



BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting
Work Session

Friday, October 21, 2022, at 9:00 am

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

10/21/2022 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Called to Order at 9:01 a.m.

PRESENT: Chair Amanda McKinney, Commissioner LaDon Linde, Commissioner Ron Anderson, Legal Counsel Josie Mesa, Clerk of the Board Julie Lawrence, Deputy Clerk of the Board Erin Franklin, Jeff Garretson (Yakima Valley Pippins), Public Services Director Lisa Freund, Building Official Marivel Garcia, Human Resources Director Jacqui Lindsay, Financial Services Director Craig Warner, and guests.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

3. DISCUSSION WITH JEFF GARRETSON/YAKIMA VALLEY PIPPINS (15 Minutes)

Jeff Garretson began by thanking the Board for the recent improvements to the State Fair Park and Stadium, including new stadium seating. He then explained that since Major League Baseball has taken control over Minor League Baseball, they have mandated certain requirements for continued updates to their facilities. If the four Minor League teams across Washington State are not able to meet these requirements by 2024, our state could potentially lose Minor League Baseball. These four teams have spearheaded a push to request one-time funding from the state legislature, and the Yakima Valley Pippins (along with other West Coast League teams at the summer collegiate level) would like to offer their support. To this end, Jeff presented a draft letter to the state legislature for the Board's approval. If funding is granted, additional improvements (such as upgraded bathroom facilities and other enhancements for fan and player safety) could potentially be made to the Pippins' stadium.

4. JOINT LETTER TO OFM SUPPORTING STADIUM CAPITAL BUDGET REQUEST

Commissioner Linde MOTION: To Adopt the Draft Letter as Written and Add the BOCC's Logo and Signatures

Commissioner Anderson SECOND

Motion Passes Unanimously.

Julie Lawrence was directed to help prepare and send this joint letter to the Office of Financial Management supporting the stadium capital budget request at her earliest convenience.

5. PUBLIC SERVICES (15 Minutes)

Lisa Freund explained the current struggle in Public Services Building Division to keep up with the volume of permits being submitted. This has stemmed partly from staffing shortages, and although additional staff have been hired, they are still being trained in their new positions. With input from partners in the Central Washington Home Builders Association and the construction industry, a short-term plan was developed to issue permits more quickly. Since the department tends to receive fewer walk-in customers on Wednesdays, they will use that day to allocate time for staff to review and process permits. A similar method proved to be successful during the COVID pandemic, so it will be trialed again through December 31, 2022, in hopes of catching up on the backlog and completing training for new staff. Lisa was directed to ensure that the public has notice of the change, especially frequent customers. CWHBA Governmental Affairs Director Andi Hochleitner stated that she would also help spread the word.

Dave Ranger (via Zoom) shared that although staff has been working as hard as possible, they need more support. Due to staff turnover and movement, his projects have been handled by a number of different project coordinators and planners before reaching completion. He suggested contracting out, if need be, to handle the influx of applications.

Justin Wolff of New Creation Construction (in-person) noted how much time a one-time customer takes compared to professionals, who tend to know what they need and have everything ready to go for their applications. He suggested a separate line and/or a modified process for these frequent customers to save time. He also suggested contracting out to other entities, as Kittitas County has done. In response to his questions about department revenue and pay plans affecting staffing, Lisa and Amanda explained the differences between the public and private sector when it comes to attracting and retaining employees. Building Official Marivel Garcia added that another idea is to implement hybrid positions where staff become cross-certified, so if one aspect of work is slow, those employees will be able to lend their aid to a different aspect.

Brad Shuler (via Zoom) voiced his support for both a "fast lane" and a streamlined, sort of "over-the-counter" application process for simpler projects. Marivel confirmed that under the new plan, Wednesdays will become a day where staff will focus on quickly processing these simpler applications.

Lisa stated that she would explore the two suggestions of a "fast lane" and contracting out to other entities. Marivel noted that certain cities currently outsource to the County, and suggested revisiting some of those contracts. Commissioner McKinney requested an update on the new Wednesday plan after three weeks. Lisa also clarified that Public Services will continue to be open five days a week, and that the public will still be able to drop off applications and questions on Wednesdays. Additional staff will also make themselves available to help anyone who has traveled from out of town on a Wednesday without being aware of the new plan.

6. SUPERIOR COURT DIRECTOR UPDATE (10 Minutes)

Jessica Humphreys asked permission for volunteer attorney services to utilize the Commissioners' Basement Conference Room #1 on Mondays and Fridays for a few hours in the morning and afternoon to help pro se litigants fill out court paperwork and answer any questions. She noted that if the Commissioners have something else on the calendar and need to use the room, the attorneys would find another space for that day. The Board acknowledged that conflicts would be extremely rare, and thus approved this request.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE (10 Minutes)

Jacqui Lindsay shared a request from the Prosecutor's Office to reduce the hours of a vacant Attorney 4 position by 75% (6 hours per day instead of 8). Jacqui and the Board inferred this was likely a recruitment tool. The Board approved this request.

8. BROADBAND DISCUSSION (15 Minutes)

Commissioner Anderson suggested Starlink as a cheaper alternative to the broadband discussion. Commissioner McKinney noted that unfortunately, Starlink is not eligible for federal funding. Commissioner

Linde shared that he had read there would be no match requirement if a county/jurisdiction has had more than a 20% poverty rate over the last 30 years. Commissioner McKinney responded that while that was true for past grants, the Board will need to wait and see if it is true for the upcoming grant, and reserve match funding in case it is not.

9. GREATER COLUMBIA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASO RATE REDUCTION LETTER

Commissioner McKinney explained that the federal government is proposing to cut reimbursements for Medicaid. She and Commissioner Anderson agreed that would not be good for our community, including our hospitals. Commissioner Linde explained that this is a state-wide issue for Medicaid involving a skewed calculation method. Our community is already underserved in terms of healthcare providers, and this decision would only serve to exacerbate the problem. The Board agreed to send a letter from Yakima County, noting that other counties will do the same. Julie Lawrence confirmed that she would put the letter on BOCC letterhead for the Commissioners to sign.

10. AGENDA ITEM REVIEW (15 Minutes)

Julie Lawrence reviewed for the Board all Agenda items submitted for Tuesday's Regular Agenda Meeting, and also gave a preview of the following week's Agenda items.

The Commissioners had no changes for the October 25, 2022, Agenda. Craig Warner explained Resolution 276-2022 in greater detail for the public benefit.

For the November 1, 2022, Agenda, the Commissioners requested that someone from the Sheriff's Office be in attendance to present their items during Regular Agenda.

11. ARPA DISCUSSION

Craig reported that Clifton Larson Allen was reviewing two final applications from the Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Linde stated that he was ready to begin discussing which projects to fund, while Commissioner McKinney stated her desire to discuss how much the Board would like to spend for the first round of ARPA funding. With upcoming the infrastructure bill and Jobs Act funding in mind, she asked Craig if CLA could make note of which infrastructure projects stated in their ARPA applications that they have also procured funding from other sources, and which might be eligible for additional funding from the aforementioned legislation. Commissioner McKinney and Commissioner Linde agreed to start by discussing projects that are unique to Yakima Valley and would not be eligible for other types of funding.

12. CLOSED SESSION

The Board met in closed session at 10:26 a.m. as allowed by RCW 42.30.140(4)(a), agreeing to return at 11:00 a.m. Commissioner Linde returned at 11:00, 11:30, and 12:00, extending the meeting by 30-minute increments each time. The Board returned at 12:30 p.m. (aside from Commissioner McKinney, who had to step out at 11:00 a.m.) and no further action was taken.

13. COMMISSIONER UPDATES/ GENERAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners did not discuss any updates.

14. NEW BUSINESS

The Commissioners had no new business to discuss.

15. ADJOURN

Commissioner Anderson MOTION: To Adjourn

Commissioner Linde SECOND

(Commissioner McKinney stepped out.)

Motion Passes to Adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 12:30 p.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

DRAFT