

County Manager Update

November 15, 2021

11 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Erik Martin, Steve Wohld, Matt Jaeger, Austin Majors, Chris Panush, Josh Metcalf, Lee Grose, Becky Butler, Lee Napier, Tom Stanton, Ross McDowell, Erika Katt, Connie Riker, Tiffanie Morgan, Steve Wohld, Tammy Martin

Guests: Frank Corbin, Eric Rosane, Nic Scott KELA

Recorder: Lara McRea

Budget

Becky Butler discussed a financial contribution request from the Lewis County Seniors and asked the board if they had any consideration for the request for 2022.

Commissioner Swope wanted to make sure it was contingent on an audit being completed. Becky said she will add language to the contribution agreement and bring forward to the Nov. 23 board meeting.

Frank Corbin said the \$50k contribution to the seniors has been contingent on the Lewis County Seniors reporting to the board on a regular basis but the last several meetings have been two months apart. He also said an audit will take place. Frank noted he will no longer be on the seniors' board at the end of December.

Flooding update

Josh Metcalf thanked the road crews for all their hard work during the flood event as they are currently understaffed. He said the one of the biggest issues they had was the number of phone calls for plugged culverts, flooding driveways, flooding houses, etc.

He also noted that road closures are being updated on the Public Works web page.

The most severe damage they noted was to a revetment that was built last year and it has started to deteriorate with this event. They are currently monitoring it. They also sustained additional damage to Shorey Rd. which they are also monitoring.

Ross McDowell discussed what a pineapple express is and atmospheric rivers. They are warmer weather storms that start in the Pacific Ocean and move across the ocean in an upward fashion. The warm weather hits the cooler weather and causes a major disturbance. When it stalls a pineapple express can occur and the event generates a lot of rain.

Ross said they are still in a level 1 activation of the emergency operations center which started on Nov. 3. That is when they started sending out press releases regarding the weather event. DEM had partners that helped coordinate and plan for the event, including several fire districts and the Sheriff's Office.

Roads were needing closed and Hwy 12 ended up closing.

The American Red Cross was part of the logistics and part of the recovery portion.

He said this doesn't look like this will be a state or presidential disaster yet but they will still be gathering information on damages.

Ross said the board's part in this would be with the MAC Group which is a Multi-Agency Command Group. There needs to be a coordinated group with all the jurisdictions being able to make policy and giving delegation of authority.

Ross said the county opened up a sandbag garage as well as Centralia City Hall and the City of Chehalis. Ross also said they will be closing the county's sandbag station today. They waited until flood warning before opening up as future supplies would come from the Army Corps of Engineers.

He noted that Hwy 12 was closed for most of Friday and Saturday but it has re-opened.

Ross reviewed the flood levels for the local rivers.

Ross said the county will likely not get assistance from FEMA or the state unless it is lumped with other storms. DEM will still gather damage information from departments.

Erika Katt said they had sandbag stations on the east side. They are also updating DEM's main webpage with current sandbag locations.

ARPA Funding request IT/Courts

Becky noted that she and Erik have reviewed the ARPA funding application request from the courts and the request fits in the ARPA guidelines. The courts are requesting an additional \$248k to finish off the court project they started last year. She said the request is outside the work that EDC is doing.

Erik said when the board set up the initial guidelines on area of funding there was a section for internal improvements and requests such as this. Becky will get the board budget figures and what has been obligated to date. This request is \$248k and it would supplement a little over \$600k that has already been spent to improve the courts for the pandemic and for remote work.

Matt Jaeger said most of the funding for this project came from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). This request also supports the jail as well.

The board noted they are fine with moving this item forward to the next ARPA meeting agenda for further discussion.

Legislative agenda

Erik reviewed the legislative agenda with the board. There are a couple of requests for funding that the county would like to bring forward to the legislators. One is for 911 radio infrastructure and specifically phase 1A of the engineering study that was done which was \$1.5 million.

He also discussed the North Lewis County Interchange request.

Erik discussed having a joint funding request for infrastructure projects or having specific individual project requests.

Josh discussed fish passage projects.

Erik will move fish passages under requests for funding on the legislative agenda.

Broadband

Erik noted they have the final application from the state broadband office. There was a meeting with Dale Merten from ToledoTel last Friday and they covered 90% percent of the application at the meeting.

There is a webinar on Wednesday to get more feedback on the process.

Lewis County will need to provide information about how they intend to partner with ToledoTel. The county would be entering into a legal and financial arrangement. The agreement potentially involves the lease of real property.

911

Erik reported that HR is in contact with a recruiting firm for the 911 Administrator position.

Erik said he will be attending the Fire Commissioner's meeting tonight and will discuss Phase 2 of the 911 study that Deltawrx is conducting. He will be asking for participation and support for that effort.

Internal Services

Steve Wohld noted that Discover Lewis County (DLC) is looking at ways to streamline tourism throughout Lewis County. He is also looking at outsourcing these efforts possibility to a non-profit tourism agency or a private tourism organization. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) would be posted and agencies would submit applications.

Commissioner Pollock said that government should be focused on infrastructure, and safety elements and this type of service could be better served by other agencies that would be more suited for this type of work.

Steve said he would look at the next steps.

The meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m.