in the Planning Division's recommendation with the condition that a new utility easement for Lot 2 will be recorded with the Benton County Auditor. Motion carried.**

Short Plat Vacation (SPV 2022-003) – Michelle Cooke, Planning Manager

On June 14, 2019, Short Plat 3608 was recorded under Auditor's Fee Number 2019-015983, creating two (2) residential lots on E Rubicon PR SE, in the Kennewick area of unincorporated Benton County. The short plat also created a thirty (30) foot access and utility easement serving both lots of the short plat. The applicants, Adam and Amy Evans, are requesting the vacation and reconfiguration of the turnaround for the thirty (30) foot access easement on Lot 2 of Short Plat 3608 to enable an accessory dwelling to be built on the parcel. The applicants are proposing to record a new turnaround for the access and utility easement to replace the turnaround being vacated. Owners of property within 300 feet of the subject parcel and all concerned agencies were notified of the proposed vacation and no objections or concerns have been received to date. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the vacation of the turnaround for the thirty (30) foot access and utility easement located on Lot 2 of Short Plat 3608, as described in the Planning Division's recommendation with the condition that the applicant shall record a new turnaround for the access and utility easement with the Benton County Auditor. Motion carried.**

Scheduled Business

Line-Item Transfer for Juvenile Probation Asst. Manager – Dave Wheeler, Interim Juvenile Court Administrator & Carlee Nave, HR Manager

Due to current department needs and to be more efficient, the Juvenile Justice Center is proposing combining the community supervision unit and the intervention unit into one unit and is requesting to change a vacant Probation Manager position to a Probation Assistant Manager position. In the future, upon review of the department's needs and staff qualifications, the Juvenile Court Administrator may request to promote the Probation Assistant Manager to a Probation Manager with Board approval. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the bi-county resolution changing position 51603 from a Probation Manager, bi-county non-bargaining grade 14, to a Probation Assistant Manager, bi-county non-bargaining grade 11. Motion carried.**

2023-2024 Budget Discussion – Linda Ivey, Finance Manager; Jerrod MacPherson, County Administrator; & Matt Rasmussen, Deputy County Administrator

Staff presented the Board with a summary of the 2023-2024 Proposed Budget and recommended going to Public Hearing on November 29, 2022. During budget preparation, the County was facing a \$6.7 million shortfall in its Current Expense (General Fund) and an additional \$5.5 million in new requests for a total shortfall of \$12.2 million to balance before passage of the final budget. The recommendations presented from staff were unable to accommodate all new requests, but no reduction in staff has been suggested. Staff recommends approval of new staff positions that either has a matching new revenue source or is budget-neutral (such as a restructure or reorganization or decrease of another line item). The County's main revenue source is property taxes, and staff recommends a 1% increase in the levy rate. Summaries for main funds are included, below:

Current Expense: Overall, staff recommends approval of eight (8) new positions in Current Expense, as well as nominal changes to existing positions or department structures. Staff recommends an increase in the budget for the following non-staff requests: \$231,000 for increased Facilities operations costs (new Administration Building), \$2.2 million increase in Corrections' medical contract services, and \$189,000 for new IT hardware, software, and maintenance. Revenues for Current Expense are slated at \$173,017,665 with expenditures at \$173,050,756 with a decrease of \$33,091 to the fund balance, resulting in a balanced budget.

Public Safety Sales Tax: The Public Safety Sales Tax (PSST) fund is anticipated to have revenues of \$20.7 million during the next biennium, with total recommended expenditures of \$34.8 million. This will result in a fund balance decrease of \$14 million over the course of the biennium, as recommended by the Board to reduce the fund balance (reserve) to approximately 6 months of operating expenses. The resulting end fund balance is anticipated to be \$5.4 million. Commissioners preliminarily approved \$7.1 million in PSST funding through Requests for Proposals processes in July and October, which included 10 new staff positions, a law enforcement shooting range and training center, mobile radio replacement, bomb squad x-ray equipment, a new crime scene evidence vehicle, and numerous other items.

Special Funds: The County has over 55 special funds (excluding Current Expense and PSST). In these special funds, staff recommends approval of 11 new positions. Of interest in 2023-2024 will be the new Behavioral Health Fund, which receives revenues from the 0.1% sales tax passed by both Benton and Franklin County to pay for programs related to the operation of the Behavioral Health Recovery Center. Those funds are not eligible to be utilized for construction and renovation costs and are for program and operational expenses only.

Overall, there were a total of 35 new staff requests with staff recommending approval of 29 positions: 8 in Current Expense, 10 in PSST, and 11 in Special Funds. **The Board moved and seconded to go to public hearing on November 29, 2022 for the Proposed 2023-2024 Budget. Motion carried.**

Other Business

Operation Green Light for Veterans – Matt Rasmussen, Deputy County Administrator

This coming Veterans Day, the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the National Association of County Veteran Service Officers (NACVSO) are inviting counties to join Operation Green Light and show support for veterans by lighting our buildings green from November 7 to November 13. By shining a green light, the County and our residents will let veterans know that they are seen, appreciated, and supported. Staff is proposing to light the front entrances to the Administration Building and Prosser Courthouse green in support of this effort. **The Board gave consensus to move forward with the project as presented.**

Letters to Tribes regarding Recovery Center Construction – Matt Rasmussen, Deputy County Administrator

Staff is recommending that the Board write letters to local tribal governments requesting their consultation on potential impacts to cultural resources related to the construction of the Behavioral Health Recovery Center. Letters are recommended to be sent to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Yakama Nation, Nez Perce Tribe, Wanapum Tribe, and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. **The Board moved and seconded to authorize the Chairman to sign these letters, as presented. Motion carried.**

Executive Session

Review Performance of a Public Employee – Chief Guerrero, Department of Corrections

Review Performance of a Public Employee – Commissioners

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