

WEEKLY REVIEW

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
December 20, 2022



This document is a weekly review of the Board of County Commissioners meeting, Tuesday, December 20, 2022. Information related to agenda changes, Consent Agenda, and Public Comment are on the [County website](#).

Scheduled Business

Job Classification & Salary Grade for Accreditation Coordinator – Sheriff Croskrey & Undersheriff Law

The Sheriff's Office has identified a need for an Accreditation Coordinator position to replace the vacant Criminologist position. The Sheriff's Office worked with HR to create a position classification description, so HR could complete a compensation analysis. Should the position be approved, HR recommends placement at a grade 10 on the Non-Bargaining Salary Schedule. The line-item transfer to fund the position would come in the new year, and no additional budget would be required as the position would replace an existing, vacant position. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the resolution creating the Accreditation Coordinator position as presented. Motion carried.**

Salary Threshold for Non-Bargaining Positions to be Classified as Exempt – Carlee Nave, HR Manager

In 2016, Washington voters approved Initiative 1433 which, among other things such as mandating paid sick leave, raised the state's minimum wage to \$13.50 by January 1, 2020 after which time the minimum wage would be calculated based on increases to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). In order for an employee to be exempt from the minimum wage and overtime, they must meet both a federal and state salary and job duties test for the exemption to be applied. In both salary and job duties, the WA state tests are more stringent than the federal tests. RCW 49.46.010(3)(c) grants authority to the Director of Labor and Industries (L&I) to establish rules for the tests for minimum wage exemption in the state. WAC 296-128-545 sets the exempt salary test thresholds as a multiplier of the minimum wage, phased in over a number of years beginning in 2020 at 1.25 times the minimum wage, and increasing to 2.5 times the minimum wage by 2027 for large employers (51+ employees). For 2023, any employee classified as exempt from overtime must be paid a minimum of 2 times the minimum wage of \$15.74/hour, or \$65,478.40 annually as calculated by L&I. HR recommends that the County set its own exempt salary threshold in order to comply with the state and federal laws, as well as maintain wage equity across County departments and that all positions placed at grade 15 and below on the non-bargaining salary schedule, be classified as non-exempt and eligible for overtime beginning January 1, 2023. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the resolution setting the 2023 Benton County exempt salary threshold for non-bargaining employees as presented. Motion carried.**

Non-Bargaining Employees, Managers, & Administrators General Wage Increase – Carlee Nave, HR Manager

HR is proposing to provide a 3% wage increase for Benton County Non-Bargaining employees and Benton County Managers and Administrators, effective January 1, 2023. Annual salary change actions are generally routine in nature, but given changes made earlier in the year to the Courthouse salary schedule there are some positions in the County that are directly impacted by the salary changes to positions they supervise. Changes to the Courthouse Union salaries adopted in October resulted in some employees in that unit receiving increases as much as 30%. In some cases, this resulted in the supervisors of those employees now making less than the people they supervise. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the resolution providing a wage increase for non-bargaining employees, managers, and administrators in 2023 as presented. Motion carried.**

Public Safety Sales Tax Education Contract w/ Desautel Hege – Shyanne Palmus, Communications Coordinator

An RFP was issued on May 20, 2022 for assistance in public information, education, and outreach efforts surrounding the Public Safety Sales Tax services, and only one response was received. On July 12, 2022, staff presented to the Board requesting approval to move forward with contracting with Desautel Hege (DH) of Spokane, WA for said services. The original proposal was approved by the Board and included fees for creation of a series of informational videos. After further discussion with the County's legal team, the informational video aspect of the project was removed and replaced with a hard-copy mailer. An additional presentation was given to the Board on October 4, 2022 to outline the proposed changes. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the Public Safety Sales Tax Education Contract with Desautel Hege, Inc. as presented. Motion carried.**

Other Business

WASPC Traffic Safety Grant – Lt. Erickson, Sheriff's Office

The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) are seeking applications from agencies in order to select and award FY2023 WTSC Traffic Safety Grants for equipment to enhance traffic safety in alignment with the Target Zero Campaign. The Sheriff's Office has identified the need for eight (8) Stalker Lidar XLR handheld lidar units, to be used during normal traffic enforcement as well as during the traffic and DUI investigation emphases under the WTSC traffic safety patrols. The Sheriff's Office wishes to apply for funding under the WASPC traffic safety grant application for FY2023 in the amount of \$24,000 including W.S.S.T. and shipping. If the grant for the lidar units is approved by WASPC, BCSO will pay for the initial expense of the lidars using the BCSO Investigative Fund. When WASPC reimburses BCSO the expense for the lidars, the grant funds will be will deposited back into the BCSO Investigative Fund. **The Board moved and seconded to authorize the Sheriff's Office to submit an application for funding under the WASPC traffic safety grant application for FY2023 in the amount of \$24,000 including W.S.S.T. and shipping to enhance traffic safety. Motion carried.**

Amendment No. 3 to Contract w/ Tri-Cities Chaplaincy – Lt. Combs, Corrections Department

A contract amendment is needed with Tri-Cities Chaplaincy for chaplaincy and redirection services in the jail to extend the current contract to March 31, 2023 to allow additional time to negotiate a new contract, amend the contract representative for Chaplaincy, amend the compensation section, and amend Exhibit B, while all other sections of the contract remain in effect. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the Third Contract Amendment extending the contract between Benton County and Tri-Cities Chaplaincy to provide chaplaincy and redirection services for the Benton County Jail through March 31, 2023. Motion carried.**

Adopting the Inclement Weather & Emergency Closure Policy – Jerrod MacPherson, County Administrator

Staff has been working to draft and finalize an Inclement Weather and Emergency Closure Policy to be followed in cases of inclement weather and other cases warranting office closure. The policy designates the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners as the authority to determine when conditions warrant closure of County offices and/or departments and services, and the policy also outlines court closures, notification, employee-initiated time off, and pay during closures. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the Benton County Inclement Weather and Emergency Closure Policy as presented. Motion carried.**

Purchase of Kennewick Fire Station 3 – Jerrod MacPherson, County Administrator

County staff has been working with representatives from City of Kennewick to execute a purchase and sale agreement of the Kennewick Fire Station 3, located at 7400 W Quinault Ave, Kennewick in the amount of \$1,129,330.00. **The Board moved and seconded to approve the resolution authorizing the purchase and sale agreement between the City of Kennewick and Benton County for the real property commonly known as Fire Station 3, located at 7400 W Quinault Ave, Kennewick, WA. Motion carried.**

Rejection of Proposals for Behavioral Health Recovery Center – Matt Rasmussen, Deputy County Administrator

On November 2, 2022 the County issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals for a provider to operate the planned behavioral health crisis recovery center. The RFP closed on December 9, 2022 and only one proposal was received. The Benton Franklin Behavioral Health advisory committee, at its December 8, 2022 meeting, expressed concern that there may only be one proposal to consider and passed a motion recommending to the Board of County Commissioners that the single proposal not be accepted and that the request for proposals be modified and reissued. At its December 13, 2022 meeting the Board discussed the request for proposals and concurred with the recommendation of the Benton Franklin Behavioral Health Advisory Committee and directed staff to prepare the necessary documentation to reject proposals and reissue the request for proposals. **The Board moved and seconded to reject all proposals for the Behavioral Health Crisis Recovery Center. Motion carried.**

Executive Session

County Position in Labor Negotiations – Commissioners

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