

## **BOCC Wrap-Up / COVID-19 meeting**

**September 10, 2020**

**3 p.m.**

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Fund, Commissioner Jackson, County Manager Erik Martin, Eric Eisenberg, JP Anderson, Megan Eastman, Andy Caldwell, Lara McRea, Alison Puckett, Undersheriff Wes Rethwill, Sara Sons, Scott Smitherman, Tawni Shepherd, Lee Napier, Gary Fredricks

Guests: Claudia Yaw, Larry McGee, Maria Andrews

Recorder: Rieva Lester

### **COVID-19**

Erik Martin reviewed the COVID-19 Weekly Update, a new compilation of COVID-19 information that will be updated weekly.

JP Anderson reviewed the week's data.

Megan Eastman provided an overview of benefits available for county employees and employees across the state.

Megan Eastman gave an overview of the following:

#### **Emergency paid sick leave**

- **For employees who have contracted COVID-19 or are quarantined per a doctor's order:** Up to 80 hours at 100 percent pay. Employees still receive Department of Retirement credits.
- **For employees caring for a child due to school or daycare closures, etc.:** This provides two-thirds pay and employees can make up the remaining one-third using compensable time. Employees do not receive Department of Retirement credits.

#### **Expanded FMLA**

- Available to parents taking care of child. Takes effect after 10 days. Parent can use emergency paid sick leave for the first 10 days, which are not covered.

Megan and Erik Martin reminded county employees to take the survey regarding how COVID-19 is affecting county employees.

Erik noted that the county has learned of additional coronavirus funding and that the deadline for use has been pushed back a month. Erik said funding can be used toward essential employees and that the

reimbursements are retroactive. Erik discussed an upcoming IPAC contract designed to help area schools.

Andy Caldwell said non-congregate housing supplies are filtering in. He said Tier 1 responders will receive disinfectant wipes and that all school nurses will receive N95 masks. Andy said the state has provided 3,000 child-size masks, which will be allocated to area school districts.

JP Anderson discussed rapid testing that will be available at Providence.

Erik Martin left at 3:37 p.m. JP Anderson left at 3:38 p.m.

### **Northern spotted owl comment**

Eric Eisenberg discussed the now-dismissed northern spotted lawsuit. He said the group making the decisions about potentially removing lands from the critical habitat designation is interested in hearing about economically-affected acreage. Eric said the Oregon timber was set aside as a result of recent discussions and that the American Forest Resource Council (AFRC) believes the same could happen in Washington. He said the Secretary makes the call regarding what acreage should be removed from the critical habitat designation.

Eric said Lewis County has 50,000 acres that could be affected.

Eric said AFRC suggested hiring an attorney to represent the three counties and that it estimated the cost at \$20,000 to \$25,000, which would be split between Lewis County and two other counties, Skamania and Klickitat.

Eric said the county would need to highlight economic effects as well as the effects on the species. He suggested a two-page description that addresses two things: (1) the lands Lewis County wishes to have excluded from the critical habitat designation; and (2) how the lands are not valuable to the spotted owl because that species is not present there now, the area is not a conducive environment for the species and the presence of the barred owl makes the habitat unsuitable.

Eric said the county has two questions to consider: Whether to partner with the other two counties and whether to reach out to an individual recommended by Ann Weckback. Commissioner Stamper said he will reach out to Skamania County.

Scott Smitherman said the state Department of Emergency Management has warned of an influx of smoke expected to blanket the area Sept. 11.

Meeting ended at 4:11 p.m.