

# WEEKLY REVIEW

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
November 29, 2022



This document is a weekly review of the Board of County Commissioners meeting, Tuesday, November 29, 2022. Information related to agenda changes, Consent Agenda, and Public Comment are on the [County website](#).

## Public Hearing

### *Approval of Final Benton County 2023-2024 Biennial Budgets – Linda Ivey, Finance Manager*

Staff presented, for Board and public consideration, the [final 2023-2024 Benton County Biennial Budgets](#), including:

- Certifying Current Expense Levy for 2023 Collection
- Certifying County Road Levy for 2023 Collection
- Certifying Budgeted Taxes for Collection in 2023
- Adoption of Final 2023-2024 Benton County Budgets

**The Board moved to approve the resolutions: 1) certifying the Current Expense Levy for 2023 Collection; 2) certifying the Benton County Road Levy for 2023 Collection; 3) certifying budgeted taxes for collection in 2023 for Benton County; and 4) adopting the Final 2023-2024 Benton County Budgets, as presented. Motions carried.**

## Scheduled Business

### *Interlocal Agreements for District Court Services – Jerrod MacPherson, County Administrator*

The Amended and Restated Interlocal Agreements for District Court Services between Benton County and the Cities of Kennewick, Prosser, Richland, and West Richland will expire on December 31, 2022. The County Administrator has been negotiating an Interlocal Agreement with each City, and the parties have agreed to a new Interlocal Agreement, effective January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2027. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the 2023 Interlocal Agreements between Benton County and the Cities of Kennewick, Prosser, Richland, and West Richland, respectively, effective January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2027 as presented. Motions carried.**

### *2023 Historic Preservation Grant Funding Overview – Shyanne Palmus, Communications Coordinator*

The 2022 Historic Preservation Grant RFP was open September 6 – October 7, 2022 and received seven (7) applications for project funding, totaling \$49,707.71. The available yearly budget for the Historic Preservation Grant is \$50,000. Detailed information for each request was provided via presentation and is available in the [agenda packet](#). Staff recommends approval of the projects as outlined in said document, for a total amount of \$44,707.00. RCW 36.22.170 states that one dollar (\$1) of the recording fee is placed in the Benton County Historical Preservation Fund 0157-101, to be used at the County Commissioners' discretion for promotion of historical preservation and/or programs in the County. Each year, the County calls upon a review committee to determine recommended project funding for Board of Commissioners' approval. Staff is requesting authorization for the County Administrator to approve the grant disbursement agreements in order to streamline disbursement of grant funds to the recipients, as was authorized in 2021. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the 2023 Historic Preservation Grant allocations as presented and authorized the County Administrator to sign the grant disbursement agreements. Motion carried.**

### *Line-Item Transfer for Juvenile Program Detention Officer Salary – Dave Wheeler, Juvenile Justice Administrator & Carlee Nave, HR Manager*

The Programs Detention Officer position in Juvenile was created as a result of the Bi-County compensation study (Resolution 2022-633). The Juvenile department was instructed by HR to complete the recruitment process prior to returning to the Board for authorization to create the position's line item. Said recruitment has been completed, and staff is requesting to convert 1 FTE Detention officer to 1 FTE Programs Detention Officer. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the line-item transfer converting position number 51660 from a Detention Officer, grade 1, to a Programs Detention Officer, grade 2. Motion carried.**

### *Recognizing Eric Lipp for his service to Juvenile Justice Center – Dave Wheeler, Juvenile Justice Administrator*

The Benton County Board of Commissioners received an email from a citizen in September requesting the recognition of Mr. Eric Lipp for his service to the Benton-Franklin Counties Juvenile Justice Center. Mr. Lipp was an employee of the Juvenile Justice Center for 26 years, with the last 12 years as Detention Services Manager. Throughout his years of service, Mr. Lipp worked tirelessly to bring meaningful programming to the Benton-Franklin Counties Juvenile Justice Center and has shown endless compassion to improving services, programs, and conditions for youth and staff. Through his steadfast leadership and through the tireless work of the detention staff, the Benton-Franklin Counties Juvenile Court can take pride in the exceptional programming offered to the youth in detention. Mr. Lipp was diagnosed with an aggressive form of ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease) in November 2020, a nervous system disease that weakens muscles and impacts physical function due to the breakdown of nerve cells, which has prevented him from doing the work he is so passionate about. As such, it is requested that the Board recognize and honor Mr. Eric Lipp's service to the community by designating a classroom in the Benton-Franklin Counties Juvenile Justice Center as the *Eric Lipp Youth Programs Center*. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the Resolution and hereby proclaim a classroom in the Benton-Franklin Counties Juvenile Justice Center be named the *Eric Lipp Youth Programs Center*. Motion carried.**

## Other Business

### *Letter of Good Standing for Habitat for Humanity – Shyanne Palmus, Communications Coordinator*

Administration Staff received an email on November 21, 2022 from the Executive Director of the Tri-County Partners Habitat for Humanity, requesting a letter of good standing from Benton County. This letter is requested in preparation for their application for Housing Trust Fund dollars, with letters of good standing required for a complete application. Since a large portion of the funds they are applying for are to be used in Kennewick, Habitat for Humanity requested a letter from Benton County. A letter has been prepared for the Board's consideration, for County Administrator signature. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the Letter of Good Standing, as presented, for the Tri-County Partners Habitat for Humanity and authorized the County Administrator to sign the letter on behalf of the Board. Motion carried.**

### *Purchase of 63 Additional SIM Cards for AXON In-Car Camera Systems – Lt. Jason Erickson, Sheriff's Office*

The Benton County Sheriff's Office requested 63 additional Verizon SIM cards and wireless data plans, for a total cost of \$81,506.25, to outfit its patrol vehicles with wireless cellular data to support the AXON in-car camera systems and deputies' in-car laptops. This is a new request for funding through Public Safety Sales Tax, outside of the regular RFP process, for the remainder of 2022 and the 2023-2024 biennium. Other solutions were discussed by the Board and staff. **The Board gave direction to continue working on this issue to determine the best solution going forward.**

### *Emergency Declaration for Security Issues at KGH Facility – Matt Rasmussen, Deputy County Administrator & Ryan Brown, Chief Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney*

On November 1, 2022 the County closed escrow on the purchase of the old Kennewick General Hospital (KGH) property and associated buildings located at 900 S. Auburn St. in Kennewick. Since taking possession of the facility, it has been subject to numerous break-ins and vandalism which are increasing in frequency and severity. To-date, the County has experienced \$12,000 in flood damage resulting from cut water pipes, 15 broken windows, 5 broken doors, destruction of numerous fixtures, significant clean-up costs from fire extinguishers being inappropriately discharged, and almost daily overtime costs for staff to respond to issues after hours. There is evidence that more piping is being removed from the building, which is expensive and time-consuming to replace and restore to the facility to operation. Every time a break-in occurs, there is a drain on the resources of City of Kennewick Police, Fire, and public works departments. Facilities staff has been working to secure the facility and repair damage as necessary but require additional assistance. The normal contracting procedures to obtain the necessary help would likely take more than 30 days, with an estimate of approximately \$3,000-\$4,000 a day in damage. Declaration of an emergency would allow staff to expedite the process to acquire the necessary services to secure the facility. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the resolution in the matter of declaration of emergency in Benton County and waiving the competitive bidding requirements related to boarding up windows and securing doors at the old Kennewick General Hospital building to prevent further damage. Motion carried.**

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Contact: Shyanne Palmus, Communications Coordinator

[Shyanne.Palmus@co.benton.wa.us](mailto:Shyanne.Palmus@co.benton.wa.us) | 509-222-3760