

Klickitat County
Board of Commissioners
Minutes – Meeting of Tuesday, January 04, 2022

Morning Workshop Session

Chairman David Sauter opened the morning session at 9:45 AM with Commissioners Dan Christopher and David Sauter in chambers and Commissioner Jacob Anderson participating via zoom.

First Order of Business: Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the 2022 Calendar Year:

The Board deferred the first order of action a resolution in the matter of reorganization of the Klickitat County Board of Commissioners and election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the 2022 calendar year until Commissioner Anderson is available through video Zoom.

Commissioner Christopher advised of his recent attendance at the Washington State Association of Counties Meeting and the advisement given that the American Indian Health Commission will appointment a tribal member to the County's Board of Health, a discussion followed about majority rule on a board; citizen and Elected Official input.

A discussion was held about the decisions made for tribal and non-tribal members and do Tribal Members fall under the purview of the Governor's COVID-19 mandates.

Resolution in the matter of reorganization of the Klickitat County Board of Commissioners and election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the 2022 calendar year.

Workshop Session Agenda

10:00 AM – Public Works/Road Department Update:

Attendance: Public Works Director Gordon Kelsey, Public Works Deputy Director Jeff Hunter in the Chambers, various county employees, and county residents participating via zoom.

Director Gordon Kelsey reported on snow plowing and the difficulty to move the snow at this point with the weight of the wet snow, followed by an update on the driveway blockage calls that will follow and the inability to plow out every citizen's driveway entrance.

Director Kelsey advised of snow plow trucks that are currently broken down and the use of gravel on the Roosevelt Grade by Republic Services.

An item on this afternoon's consent agenda was reviewed, followed by the pay estimate approval and construction program update, noting it is suspended until the snow melts.

A maintenance report was provided, followed by a discussion of Annex 4 and 1.

10:30 AM – Natural Resources/Economic Development Department Update

Attendance: Natural Resources/Economic Development Director Dave McClure in the Chambers, Economic Development Coordinator Richard Foster, Natural Resources Specialist Whitney Reynier, various county employees and county residents participating via zoom

Natural Resources/Economic Development Director Dave McClure reported on progress on the application for the US Economic Development Administration grant being pursued for the infrastructure of the Columbia Gorge Regional Airport, and on drafting an agreement for the County providing a "Point-09" grant to the City of Goldendale for wastewater treatment plant upgrades.

Director McClure advised of a training program being developed for people interested in opening child care facilities, and of the status of the County process for awarding lodging tax funding for tourism promotion projects, followed by Economic Development Coordinator Richard Foster reporting on the availability of workforce training in the area, including CDL training for truck driving.

Director McClure advised of attempts to coordinate with the purchasers of SDS Lumber in Bingen to offer assistance for displaced employees.

Director McClure reported on funding for the Salmon Recovery Programs, followed by a brief update by Natural Resources Specialist Whitney Reynier on the funding timeline.

Director McClure advised of a request to extend the Department's grant from Ecology that is funding streamflow monitoring to evaluate water storage opportunities.

Executive Session: Annual Performance Evaluation:

At 10:40 AM Chairman Sauter announced that the Board would be convening into Executive Session in accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1) (g) to conduct an annual performance evaluation of a public employee. It was noted the session would last twenty (20) minutes. The Board convened back into Regular Session at 11:00 AM.

The Board recessed for lunch at 11:02 AM.

Commissioner's Business Meeting

Chairman Sauter reconvened the Commissioner's meeting at 1:00 PM. All Three Commissioners were present.

***Approved (M/Anderson, S/Christopher. Passed unanimously): Resolution No. 00122** in the matter of reorganization of the Klickitat County Board of Commissioners and election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the 2022 calendar year

Agenda:

***Approved (M/Sauter, S/Christopher. Passed unanimously):** Business Agenda as presented.

Approval of Commissioner Meeting Minutes

***Approved (M/Sauter, S/Christopher. Passed unanimously):** Commissioner Meeting minutes from November 30, 2021, December 14, 2021, and December 21, 2021, as presented.

Citizen Comment: Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per individual

Peter Leon stated he has concerns about the Board of Health Members and would like to balance the members and would like to replace expired member Sue Pennington with a citizen who is not a medical professional.

Sheri Bousquet reviewed an economic development plan from 2015, regarding jobs available in Klickitat County and the lack of jobs available by green energy projects from foreign entities.

Commissioner Sauter reported on the progress of the Lyle/Dallesport School District regarding a lease, selling, and utilizing the Dallesport School property, verifying that the Board's intention is to release the land to the school. The County will remain the owner of the Community Center in the area.

Chairman Anderson reviewed the building permit report for 2021, followed by a clarification from Building Department Director Lynn Ward on the yearly reports.

Commissioner Christopher clarified about the time frame for citizen comment and the Board responding to citizens for the last five (5) minutes, it will be added to the agenda for future reference.

Chairman Anderson responded to Mr. Leon, stating a further conversation can be held during Thursday's workshop about the Board of Health Member Appointments.

Clarification was provided to Ms. Bousquet regarding the Economic Development Plan and the sections in which the County is broken up into and what the different regions would produce as their Economic Sector jobs, noting in the time it was written the jobs listed were accurately recorded.

Tracy Wixman inquired why Communication Officers are classified as First Responders in a Klickitat County document, clarification was provided by Department of Emergency Management Director Jeff King stating that the Governor has changed the Communication Officers titles to Clerical and Klickitat County wanted to reaffirm the importance of the position in the role of First Responders.

Public Meetings/Public Hearings/Bid Openings:

Public Hearing: To consider imposing the optional sales tax second half-cent, and that, at said hearing, any interested taxpayer may appear and be heard for or against the proposal.

Attendance: Treasurer Greg Gallagher, Human Resources & Administrative Services Director Robb Van Cleave, Fiscal Manager Jenn Bartley in the Chambers, various county employees, and county residents participating via zoom.

Fiscal Manager Jenn Bartley reported that during the development of the 2022 budget it was discussed how to close the budget deficit beyond just reducing staff and departments' budgets.

Chairman Anderson opened the public hearing inquiring if any citizens would like to make a comment for or against.

Sheri Bousquet stated her opinion against the implementation of the optional sales tax and would like to see the County implement the income tax method for renewable energy projects.

Tracy Wixman stated her opposition against the increase

Greg Wagner stated that new taxes need to be directed to the larger corporations and away from the citizens.

Dave Barta inquired about the balance of the reserve funds, noting he is opposed to raising the sales tax.

Peter Leon stated he is interested in the planes that were being put into service in the County due to the low sales tax and the increase will affect that.

Ryan stated his opposition to the tax increase, stating it will further exacerbate more citizens shopping in The Dalles and Hood River.

Fiscal Manager Jenn Bartley clarified this increase would bring all the unincorporated areas in Klickitat County to match what is already implemented in the cities, noting Klickitat County will still have the lowest sales tax rate in the State.

Chairman Anderson asked if there was anyone else who wished to comment and called for Board questions of staff.

Commissioner Christopher clarified the State provides the guidance on taxing the Green Energy Projects at a cost rate and the County Commissioner's have no oversight, the Assessor is following the guidance of the State, followed by clarification on the process for planes being put into service in Klickitat County.

Commissioner Sauter stated it will take Legislative action to change the ways counties tax green energy projects.

A brief discussion was held about all the Counties deficient in the State and Klickitat County is the last County to implement this action.

Chairman Anderson opened the Public Hearing to Board discussion, the Board stated they are reluctantly approving the resolution but it is to benefit the future of the county and costs are increasing at a higher rate than the County can raise property taxes.

Approved (M/Sauter, S/Christopher. Passed unanimously): Resolution No. 00222 to rescind the resolution allowing a .25% charge on real estate excise in lieu of "Second Half" sales tax per RCW 82.46.010 and elects to impose the second .5% rate for sales tax and remove the .25% of excise tax.

Code Compliance Department Update:

Attendance: Code Compliance Officer Lem Pratt, Human Resources & Administrative Services Director Robb Van Cleave, Information Technology Manager Jeff Roe, Treasurer Greg Gallagher, in the Chambers, various county employees and county residents participating via zoom.

Code Compliance Officer Lem Pratt reported on December 2021, cases, noting 34 cases were closed, a discussion was held about the Department of Ecology filling out the required Klickitat County Complaint Forms and following due process.

Code Compliance Officer Pratt stated in 2021 thirty-one (31) code cases were opened with eighteen (18) of those being successfully closed, there are still forty-two (42) open code cases and fifty-three (53) nuances abatement cases, some of which may be outside the three-year statute of limitations.

A brief discussion was held about the number of cases Code Compliance Officer Pratt has closed since he started.

Human Resources & Administrative Services Director Robb Van Cleave and Information Technology Manager Jeff Roe, requested and received verbal approval to proceed with the advertising process for an Information Technology Systems Administrator, followed by a discussion about the starting wage for advertising this position.

The Board took a three (3) minute break at 2:30 PM

Consent Agenda:

***Approved (M/Christopher, S/Sauter. Passed unanimously):** Consent Agenda with three (3) items.

- 1) Airport Rescue Grant Agreement 3-41-0059-019-2022 for the Columbia Gorge Regional /The Dalles Municipal Airport between The City of The Dalles; Klickitat County and the United States Department of Transportation Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for the purpose of the FAA providing eligible sponsors with funding for costs related to operations, personnel, cleaning, sanitation, janitorial services, combating the spread of pathogens at the airport, and debt service stations.
- 2) **Resolution No. 00322** in the matter of restructuring the Department of Emergency Management's organizational chart to reflect changing a Communication Officer Position to a Lead Communication Officer Position, effective January 1, 2022.

3) Local Agency Agreement Supplement No. 1 between Klickitat County (Public Works Department) and Lower Columbia Research and Archaeology LLC. To provide on-call archaeological services to extend the completion date from December 31, 2021, to June 30, 2022.

Pay Estimates:

***Approved (M/Christopher, S/Sauter. Passed unanimously):** Pay estimate No. 20 to Kirby Nagelhout Construction Company in the amount of \$215,529.93 which excludes retainage in the amount of \$8,712.53 and includes sales tax in the amount of \$16,164.74, for a total payment amount of \$222,982.15, for the County Services Building Project, Contract No. C03120.

Voucher Certification and Approval

There were no warrants requiring approval.

Public Health Director Erinn Quinn requested and received verbal approval to proceed with the advertisement process for a Clerical Administrative Assistant III in Goldendale in the Environmental Health Department.

Board Pending:

Confirmation was provided that a continued conversation will take place on Thursday during the workshop about the Board of Health Member appointments, Public Health Director Quinn asked to postpone the conversation as she will not be available at the workshop. The Board stated they will hold a conversation on Tuesday, January 11, 2022, in the morning, Director Quinn advised she will be available for the conversation.

Elected Official – Treasurer’s Report/Update:

Attendance: Treasurer Greg Gallagher, Human Resources & Administrative Services Director Robb Van Cleave, Fiscal Manager Jenn Bartley in the chambers, various county employees, and county residents participating via zoom.

Treasurer Greg Gallagher provided a Finance Committee report, thanking Commissioner Sauter for his years’ service.

Treasurer Gallagher reported on the payment for the Dallesport Waste Water Plant, noting, it was in the 2022 budget to pay the plant off, the Board is in support of paying off the plant to start the process of allowing another public entity to take the plant over.

Treasurer Gallagher stated the 2023, the budget was discussed, noting Fiscal Manager Jenn Bartley will provide budget training starting in January 2022.

A brief Treasurer’s Office update followed, noting there will be an upcoming foreclosure sale on February 14, followed by a tax statement mailing update.

The Board inquired about County-owned properties in the area Treasurer Gallagher is researching for title clarification.

Elected Official – Prosecutor’s Report/Update:

Attendance: Prosecuting Attorney David Quesnel, Deputy Prosecutor Rebecca Cranston, various county employees, and county residents participating via zoom.

Prosecuting Attorney David Quesnel stated he will be following up with the Dallesport Property Title, followed by a report on video conferences held for Court yesterday.

Prosecutor Quesnel stated trials have been rescheduled and is discouraged because there is a large backlog and this does compound this backlog further, followed by an update on the Blake Decisions that was recently passed, noting the Department is doing all they can to stay up on the repayments and tracking down the funds paid or unpaid.

(M/Sauter, S/Christopher. Passed unanimously): There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:03 PM until Thursday, January 6, 2022, at 9:00 AM for a budget planning workshop.

Thursday's workshop was canceled due to inclement weather and will be rescheduled for a later date.

* Reference Document on File. Please Note: The Board of Commissioners' minutes are action minutes. A digital recording is on file as part of the official record and available on file 01.04.2022 Board of County Commissioner's Meeting.


Approved: **Jacob Anderson**
Chairman of the Board



1.18.2022
Date