

MINUTES

BOARD OF BENTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Board Meeting
September 27, 2010, 8:30 a.m.
Commissioners' Conference Room
Benton County Courthouse, Prosser, WA

Present: Chairman James Beaver
Commissioner Leo Bowman
Commissioner Max E. Benitz, Jr.
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, Community Development Coordinator; Finance Manager Keith Mercer; Facilities Manager Roy Rogers; Planning Manager Mike Shuttleworth; Deputy Treasurer Erhiza Rivera; Human Services Administrator Ed Thornbrugh; Auditor Brenda Chilton; Treasurer Duane Davidson; DPA Ryan Brown; Personnel Manager Melina Wenner.

Workshop Agenda

NACO Report/NG 9-1-1

Commissioner Bowman reported on his attendance at the NACO conference and the discussion regarding different aspects of emergency response. He said the County should be considered an immediate responder because if the roads were not open, the emergency services would not be able to get to the destination. He briefly discussed the NG 911 (Next Generation – telephone excise tax) and said there would be a lot of information from that “data gathering” and that Benton County would be light years ahead of others that had not started this process.

Commissioner Benitz said the Emergency Management Board was reviewing the new technology (Phase 3 of NG 911), that it would take years to implement, but now there was a dedicated source of funding.

County Seat Move

Chairman Beaver said he met with the Tri-City Herald Editorial Board and they had expressed concern that Benton County Commissioners had not done an adequate job producing the information that would determine the actions the County would take if the county seat were to move. He said they talked about the study and the range of options and range of costs but said the Commissioners had not publicly come out with what they would do. He said he told the Editorial Board it was his observation that his colleagues would not spend millions of dollars at the start, but he could not speak for them. He said the Entrix study illustrated the starting point

and that is where he would be as a Commissioner. He added that this issue was being driven by the private sector and not driven from the office of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Bowman said when he was elected, he decided it was not his job to increase the size of government, but to control the costs and the purpose was to collectively provide services for those individuals that could not provide for themselves. He said the County had worked to provide the technology so the government would not have to grow. He said the Supreme Court gave the County permission to do what they were currently doing and the law was also changed to state that certain elected officials would need to have an office, not “their office” at the County Seat. Commissioner Bowman said if the County Seat were moved, he would like to move the Commissioners and its offices to Kennewick. He added that the Assessor wanted to move her office (but that it could happen with or without the county seat being changed). The law had been changed and the other offices were no longer related to where the county seat was and he did not believe it would cost a lot of money to move the Commissioners’ office.

Commissioner Bowman also said he had met with many groups and asked them all what they wanted to see move if the issue passed but no one responded. He again said he would see the Commissioners’ office moving and the rest would come in time depending on what was appropriate, what was right at the time, and depending on the Board at the time. He said he had never said he thought the county seat should move, but he believed the Tri-City Herald had already made that decision for him by reporting the County seat should be moved. He said there was no reason to move the county seat unless the public wanted it to.

Commissioner Benitz said the question in front of the Board today was its intent if the County Seat were moved. He said he would follow the letter of the law and its intent. He said the Board made a decision to move forward with an independent consultant firm for what was required by the law. He also said the Board asked the Tri-City Herald to participate in an advisory committee and it declined stating it didn’t want to get involved. He said they shouldn’t chastise the Board for not doing its job when it had done its job. He said if the County Seat were moved, they would need to move the Commissioners office, administrative office, and filing cabinets and furniture and must also move the Public Works Director (County Engineer). He said that in order to accomplish this in 90 days it would cost since there was not space at the Justice Center and the taxpayers needed to know this would take new tax dollars to accomplish this move. He said it would increase the capital facilities and operating budget and he firmly believed there would not be any improved services or emergency services. Again, he said he would follow the law (and the Entrix report stated it would cost of millions of dollars).

The Board briefly recessed, reconvening at 9:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of September 20, 2010 were approved.

Consent Agenda

MOTION: Commissioner Benitz moved to approve the consent agenda items “a” through “n”. Commissioner Bowman seconded and upon vote, the Board approved the following:

Commissioners

- a. State Administration Agreement w/Department of Revenue for 911 Excise Taxes
- b. Transportation Partnership Appointment Letter
- c. Red Mountain Interchange Funding

Human Services

- d. Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0108-101, Dept. 560, 504 & 506

Juvenile

- e. Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0115-101, Dept. 174
- f. Purchase Reimbursement Agreement w/WA State Administrative Office of the Courts
- g. Purchase of Public Safety Communication Equipment Off State Contract No. 02702
- h. Contract w/Benton County Emergency Services for Radio Services

Office of Public Defense

- i. Amended District Court Professional Services Contract w/M Poland

Public Works

- j. Vacation and Abandonment of Unimproved Road Right of Way of Christy Road
- k. Alternate Route for Piert Road Alignment

Superior Court

- l. Proclamation for National Adoption Day
- m. Interlocal Cooperative Agreement w/Administrative Office of the Courts

Other

- n. Time of Remembrance Proclamation

Prosser Planning Process

Mike Shuttleworth said that PEDA was working with the Association of Planning for Washington State on planning for the GAP Road area and they were asking for a letter of support from the County. He said the county Planning staff and city staff would participate in this process.

The Board agreed to sign a letter of support.

Justice Center Water Line Discussion

Roy Rogers discussed replacement of 350 feet of water pipe that runs through the Superior Court area. He said there had been increased leaks in the pipe that had been repaired and he recommended the Board move forward with replacing the water line at an approximate cost of \$40,000 in order to avoid a catastrophe.

The Board agreed with moving forward and requested that Mr. Rogers work with Mr. Sparks on the funding issue.

Vouchers

Check Date: 9/17/2010
Warrant #: 18495-18832
Taxes #: 0910
Total all funds: \$607,565.40

Check Date: 9/24/2010
Warrant #: 19261-19541
Taxes #: 09102
Total all funds: \$1,289,866.02

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

Resolutions

- 10.558 State Administration Agreement w/Department of Revenue for 911 Excise Taxes
- 10.559 Red Mountain Interchange Funding
- 10.560 Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0108-101, Dept. 560, 504 & 506
- 10.561 Line Item Transfer, Fund No. 0115-101, Dept. 174
- 10.562 Purchase Reimbursement Agreement w/WA State Administrative Office of the Courts
- 10.563 Purchase of Public Safety Communication Equipment Off State Contract No. 02702
- 10.564 Contract w/Benton County Emergency Services for Radio Services
- 10.565 Amended District Court Professional Services Contract w/M Poland
- 10.566 Vacation and Abandonment of Unimproved Road Right of Way of Christy Road
- 10.567 Alternate Route for Piert Road Alignment
- 10.568 Proclamation for National Adoption Day
- 10.569 Interlocal Cooperative Agreement w/Administrative Office of the Courts
- 10.570 Time of Remembrance Proclamation

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately at 9:11 a.m.

Clerk of the Board

Chairman