



## BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting  
Work Session

Monday, July 10, 2023, at 9:00 am

BOCC Conference Room, Room 232, 128 N 2nd Street, Yakima, WA 98901 or Zoom

7/10/2023 - Minutes

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Called to Order at 9:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Chair LaDon Linde, Commissioner Amanda McKinney, Commissioner Kyle Curtis, Legal Counsel Don Anderson, Clerk of the Board Julie Lawrence, Deputy Clerk of the Board Erin Franklin, Facilities Director Brian Griff, District Court Administrator Therese Murphy, Human Services Director Esther Magasis, Courtney Hesla (Comprehensive Healthcare), Financial Services Director Craig Warner, and guests.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment Received.

### 3. FACILITIES SERVICES (30 Minutes)

Brian Griff, Therese Murphy, and Esther Magasis were present to discuss office relocation requests for District Court Probation and Human Services. Moving Human Services to the 1st Street Conference Room with the Veterans' Program would cost about \$97,000 for carpet, paint, walls, doors, and electrical. Brian noted that utilizing floor-to-ceiling cubical walls would actually cost about \$23,000 more than putting up actual walls, but would also allow for greater flexibility down the road if desired. After talking with Esther about the expansion of her team, the Board agreed that the configuration of the space with real walls should still allow adequate flexibility for the future. In terms of funding, Esther explained that Human Services has applied for one-time CHG funding from the State, and has also received \$100,000 in operational grants this year that were not anticipated, thus freeing up other budget funding to cover the project.

Commissioner Linde stated that there were some concerns from the Veterans' Board about how this move might affect their program. Esther stated that the main change will be removing the existing food pantry for office space, in order to maximize use of space instead of paying rent on square footage solely being used for storage. She also discussed working with Dave Hansen (a fellow veteran) and Sunrise Outreach, which already offers a food bank one block away. The Veteran's Program would still keep a small supply of food and clothing on hand, but Esther explained that other programs are better equipped to offer these services, and this would reduce redundancies for County services. Esther also noted that having other Human Services office staff in the same building would make it easier for Veterans' Program staff to be able to conduct their outreach at the jail or in the Lower Valley, without having to close the office to veterans receiving other services in Yakima. The Board agreed that this plan would help the County to function more efficiently for greater outreach opportunities.

In terms of a timeline, Esther noted that the 1st Street Conference Room had been discussed as a possible temporary location for Public Services accounting staff while the 4th floor of the Courthouse undergoes renovations. However, she noted that it might be wiser to place them somewhere else and begin work on the 1st Street project, as Therese Murphy has expressed interest in utilizing Human Services' current space for staffing a new District Court Probation program that she would like to launch by January 1st.

Brian stated that to add electrical and a few walls to the space for offices would cost about \$25,000. Part of this work would be funded by Mental Health Sales Tax (which is also funding the new program); the Board noted that they could adjust the amount of her MHST request if necessary. Work on the 1st Street Conference Room could begin quickly to move Human Services in by early September, which would then allow enough time to remodel District Court's new space to be functional and ready with ample time before January 1st. As for displaced Public Services accounting staff, Brian reported that Technology Services Director Dale Panattoni has agreed to offer up use of the TS Conference Room for a few months instead.

Additional Public Services staff will utilize space from the Clerk's Office on the 1st floor of the Courthouse while the clerks are in the process of preparing to move down to the Basement, anyway. Brian added that the Public Services remodel should be complete by the end of this year, but that he would update the Board with a firmer timeline soon. Commissioner Linde also asked Brian to ensure that Public Services Director Lisa Freund is informed of the changes to staff locations.

Finally, Commissioner McKinney asked that Esther invite some of the Veterans' Board members to a future Work Session so that the Commissioners can discuss any remaining concerns with them, and also show them what the BOCC has in mind. Esther noted that she was also planning on inviting Dave Hansen to the next Veteran's Board meeting. Commissioner Curtis offered to attend that meeting on behalf of the BOCC, instead of scheduling time at a Work Session; the other Commissioners concurred.

#### 4. HUMAN SERVICES (30 Minutes)

Esther Magasis and Courtney Hesla were present to follow-up on anticipated costs for DCR vehicles and estimated mileage. Courtney estimated about 8,000 miles in a 12-month period with more localized DCR teams, but this number could increase as awareness of the program grows and it becomes accessed more frequently. Craig Warner clarified that the mileage costs would be about \$4,800 based on last year's IRS reimbursement rate. Courtney also noted that Comprehensive Healthcare usually purchases small SUV's, which typically run at about \$45,000-\$50,000 right now. However, these costs could be lower if the County has surplus vehicles available.

Commissioner McKinney suggested that County Roads and Financial Services provide additional insight on the cost-effectiveness of the County purchasing these vehicles, or having Comprehensive handle this instead. Craig pointed out that there could be a liability issue with having non-county employees driving county vehicles. In response to the suggestion that the County sell surplus vehicles to Comprehensive, Craig explained that the County cannot direct vehicles to a specific entity – the surplus process occurs on an external auction site. The County could simply inform Comprehensive of the opportunity to bid. As for leasing the vehicles to Comprehensive, Don Anderson stated that he would have to research the legality of this idea; following up a few minutes later, he explained that the Attorney General's opinion on leasing is that it would exceed the scope of the County's powers. Craig noted that financially, it would be better for the County to sell these vehicles. For Comprehensive, it would be helpful if the County's DCR contract would allow for the purchase of vehicles, whether bidding on surplus County vehicles or purchasing from a different source altogether. The Board agreed that this is likely the most prudent course of action; however, they would need more information about what features the vehicles might need (e.g. radio communication with Dispatch), as well as a firmer cost estimate. The Commissioners also concurred that they each favored DCR Program Option #3, as it would decrease response times and free up both law enforcement and the DCR staff for greater efficiency; this consensus is important to determining the number of vehicles needed.

In response to Commissioner McKinney's question, Commission Linde updated the Board on his Friday meeting with the Yakama Nation, noting that they covered many different topics. Courtney was able to pass along her contact info to the new interim director of the Yakama National Behavioral Health Agency, and Esther was able to briefly connect with Commissioner Shike about the DCR program.

Regarding Mental Health Sales Tax funding overall, Esther stated that the total amount the Board is looking

at funding will be about \$4 million: \$1.1 million for internal programs, \$1.2 million for the necessary external partners for the internal programs, and \$1.7 million for Option #3 of the DCR program (or as low as \$1.2 million for the first year depending on supplemental funding from the State). Commissioner McKinney expressed her belief that the State will likely continue their supplemental funding in some form beyond one year due to the Legislature's support for these types of programs. She and Commissioner Curtis concurred that they are comfortable funding more projects this first year to explore what programs work well and see what progress can be made. All three Commissioners concurred that this will help Yakima County prove to the State Legislature that local government is doing everything it can to address mental/behavioral health issues/needs, and that the State is unfortunately not providing adequate funding and support.

Esther noted that there would still be adequate funding available for the RFP for external programs. She also clarified that she might release additional, smaller RFP's specifically related to the external partners for internal projects. Commissioner Curtis asked if these are something that could be sole sourced; Esther confirmed that she would discuss the guidelines with Craig and then follow up with the Board.

Commissioner Linde was also designated as the point person to continue to follow up on the DCR program moving forward.

#### 5. COMMISSIONER UPDATES/ GENERAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners gave updates on individual committee/board assignments for the week of July 3, 2023 - July 7, 2023.

#### 6. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Curtis noted that the Yakima Herald recently published an article about two solar projects that were recently approved in Yakima County. In response to his question about the County's next steps on the solar moratorium, Commissioner McKinney shared that she has a meeting scheduled this week with Public Services Director Lisa Freund and Planning Official Tommy Carroll to receive an update on proposed changes to County Code, but anticipates that the Board will need to extend the moratorium again.

Don Anderson shared that County Prosecutor Joe Brusica has a prior commitment with the Domestic Violence Coalition on Tuesday morning, so Don will present the encampment policy in person at Tuesday's Regular Agenda Meeting in Joe's stead.

#### 7. ADJOURN

Commissioner Curtis MOTION: To Adjourn

Commissioner McKinney SECOND

Motion Passes to Adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

All work sessions are recorded and will be available to view on the BOCC website at <https://www.yakimacounty.us/AgendaCenter/Board-of-Commissioners-2>.

APPROVED DATE

DATE/Minutes