

**Klickitat County
Board of Commissioners
Minutes – Meeting of Tuesday, May 24, 2022**

Agenda Item - Comment/Disposition

Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Jacob Anderson called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. All three (3) Commissioners were present.

Workshop Session Agenda

9:30 AM - Public Health Department Update/Report:

Attendance: Public Health Director Erinn Quinn. There were also various county department directors, county employees, elected officials, and members of the public present in person and via zoom.

The Board had a discussion concerning the lack of County Designated Crisis Responders (DCR), which are provided by Comprehensive Healthcare who is the County's provider as contracted by the state through Beacon. Director Quinn provided an overview of how other Washington counties' manage and provide mental health services, and their funding sources, such as Medicaid, Medicare, or private insurance.

Director Quinn advised that the Public Health Department's role is to support the current mental health programs provided by Comprehensive Healthcare, as well as both our county hospitals and North Shore Medical Group. Discussion continued regarding Skamania County mental health services. Further discussion followed concerning the funding that Comprehensive Healthcare is receiving for services that are not being provided.

Vern Harpole thanked the Commissioners and Director Quinn for looking into mental health concerns, noting he is very involved in community mental health. Mr. Harpole stated if a mental health advisory board is formed, he would like to be appointed to the board.

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

Attendance: Public Works Director Gordon Kelsey and Senior Engineer Seth Scarola, DEM Director Jeff King and various county employees, and members of the public via Zoom.

Director Kelsey reviewed consent agenda items and a pay estimate for Board consideration in the afternoon. Senior Engineer Seth Scarola provided a construction program report which included updates on Courtney Road, the Klickitat Path, and construction of the parking lots surrounding the Courthouse and County Services Building.

Mr. Scarola gave a report on the County's bridge replacement project, which is 100% federally funded. Director Kelsey reported on the demolition work at Annex I and updated the Board on punch list items being completed at the County Services Building.

10:30 AM – Economic Development/Natural Resource Department Update/Report:

Attendance: Natural Resource/Economic Development Director Dave McClure, Natural Resources Project Coordinator Whitney Reynier, and Rye Development representative Erik Steimle. There were also various county department directors, county employees, elected officials, and members of the public present in person and via zoom.

Natural Resources Project Coordinator Whitney Reynier reported on well monitoring activities. Director McClure reported the Gorge Commission issued a climate change advisory and a discussion will need to be held regarding the comment period. Director McClure also reported on the Switzler Water Storage project.

Erik Steimle with Rye Development provided an update on the Goldendale Energy Storage Project, which was followed by discussion about the amount of required water and the water right being used.

Chairman Anderson requested and received updates on the federal Economic Development Authority Grant project at the Airport and on the Childcare Committee's progress.

Board Pending: Issues as determined by the Board of Commissioners

Chairman Anderson provided updates on a federal grant application for the Hood River/White Salmon Bridge replacement and on a meeting with Charter Communications concerning extending internet optic fiber to homes in Klickitat County. Further discussion followed regarding internet services within the County.

Washington Small Business Development Center Advisor Lorena Lowell clarified with the Board what information they would like her to present at the June 16, 2022, for the Childcare discussion.

DEM Director King advised of the importance of having a Radio tower Site at Juniper Point and encouraged the Commissioners to work with the developers of the Goldendale Energy Storage Project.

Assessor Crista Schroder and Chief Appraiser Billi Bare presented a response to an inquiry from Fire District #6 regarding an issue with the Fire District's levy. Assessor Schroder advised that the Fire District made an error on their resolution presented for the levy certification, noting that she will be attending the June FD #6 Fire Commissioner meeting to review the process and ways to submit the documents according to the statute. Assessor Schroder noted that she has concurrence from the Department of Revenue that the Assessor's process is correct

Approved (M/Christopher, S/Anderson. Passed unanimously): The Board recessed for lunch at 11:29 AM.

Commissioner's Business Meeting

Chairman Anderson reconvened the meeting at 1:00 PM, opening with the Pledge of Allegiance. All three (3) Commissioners were present.

Agenda:

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

Approval of Commissioner Meeting Minutes

There were no meeting minutes requiring approval at this time.

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

Commissioner Christopher asked if the Board could move forward with business if there were no citizen's wanting to comment. Chairman Anderson stated the importance and the reason to keep the thirty minutes.

Assessor Crista Schroder followed up on her morning discussion regarding the Fire District #6, noting if the levy and resolution were submitted for the current year with the correct amounts the total they are unable to recuperate is \$60,211.

Ruby Irving inquired about Chairman Anderson's Airbnb rental and Conditional Use Permit for Airbnb use.

Sheri Bousquet requested clarification about the speakers, and the information provided. Ms. Bousquet stated her concern with the Conditional Use Permits Process, and the need for a Conditional Use Permit to be used for large solar projects, followed by questions about Chairman Anderson's personal Airbnb, followed by an inquiry about Accessory Dwelling Units in Klickitat County.

Assessor Christa Schroder addressed Ms. Bousquet's inquiry about names and topics discussed during citizen comment period.

Elaine Harvey inquired about the solar projects potentially being constructed on Knight Road and whether they would go through a state or county permitting process.

Commissioner Sauter responded to Ruby Irving regarding the absence of a Klickitat County employee due to military requirements, followed by a response to Sheri Bousquet regarding the requirement for a Conditional Use Permit for any green energy projects connecting to the Knight Road substation. Commissioner Sauter responded

to Elaine Harvey stating most developers have chosen to go through the County's process and not the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council Process, noting the County has a very robust permitting process.

Commissioner Christopher respond to the Conditional Use Permit versus the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council Process, noting the article in the Yakima Tribune regarding the Benton County green energy projects that went through the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council Process. Commissioner Christopher stated his support for military service.

Kathy Moco stated she has seen the annex buildings coming down and inquired if the vacant lots are going to turn into parking lots.

Elaine Harvey stated that the new Klickitat County Services Building was placed over the top of the parking lot that was used for employees who work downtown. Ms. Harvey stated she would like to see the parking open to all citizens and residents of Goldendale.

Chairman Anderson stated that the County is building an additional 100 parking spots and they will be open to all residents. Chairman Anderson spoke to Sheri Bousquet's inquiry about Airbnb's in Klickitat County, noting he has an Airbnb that is operating under the County's current regulations.

Chairman Anderson responded to the comments made in regards to Economic Development Richard Foster's involvement in Community Enrichment for Klickitat/Skamania Counties.

Dallesport/Murdock Community Council President Don McDermott inquired if the County can make changes to the required decommissioning plans for solar panels just as the County did with the wind turbines.

Chairman Anderson responded to Mr. McDermott, stating there are decommissioning plans in place and they are going to be updated. Commissioner Christopher stated that the Commissioners do not have any control over where the power is sold.

Public Meetings/Continued for consideration of approval of SUB2021-01, Applicant: Michael Herin.

Assistant Planner Alisa Grumbles reported the Plat of Old American Way (Subdivision 78-14) was a 7-lot subdivision. Lot 5 was created and maintained as a park since it had a community well on it, noting that the community well was officially decommissioned on August 31, 2021, and the landowner wishes to remove the park designation.

Assistant Planner Grumbles stated six out of seven land owners within the Plat of Old American Way signed off on the alteration, which meets the requirements of RCW 58.17.215. Plat alterations are not required to go back to the Planning Commission. The Board of County Commissioners is the legislative authority to approve alterations to a plat. Planning Director Mo-chi Lindblad provided further clarification on the project as proposed.

Approved (M/ Sauter, S/Christopher. Passed unanimously): Motion granting final approval of SUB2021-01, a subdivision alteration; Parcel No. 04-16-2853-0005/00 in the Goldendale vicinity; Applicant: Michael Herin.

Code Compliance Officer Department Update/Report:

Attendance: Code Compliance Officer Lem Pratt, DEM Director King, Chief of Operation Filiberto Ontiveros, HR & Administrative Services Director Robb Van Cleave, Public Health Director Quinn, Assistant Planner Alisa Grumbles, Bookkeeper-Human Resources at Pioneer Surveying Victoria Allen, Bingen-White Salmon Police Department Police Chief Mike Hepner, various county employees, and residents via Zoom.

Code Compliance Officer Pratt stated this is his final update as he has submitted his resignation earlier this month and his last day work will be June 3, 2022. Officer Pratt provided a report on the twenty-four (24) active cases.

Officer Pratt stated he has provided a recommendation for Code Compliance from the 2020, workshop, which he believes should be implemented. Officer Pratt stated if Code Compliance is placed solely under the Sheriff's Office, the physical office should stay in the Klickitat County Services Building because of the daily interactions with other departments.

Miscellaneous Reports/Comments: Review of Historic Presentation Grant Applications

Attendance: Deputy Clerk of the Board Ibbey Jane Coyne, DEM Director King, Chief of Operation Ontiveros, HR and Administrative Services Director Van Cleave, Public Health Director Quinn, Bingen-White Salmon Police Chief Mike Hepner, various county employees, and residents via Zoom.

Deputy Clerk of the Board Ibbey Jane Coyne stated a request for proposals was published in the Goldendale Sentinel in the Weeks of April 6th and 13th, 2022, requesting applications be submitted for the use of the Historical Preservations funds by Friday, May 06, 2022, and three applications were received. Discussion followed regarding the entity's use of the funds and the requested amounts, which was followed by the motion.

Approved (M/Sauter, S/Christopher. Passed unanimously): Motion to award Historical Preservation Fund grants as requested.

Payment Approvals/Pay Estimates/Change Orders:

Approved Warrants (M/Christopher, S/Sauter. Passed unanimously): Accounts Payable Warrants (#313996-314110), in the amount of \$744,456.86, (#314111 – 314117) for a total of \$751,270.49 the date ending May 23, 2022. There were no Payroll warrants requiring approval.

Approved (M/Christopher, S/Sauter. Passed unanimously): Pay Estimate No. 1 to James Dean Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$617,772.07 for the Courtney Road Project, CRP 342 & CRP 353.

Consent Agenda:

Approved (M/Christopher, S/Sauter. Passed unanimously): The Consent Agenda with six (6) items.

- 1) Cumulative Reserve Fund #125 project list change which is required to reflect approval of Budget Supplemental 2022-1, dated May 10, 2022.
- 2) **Resolution No. 05622** in the matter of appointing Erinn Quinn of White Salmon, Washington to serve on the Klickitat County Veterans' Advisory Board, representing Commissioner District No. 1, to an unexpired two (2) year term, expiring December 19, 2023; And Certificate of Appreciation to Jerry Smith for his service as a member of the Klickitat County Veterans' Advisory Board.
- 3) Personnel Authorization to begin the advertising process to fill a vacant Maintenance/Vegetation Management Technician position at Union Grade, Steps 1-3, within the Public Works Department.
- 4) Personnel Authorization to begin the advertising process to fill a vacant Clerical Administrative Assistant I or II position at Grade 34 or 35, Steps 1-3, within the Human Resource and Administrative Services Department.
- 5) Scheduling a public meeting to be held Tuesday, May 31, 2022, at 1:30 PM,
 - To consider approval of the Planning Commission's recommendation for approval of Shoreline Substantial Development Permit and Shoreline Conditional Use Permit No. SH2022-02 (Peach Beach Dredging) in the Maryhill vicinity. Applicant: Dan Gunkel.
 - To consider approval of the Planning Commission recommendation for approval of Shoreline Substantial Development Permit and Shoreline Conditional Use Permit No. SH2022-01 (Pearson Bank). Applicant: Underwood Conservation District.
- 6) Small Works Contract (**C09822**) between Klickitat County (Public Works Department) and Frank Gurney, Inc. for the 2022 Guardrail Repair, as bid for \$29,230.00.

The Board recessed for five (5) minutes at 2:00 PM

Following the recess, Commissioner Christopher asked if the Board was supportive of hanging historical prints in County Services Building if the Historical Society is willing to provide the pictures that they have on file.

Commissioner Christopher provide clarification that the photographers were from throughout the County, not the east or west side specifically. Following discussion, Commissioner Christopher noted that he will follow up with the museums and present photo options in the near future.

Senior Services Department update and discussion regarding the assisted living facility in White Salmon.

Attendance: Senior Services Director Sharon Carter and Senior Services Advisory Board members Shelly Baxter, Garvin Carmichael, and Anita Wellenbrock. There were also various county department directors, county employees, elected officials, representatives from other agencies and members of the public present in person and via zoom.

Senior Services Director Carter requested and received verbal approval to replace the Goldendale Case Manager position and increase the position to full-time. Director Carter stated the Lead Case Manager will provide training and oversight of the new case manager, noting each would fill in for the other during absences. A discussion followed regarding the Cook position in the Senior Services Department. Director Carter was advised to work with HR regarding an increase in hours and other staff coverage of the position.

Commissioner Sauter inquired and received clarification about grant funding as well as staffing levels. Director Carter provided further clarification about grant funding the Senior Services receives for transportation services.

Director Carter advised that the Senior Services Advisory Board has concerns about the funding shortfall for the proposed Assisted Living facility in White Salmon. Director Carter introduced the advisory board members that were present.

Board members Shelly Baxter, Garvin Carmichael, and Anita Wellenbrock expressed their concerns regarding the lack of support for seniors in our area, such as the lack of available assisted living facilities, cost to live in a facility, lack of services to deal with dementia, which are forcing seniors to move out of the area. Mr. Carmichael stated that the Assisted Living Facility has a funding gap and the advice from the Senior Advisory Board is for the County to fill the gap in funding.

Commissioner Sauter stated there are two different issues, the construction cost as well as staffing. Columbia Cascade Housing Corporation is the lead entity of the project and currently there is a 3-million-dollar funding shortfall. Commissioner Christopher stated this is a Columbia Gorge Housing Authority project not a county project but pushing for funding at the state level would be a huge benefit. Chairman Anderson provided information regarding the Columbia Gorge Housing Authority oversight as well as State legislative oversight. Further discussion followed.

The Board recessed for three (3) minutes at 3:06 PM

Comprehensive Healthcare Update and discussion regarding lack of mental health professionals

Attendance: Comprehensive Healthcare Chief Operating Officer Edie Dibble and Chief Clinical Officer Ron Gengler, and Leah Becknell from Beacon Health Options. There were also various county department directors, county employees, elected officials, representatives from other agencies and members of the public present in person and via zoom.

Chief Clinical Officer Ron Gengler reported on the type of services that Comprehensive Healthcare provides, indicated that they are very short-staffed, and more specifically short on Designated Crisis Responders (DCR) and have been utilizing telehealth.

Commissioner Christopher inquired if the state funding levels fluctuate in relation to the number of DCR's Comprehensive has on staff.

Leah Becknell from Beacon Health Options, the agency that contracts with Comprehensive to provide crisis response services to Klickitat County, indicated that funding does fluctuate based on staffing.

Discussion followed regarding the funds being paid to the Comprehensive for positions that are not filled and whether there has been any research into contracting other providers. Mr. Dibble commented that they have tried very hard to recruit and retain professional DCR's but there is not a large population wanting to move to Klickitat County. Further discussion followed regarding Comprehensive's interactions with law enforcement as well as the assessment timeline, and telehealth assessments.

E911/Chief of Operation Filiberto Ontiveros spoke about the relationship that DEM has had with Comprehensive DCR providers in dispatch calls from the public and assisting officers on a call. Chief Ontiveros described several situations where a person was in crisis and the situation was not addressed. Chief Ontiveros commented that telehealth does not work well in most cases because there is no internet.

Bingen-White Salmon Police Chief Mike Hepner spoke about the interactions his department has had with DCRs and issues when his officers must wait in the hospital with the patient in crisis until a DCR shows up.

Public Health Director Quinn commented on the number of calls she receives looking for mental health services as well as how many times her staff have walked mental health patients to the Comprehensive Healthcare Office and helped fill out the intake paperwork.

Skyline Health Family Medicine and Emergency Medicine Physician Assistant, Jenna Newcomb spoke about the mental health coverage in Skamania and Klickitat County, noting that DCRs can't cross county lines.

Goldendale Police Chief Jay Hunziker stated he is short-staffed and understands the difficulties Chief Hepner expressed and he is having similar issues. Chief Hunziker stated the Klickitat Valley Health is building a safe room, which will allow officers to leave while patients wait for a DCR.

Interim Adult Probation Officer Courtney Cooke spoke to circumstances that have impacted Adult Probation clients needing court ordered mental health assessments, indicating that the backlog is unsafe. Ms. Cooke also commented on insurance issues that prevent her clients from receiving mental health services. She stated that she would like to see services expanded to all those in need.

Chairman Anderson spoke about a recent incident that took place in the jail where treatment was to be provided in the hospital the next day, unfortunately no DCR showed up. Mr. Gengler stated that was a clinical error which has been addressed. Discussion continued concerning the lack of care being provided due to the lack of providers.

Washington Gorge Action Programs Executive Director Leslie Naramore reported on her interactions with Comprehensive Healthcare, noting she works a lot with cross-over patients between homelessness and mental health issues and works directly with Medicaid patients. Director Naramore asked what Comprehensive will do to regain the trust of patients.

Chief Clinical Officer Gengler stated he is apologetic to the clients that they have not been able to serve.

Prosecuting Attorney Quesnel advised he has tried without success to work with Comprehensive and noted the service they have been providing is failing the community as a whole for adults and children.

Senior Services Director Carter spoke about the Medicaid and Medicare coverage for mental health services. Director Carter advised that telehealth assessments done for clients but they were not accurate assessments and family members were still concerned. Director Carter asked if Beacon can contract with other providers.

Chairman Anderson stated it may not just be the lack of providers at this point, it is the lack of reputation as well, and he also asked Beacon to contract with another provider to meet Klickitat County's DCR needs.

Elected Official – Prosecutor’s Report/Update:

Attendance: Prosecuting Attorney David Quesnel, Director Van Cleave and various county employees and members of the public listening via zoom.

Prosecuting Attorney Quesnel reported that an appeal was filed to the Hearings Examiner’s ruling on the Under Canvass Project. A discussion was held regarding the difficulty of hiring and retaining Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys in Klickitat County due to lower salaries and the rural location. Prosecutor Quesnel provided a proposal to increase salaries. After review of the proposal and further discussion the Board expressed their support of the proposal and in taking action to increase the Attorney’s pay in the coming weeks.


Review of Applicants for the Code Compliance Officer Position:

At 4:31 PM, Chairman Anderson announced that the Board would be convening in Executive Session with HR Director Van Cleave in accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to review the qualifications of a public employee. Chairman Anderson noted that the session would last five (5) minutes. At 4:36 PM it was announced the Executive Session would be extended five (5) minutes.

The Board convened back into Regular Session at 4:41 PM. No action was taken.

Approved (M/Sauter, S/Christopher. Passed unanimously): There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:41 PM.

* 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 Board of County Commissioners Meeting on 5-24-2022.


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



7-5-22
Date