



Minutes – Board of County Commissioners

Regular Board Meeting
Benton County Administration Building
Commissioners' Hearing Room, Kennewick, WA
Tuesday, April 9, 2024 9:00 AM

Meeting provided in-person, by Video Live-Broadcast and Telephonically via/WebEx

Present: Chairman Jerome Delvin
Commissioner Michael Alvarez
Commissioner Will McKay
County Administrator Jerrod MacPherson
Clerk of the Board Marilu Flores

Benton County Employees Present During All or a Portion of the Meeting: Deputy County Administrator, Matt Rasmussen; Information Technologies Manager, Robert Heard; Cody Shelton, IT; Human Resources Manager, Carlee Nave; Community Development Director, Greg Wendt; Sustainable Development Manager, Adam Fyall; Clerk, Josie Delvin; Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, Ryan Brown; Treasurer, Ken Spencer; Finance Manager, Linda Ivey; Sheriff's Office CEO Katie Gillies; Undersheriff, Jon Law; Lt. Michael Clark; Tom French, Event Center Manager; Robert Blain, Director of Operations and Capital Assets; Superior Court Administrator Tiffany Runge; Security Coordinator Steve Caughey; Paul Schut, Procurement; Danica Hope, Procurement; Deputy Treasurer Kirstin Yniguez; Veronica Bivins, Treasurer's Office; Cindi Kane, Corrections; Casey Kist, Corrections; Glenn Vaagen, Communications Coordinator; Planning Manager Michelle Mercer; and District Court Administrator Amanda, Watts.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of March 28, 2024 and April 2, 2024 were approved.

Review Agenda

The following items were added to the agenda:

- Scheduled Business ~ Wind Farm Update by Paul Krupin
- Scheduled Business ~ Letter to EFSEC ~ G Wendt & M Mercer

Public Comment

Tim Taylor, from S Richland via Webex spoke about the recent dog attacks, settlements and killing of dogs. Mr. Taylor expressed that Benton County needed a policy. It was his opinion that the

Benton County Sheriff's Office should not be responding and Canine employees being properly trained. He said Benton County should provide enough funding for the Canine Shelter with more canine officers involved.

Mandi Cantera, via Webex, expressed his concern on property taxes. He indicated that the property tax exemption needs to be updated with more assistance toward the elderly. He stated that the threshold should not include the total gross income. He and his wife are of retirement age, and still working to pay the taxes. He would like to see a change from the basis on property tax exemption for disabled and elderly so there doesn't have to be choices having to be made on what they should cut from their household expenses such as food, medicine or insurance.

Consent Agenda

MOTION: Commissioner Alvarez moved to approve the consent agenda items "a" through "r". Commissioner McKay seconded and upon vote, the Board approved the following:

Auditor

- a. Accounts Payable ~ Check Posting List for 03/29/2024
- b. Accounts Payable ~ Check Posting List for 03/29/2024

Commissioners

- c. Transfer of Funds, Fund No. 0010, Dept. 115 to 120 for Medical Supplies

Coroner

- d. Interlocal Agreement w/Walla Walla County Coroner's Office for Autopsy Facility Use
- e. Interlocal Agreement w/Franklin County Coroner's Office for Autopsy Facility Use

Corrections

- f. Agreement w/San Diego Policy Equipment Company for Purchase of Ammunition
- g. Subscription Agreement w/International Business Information Technologies, Inc.; Amending Resolution 2023-419

Juvenile

- h. Contract w/Herrera Health, LLC for Functional Family Therapy Services

Public Works

- i. Appointments to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee
- j. Transfer of Funds, Fund No. 1550, Dept. No. 000 for Engineering Services
- k. Certification of Road Fund Expenditures for Traffic Law Enforcement, Fish Passage Barrier Removal & Annual Certification to County Road Administration Board

Purchasing

- l. Contract Award to Central Washington Asphalt, Inc. for Bituminous Surface Treatment & Edge Repair
- m. Contract w/GMCO Corporation for Magnesium Chloride for Public Works Department
- n. Ratifying Change Order Proposals No. 1 & 2 w/Central Washington Asphalt, Inc. for the Red Mountain Access Road Project
- o. Authorization to Proceed w/Advertisement for Design-Build Team for the Fairgrounds Arena Upgrade Project

Sheriff

- p. Payment to Black Knight Emblem & Insignia, Inc. for Uniform Insignias

Sustainable Development

- q. Amended Interagency Agreement w/State of WA Department of Ecology for Funding Support of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Coordinator

Treasurer

- r. KeyBank Officer's Certification for Additional Banking Services; Amending Resolution 2015-933

Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission Officer Wellness Grant

Sheriff's Office staff Michael Clark and Katie Gillis spoke about the grant for wellness programs through the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission. These services included building resilience, injury prevention, peer support, physical fitness, proper nutrition, stress management, suicide prevention, physical health services, mental health support services and officer wellbeing. Lt. Clark indicated that based on the assessment during the previous grant, the Benton County Sheriff's Office had established a wellness program which was working through two contracts with outside contractors to provide mental health, critical incident memberships for wellness services and wellness trainings to improve deputy wellness. It was further stated that this grant was non-matching and was not a continuation of last year's award.

Commissioner McKay asked about critical services with Lt. Clark mentioning some critical incidents which would allow officers to go to counselors to operate in a healthy standard.

Ms. Gillies explained what qualified for critical operating services. Commissioner McKay asked about the EAP counselors (offered by the County) and whether these programs covered an expanded type of services (trauma from first responders). The Sheriff's Office mentioned that they had identified a counseling center with different types of services for different styles of traumas and how it affected different employees. Lt. Clark indicated this grant would be the initial set up of the program.

Commissioner Alvarez asked about the contractors and services indicating that the County already had a good system in place in the form of county provided medical insurance as well as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with Ms. Gillis identifying a few options for mental health services, nutrients, and PTSD treatment. Deputy County Administrator Rasmussen indicated that the County should make sure we are not duplicating services already offered through regular county insurance or the EAP services. Ms. Gillies indicated that with these services, the employees would be more inclined to go without having to pay copays.

Commissioner Alvarez mentioned other counties' budgetary status and wanted Benton County to be proactive so that the County would not face financial issues and asked how the Sheriff's Office was going to continue the funding after the grant was gone. Lt. Clark indicated that the cost is worth it upfront and estimated the long term estimates would be between \$25,000 - \$50,000 moving forward.

Commissioner Alvarez asked the Sheriff's Office to work with Human Resources so there would not be any duplication of services. The Sheriff's Office would send the Board a copy of the application before submitting.

MOTION: Commissioner Alvarez moved to authorize the Benton County Sheriff's Office to submit an application for funding under the WSCJTC Officer Wellness Grant Program in the amount of \$50,000. Commissioner McKay seconded and upon vote, the motion carried as presented.

Recap of April 1, 2024 Public Safety Meeting

Prosecuting Attorney Eric Eisinger reported on a public safety meeting held on April 1, 2024 at the Benton County Administration Building. That meeting was well attended by

community leaders at the Cities, State as well as the County level. The meeting included breakout sessions which included the following:

- What should public safety look like in 3 years
- Strengths ~
 - engagement
 - police collaboration
 - motivated to make a change
- Weaknesses ~
 - processing juvenile cases, learn and adapt, accountability
 - improving recovery center, diversions & jail alternatives
 - mental health, homelessness, support/programs
 - lack of attorneys, bailiffs, court staff
 - community education
- Threats ~
 - lack of taking advantage of grant funding
 - Office of Public Defense (OPD) crisis
 - Inability to adapt as necessary

Mr. Eisinger mentioned the concern with the OPD crisis and gave current statistics within Benton County which could become a threat to public safety. He mentioned that should be a priority.

Commissioner Alvarez indicated that the above discussions have and are taking place and that the County was looking at partnerships, internships, student forgiveness options as well as looking at having meetings with Cities. Commissioner Delvin said the County should be doing all we can to make the system work before it collapses. He further stated that legislative assistance is needed before we are forced to dismiss cases. Commissioner Delvin mentioned that we were in a crisis which no one was truly aware; but needed to find a way to make the system work in an effort to secure public safety.

County Administrator MacPherson commented on current budget status and spending for the Office of Public Defense. Mr. Eisinger mentioned that the group was determined to find a solution through this crisis.

Public Safety Sales Tax Request for Proposals for Gang and Crime Prevention Initiative

Communications Coordinator, Glenn Vaagen, indicated that Benton County was seeking proposals for 2025-2026 projects and programs supporting the Benton County Gang and Crime Prevention Initiative which was funded by the Public Safety Sales Tax. The mission of the Gang & Prevention initiative was to improve the quality of life for residents reducing the incidence of gang-related and other crimes. This initiative would achieve its mission by providing resources to support efforts. Mr. Vaagen indicated that this process takes place every two years.

Commissioner McKay asked whether this RFP included Franklin County to which Mr. Vaagen indicated that it did not.

MOTION: Commissioner Alvarez moved to approve the Request for Proposals for 2025-2026 Projects and Programs supporting the Benton County Gang and Prevention Initiative. Commissioner McKay seconded and upon vote, the motion carried as presented.

Other Business

Tri-Cities C.A.R.E.S. Update

Paul Krupin, Board Member from Tri-Cities C.A.R.E.S. (TCC) presented slides on the results of a new Google Earth Visual Assessment model that allowed individuals to view the results of the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council Mitigation Removal of the Class 3 turbines. He indicated that these slides would allow people to develop comments on the Draft Site Certification Agreement and Draft Recommendation to the Governor. The public comment period would close on April 10, 2024. The slides included information on the key observation points and areas of concern identified for Options 1 and Option 2 for:

- Benton City results
 - Applicant proposal included 4 turbines visible
 - Council mitigation proposal included no turbines visible
- Red Mountain Wineries Fidelitas results
 - Applicant proposal included 9 turbines visible
 - Council mitigation proposal included 3 turbines visible
- Badger Mountain South Residences results
 - Applicant proposal included 35+ turbines visible
 - Council mitigation proposal included 11 turbines visible
 - TCC comment proposal included no turbines visible
- Summit View Residences
 - Applicant proposal included 16+ turbines visible
 - Council mitigation proposal included 5+ turbines visible
 - TCC comment proposal – no turbines visible
- Thompson Hill Residences
 - Applicant proposal included 25 turbines visible
 - Council mitigation proposal included 14 turbines visible
 - TCC comment proposal included no turbines visible
- Badger Mt. Estates:
 - 45 additional turbines need to be removed

Mr. Krupin indicated that the final decision could be to approve, deny or send back for reconsideration with a 30 day range to file suit if the Governor does sign.

Letter to Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

Community Development Director Greg Wendt and Planning Manager Michelle Mercer spoke about a comment letter for Board signature to the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council regarding the Scout Clean Energy LLC for the proposed Horse Heaven Wind Farm. Ms. Mercer spoke on the options for the turbines as well as EFSEC's recommendations. It was noted that some concerns in the letter included a lack of clarity; original proposals; future footprint; as well as the county not being listed as a consultant.

Commissioner McKay asked whether the City of Kennewick was doing a letter as well and it was noted that it was not known at this time.

MOTION: Commissioner Alvarez moved to approve a letter to EFSEC regarding the Scout Clean Energy LLC for Horse Heaven Wind Farm. Commissioner McKay seconded and upon vote motion carried.

Commissioners' Special Board Meeting Reminder

Commissioner Alvarez reminded everyone about the Commissioner workshop this afternoon regarding the Canine Shelter at 3:30 pm.

Accounts Payable

Check Date: 03/29/2024
Warrants #:255334-255469
Total of all funds: \$670,575.02

EFT's #: 848-870
Transfers #: 1685-1686, 1689-1690, 1696, 1700-1707
Total of all funds: \$216,541.07

Check Date: 03/29/24
EFT #: 871
Total of all funds: \$6,314.00

Resolutions

- 2024-0255 Transfer of Funds, Fund No. 0010, Dept. 115 to 120 for Medical Supplies
- 2024-0256 Interlocal Agreement w/Walla Walla County Coroner's Office for Autopsy Facility Use
- 2024-0257 Interlocal Agreement w/Franklin County Coroner's Office for Autopsy Facility Use
- 2024-0258 Agreement w/San Diego Policy Equipment Company for Purchase of Ammunition
- 2024-0259 Subscription Agreement w/International Business Information Technologies, Inc.; Amending Resolution 2023-419
- 2024-0260 Contract w/Herrera Health, LLC for Functional Family Therapy Services
- 2024-0261 Appointments to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee
- 2024-0262 Transfer of Funds, Fund No. 1550, Dept. No. 000 for Engineering Services
- 2024-0263 Certification of Road Fund Expenditures for Traffic Law Enforcement, Fish Passage Barrier Removal & Annual Certification to County Road Administration Board
- 2024-0264 Contract Award to Central Washington Asphalt, Inc. for Bituminous Surface Treatment & Edge Repair
- 2024-0265 Contract w/GMCO Corporation for Magnesium Chloride for Public Works Department
- 2024-0266 Ratifying Change Order Proposals No. 1 & 2 w/Central Washington Asphalt, Inc. for the Red Mountain Access Road Project
- 2024-0267 Authorization to Proceed w/Advertisement for Design-Build Team for the Fairgrounds Arena Upgrade Project
- 2024-0268 Payment to Black Knight Emblem & Insignia, Inc. for Uniform Insignias
- 2024-0269 Amended Interagency Agreement w/State of WA Department of Ecology for Funding Support of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Coordinator

- 2024-0270 KeyBank Officer's Certification for Additional Banking Services; Amending Resolution 2015-933
- 2024-0271 Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission Officer Wellness Grant

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:26 a.m.

Clerk of the Board

Chairman