

**MINUTES**

**BOARD OF BENTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Regular Board Meeting  
Tuesday, November 1, 2011, 9:00 a.m.  
Commissioners' Conference Room  
Benton County Courthouse, Prosser, WA

**Present:** Chairman Leo Bowman  
Commissioner James Beaver  
Commissioner Shon Small  
County Administrator David Sparks  
Clerk of the Board Cami McKenzie

**Benton County Employees Present During All or a Portion of the Meeting:** Deputy Administrator Loretta Smith Kelty; Adam Fyall, Sustainable Development Manager; Finance Manager Keith Mercer; Personnel Manager Melina Wenner; Public Works Manager Steve Becken; Planning Manager Mike Shuttleworth; County Engineer Malcolm Bowie; DPA Ryan Brown and DPA Steve Hallstrom; Marianne Ophardt and Lizanne Powers-Hammond, WSU Benton County Extension; Superior Court Judge Cameron Mitchell; Sharon Paradis and Jennifer Bowe, Juvenile Administration; Larry Moser, Public Works; Treasurer Duane Davidson.

**Approval of Minutes**

The Minutes of October 25, 2011 were approved as corrected.

**Review Agenda**

Commissioner Beaver thanked David Sparks and Loretta Smith Kelty for their work on the West Richland disbursement agreement.

**Consent Agenda**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Small moved to approve the consent agenda items “a” through “s”. Commissioner Beaver seconded and upon vote, the Board approved the following:

**Animal Control**

- a. Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept. 137

**Commissioners**

- b. Appointment to the Mid Columbia Library Board of Trustees
- c. Disbursement Agreement w/City of West Richland for Use of Distressed County Tax Credit Funds
- d. Thank You Letters to Redistricting Working Committee

**District Court**

- e. Contract w/Washington Collectors for Collection Services

**Fairgrounds**

- f. Payment Authorization to SimplexGrinnell for Inspection Services

**Human Services**

- g. Agreement, #11/13-SA-NECC-00, w/Nueva Esperanza Counseling Center
- h. Agreement, #PSA-2011/12, w/Nueva Esperanza Counseling Center
- i. Agreement, #11/13-PREV-SHCN-00, w/Safe Harbor Crisis Nursery
- j. Agreement, #11/13-SA-RP-01, w/Recovery Pointe
- k. Contract Amendment, #0963-68016-05, w/DSHS for Substance Abuse & Prevention Treatment

**Prosecuting Attorney**

- l. Employer Contract w/State of Washington for Work Study Program

**Public Works**

- m. Bid Date Authorization for Furnishing and Stockpiling Crushed Screenings
- n. Contract Award to Allstar Construction Group, Inc. for Piert Road Phase II
- o. Authorization for Contract w/Riggle Plumbing, Inc to Re-Route Underground Compressed Air Lines @ Kennewick Road Maintenance Shop

**Sheriff**

- p. Purchase Authorization from Crown Paper and Janitorial Supply, Inc.
- q. Purchase Authorization from Columbia Basin Paper & Supply
- r. Purchase Authorization from Airgas Safety, Inc.
- s. Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept. 121

The Board briefly recessed, reconvening at 9:05 a.m.

**Public Hearing – Six-Year Road Program – 2012-2017**

Malcolm Bowie, Steve Becken, and Larry Moser presented the Six-Year Road Program 2012-2017. Mr. Bowie said it was the same program as proposed in the workshop with some unknowns. He said that statute requires them to adopt a program once a year through a public hearing, prior to the County budget adoption.

As there was no one present to testify, public testimony was closed.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Small moved to approve the 2012-2017 Six-Year Road Program as presented. Commissioner Beaver seconded and upon vote, the motion carried.

**WSU Extension – Programs Update**

Lizann Powers-Hammond and Marianne Ophardt, WSU Extension, updated the Board on the following programs:

- Food Sense
- Master Food Preserver/Food Safety Advisor Program
- New Program – Emergency Preparedness

## **Unscheduled Visitors**

Ruth Swain, West Richland, thanked the Board and staff for help with the disbursement agreement to build the Belmont Industrial Center.

## **Executive Session – Current and Pending Litigation**

The Board went into executive session at 9:33 a.m. for up to 30 minutes with DPA Steve Hallstrom to discuss current and pending litigation. Also present were Franklin County Deputy Prosecutor Janet Taylor; David Sparks, Cami McKenzie, Sharon Paradis, Ryan Brown, Judge Cameron Mitchell, Jennifer Bowe, Eric Lipp, Melina Wenner, and Loretta Smith Kelty. The Board came out at 10:02 a.m. and Mr. Hallstrom announced the Board needed an additional 10 minutes. The Board came out at 10:10 a.m. Mr. Hallstrom said no decisions were made.

## **Commissioner Assignment Update**

### **BCES**

Commissioner Small presented the proposed BCES budget and said that costs were up considerably, (nearly 25% cost increase). He said they were losing money from CSEPP and looking at how to pay for warranties on radios and he asked them to review where they could cut costs; approval of the budget was postpone.

Commissioner Beaver expressed concern about the program and the system that was still not currently working properly. He said it appeared from the budget they were in “growth mode” but they should be looking at how to get by on a smaller budget. He said his message would be to live within your means.

Chairman Bowman said it appeared to him they had less to do with CSEPP now gone and that planning was complete on most projects. He said he was not in favor of any increases and also wanted to know why warranties were so expensive on new radios.

Additionally, Commissioner Small said he sent the most recent revised contract to the Board and Ryan Brown and asked for another review.

### **HB 1886 – Critical Areas**

Commissioner Small said he talked to Commissioner Miller and they think it might be a good idea to opt in.

### **Columbia Basin College**

Commissioner Small reported on his presentation at a Political Science class at CBC (they were meeting with politicians) and they talked a lot about the current budget problems facing the nation.

Commissioner Beaver said his TRIDEC meeting was cancelled. However, reported he had attended the Visitor & Convention Bureau meeting and had been meeting w/local jurisdictions about County UGA boundary issues.

### Budget Issues

Chairman Bowman asked whether the Board should consider a hiring freeze of non-essential personnel and take a look at what that definition was. He said it was his experience with the State that they continued to spend and hope for a bright future. He wanted the County to be proactive so it wouldn't have to act so severely in the next biennium.

Commissioner Beaver said he talked to Melina Wenner about the entire employment base and the attrition issue. He agreed with being proactive and strategic in looking at retirees and how those positions might be filled. He wanted the county administrator to be allowed the flexibility to look at that issue. He said they could make the decision but wanted it to be in concert with the other elected officials.

Commissioner Small agreed it was time to look at the issue. He said he would rather cuts be through attrition than a 6% cut across the board.

### Department Recognition

Chairman Bowman recommended the Board implement a "department recognition program", in addition to "employee of the month" when a particular department stood out. He suggested recognizing a department with presentation of a plaque or similar tribute. Commissioner Beaver said the Board could make that recommendation when they recognized it and pass a resolution or proclamation. The Board agreed.

### WSAC – Legislative Issues

Chairman Bowman presented the latest draft from WSAC on what was going on at the State and specific issues they were requesting the State to consider i.e. no unfunded mandates, reducing costs of public records requests, etc. He also asked Mr. Brown if the Prosecuting Attorney's office could do a summary report on costs related to public records requests. Mr. Brown said they could, but it would need to be reported completely by all departments or would be understated.

Chairman Bowman reiterated the need to have a representative from Benton County frequent Olympia to talk about these issues as the legislative session proceeded. Additionally, he expressed his frustration that he was told by the Board to change the way he did business (start communicating and/or attending meetings by conference call, take a year off) and that it was implied he did all the travel. He said the records indicated he didn't use the most fuel, even with trips to Olympia, however, he was being held up as the example and that he needed to change. He said he didn't see other commissioners reporting on how they were changing by communicating with conference calls, etc. and suggested one way to save money might be for himself and Commissioner Beaver to attend board meetings by video/conference in Kennewick.

Commissioner Beaver said that any thoughts or ideas to change the process and save money would be appreciated and he wanted to hear them. He did suggest communicating by telephone or videoconference as an example of how to save money. He said he probably needed to do a self-evaluation and the Board should come up with examples on how to save travel costs. He indicated it was about coming together to survive and maintain services, but not about gas.

Chairman Bowman said he had never witnessed anyone testify at a hearing in Olympia by conference call and stated the importance of being present where the laws were made to have conversations and brainstorming sessions.

Commissioner Small said he meant Chairman Bowman should find ways to minimize trips when he suggested he take a year off. He indicated the reason he was using a lot of fuel was because he was traveling all around Benton County to learn his new job, dealing with constituents, and getting to know other Benton County departments and elected officials. He said his interest and constituents were in Benton County, not in other states. He commented that Chairman Bowman did a good job in Olympia, but he was not in favor of supplementing the budget for travel.

Chairman Bowman said that when he traveled to Texas for the rail conference, he managed to save the City of Prosser \$23,000/year for the next 10 years; he said he reported that to the Board and an article was written in the paper so the County did have interests in other states.

### **Vouchers**

Check Date: 10/28/2011  
Warrant #: 44537-44749  
Taxes #: 010110114  
Total all funds: \$455,484.11

Total amounts approved by fund can be reviewed in the Benton County Auditor's Office.

### **Resolutions**

- 11-677: Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept. 137
- 11-678: Reappointment of Thomas Callahan to the Mid Columbia Library Board of Trustees
- 11-679: Disbursement Agreement w/City of West Richland for Use of Distressed County Tax Credit Funds
- 11-680: Contract w/Washington Collectors for Collection Services
- 11-681: Payment Authorization to SimplexGrinnell for Inspection Services
- 11-682: Agreement, #11/13-SA-NECC-00, w/Nueva Esperanza Counseling Center
- 11-683: Agreement, #PSA-2011/12, w/Nueva Esperanza Counseling Center
- 11-684: Agreement, #11/13-PREV-SHCN-00, w/Safe Harbor Crisis Nursery
- 11-685: Agreement, #11/13-SA-RP-01, w/Recovery Pointe
- 11-686: Contract Amendment, #0963-68016-05, w/DSHS for Substance Abuse & Prevention Treatment
- 11-687: Bid Date Authorization for Furnishing and Stockpiling Crushed Screenings

- 11-688: Employer Contract w/State of Washington for Work Study Program
- 11-689: Contract Award to Allstar Construction Group, Inc. for Piert Road Phase II
- 11-690: Authorization for Contract w/Riggle Plumbing, Inc to Re-Route Underground Compressed Air Lines @ Kennewick Road Maintenance Shop
- 11-691: Purchase Authorization from Crown Paper and Janitorial Supply, Inc.
- 11-692: Purchase Authorization from Columbia Basin Paper & Supply
- 11-693: Purchase Authorization from Airgas Safety, Inc.
- 11-694: Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0000-101, Dept. 121
- 11-695: Approval of Comprehensive Six-Year Road Program 2012-2017

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 11:31 a.m.

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Clerk of the Board

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Chairman