

## **Mayors' Update**

**March 1, 2024**

**9:00 a.m.**

Present: Commissioner Brummer, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Ryan Barrett, Tripp Muldrow FAICP, Partner of Arnett Muldrow, Toledo Mayor Cherie DeVore, Centralia City Manager Rob Hill, Todd Chaput, Chehalis Mayor Tony Ketchum, Becky Butler, Caitlyn Harrington of Senator Murray's office, Cameron Kockritz of Rep. Gluesenkamp Perez's office, Mitchell Roland, Paul Mason of WSDOT, Lee Napier, Mindy Brooks, Vader Mayor Joey Schey, Josh Metcalf

Guest(s):

Recorder: Tammy Martin

**Public comment:** None

### **Roundtable:**

- Centralia City Manager Rob Hill said the City of Centralia has begun Phase I of the Scheuber Rd. project.
- Cameron Kockritz said there was a grant received for Public Health. She also said the office is gearing up for military academy nominations April 4<sup>th</sup> at the Veterans Memorial Museum in Chehalis.
- Caitlin Harrington said Senator Murray's office is focusing on the fiscal year 2024 budget.
- Cameron Kockritz said it is beneficial to apply for grants from each of the representative offices.
- John Anderson from Governor Inslee's office said the new criminal justice training center CJTC recently opened in Vancouver. John said the last day of the Legislative session is March 7. John said budgetary matters are still being discussed at the legislative level.
- Todd Chaput said there is a bowling tournament with 12 teams to raise money and awareness of Discover Lewis County. They are also looking to raise funds for the CET team.
- Paul Mason from WSDOT said the Skookumchuck Bridge had some emergency work recently completed. There will be work on I-5 through Lewis County beginning on June 1.

Countywide tourism strategic plan:

Tripp Muldrow said this is the 16<sup>th</sup> project his company has worked on in Washington State. Tripp said he was able to visit the majority of Lewis County and his goal is to expand tourism offerings. This would bring people from outside of Lewis County and provide tourism dollars. Data would be tracked and then shared with cities and towns as well as the Economic Alliance to determine the demographics that marketing should focus on. He said there was \$4.3 million non-recurring visitors from 2021-present. Tripp said Discover Lewis County's online presence was the number three identified way tourists said they found and visited Lewis County. Todd said he is looking to form a petition to add flexibility and possibly a TPA to change the allocation of lodging tax dollars. Tripp said single family units converting to

short term rentals accounts for majority of Lewis County's lodging tax revenue and any additional fees would only apply to lodging that had 40 or more units. Todd would like to present the information to the Board in the future about the funds generated and usage of those funds. He feels funds used towards infrastructure would benefit Lewis County. Commissioner Brummer said he would not support a TPA. Commissioner Brummer said lodging tax already collects over a \$1 million dollars annually. Commissioner Brummer said if the fees would actually go towards trails instead of consultants, he might consider offering his support.

Meeting adjourned 9:55 a.m.