

Mayors' Meeting

February 1, 2019

9:02 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Jackson, Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Fund, County Manager Erik Martin, Public Works Director Josh Metcalf, Napavine City Councilman Shawn O'Neill, Chehalis City Manager Jill Anderson, Dena Horton of Sen. Maria Cantwell's office, Dale Lewis of U.S. Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler's office, Chehalis Mayor Dennis Dawes, Wes Anderson of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Kimberly Pincheira of WSDOT, Lewis Economic Development Council Executive Director Matt Matayoshi, Christine Nhan of Sen. Murray's office, Vader Mayor Ken Smith, Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh, Lee Grose of Packwood, Centralia Port Commissioner Peter Lahmann, Chehalis City Manager Rob Hill, Winlock Mayor Don Bradshaw, Centralia Mayor Lee Coumbs

Guests: Various members of the press and public, including Jared Wenzelburger, Alex Brown, Lynette Hoffman, Carol Brock and Anne Randt

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Attendees introduced themselves.

Commissioner Fund noted that there is a push to make the razor clam the state clam. She said there also is talk about legislation regarding wolves in Eastern Washington.

Commissioner Fund gave an update on matters before the state Legislature, including:

- Public disclosure for the state Legislature (SB 5784)
- Elections (HB 1209/SB 5063 – pre-paid ballot postage, HB 1291/SB 5073 – state reimbursement of election costs, and HB 1481/SB 5500 – state reimbursement of election costs and payment of prepaid postage returns)
- Broadband (HB 1498/SB 5511 and SB 5085)
- Retirement – PERS/TRS (HB 1390/SB 5400 – increase benefits)
- Indigent Defense (SB 5098/HB 1086)
- Orcas

Erik Martin discussed the proposed sweep of roads funds.

Commissioner Fund outlined how individuals can keep track of bills filtering through the state Legislature.

Commissioner Fund discussed WSAC's potential litigation regarding ballot boxes. She noted that Lewis County's request for ballot box reimbursement was denied.

Commissioner Fund, Josh Metcalf and Erik Martin discussed concerns regarding culvert replacement costs.

Roundtable

Napavine City Councilman Shawn O'Neill said the city has a new police mascot. He said an apartment complex is in the works.

Chehalis City Manager Jill Anderson said the city is working through issues with its fire station. She said the city also is working to secure grants for Recreation Park, exploring expanded water rights and working with a potential developer for property along Interstate 5.

Dena Horton of Sen. Maria Cantwell's office discussed recent talks with the Seattle-based Army Corps of Engineers regarding concerns related to the permit process. She said the Corps is addressing deficiencies identified in a recent audit of the Seattle branch. She said a permitting session is planned for Feb. 20 in Centralia.

Dale Lewis of U.S. Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler's office said the Seattle Corps is adopting the Standard Local Operating Procedures for Endangered Species (SLOPES) process used in the Portland Corps.

Chehalis Mayor Dennis Dawes said it's troubling that the Seattle Corps and Portland Corps don't use the same set of rules. He said the airport has signed an anchor and that the city is working on realignments. He said work continues on the Discover Children's Museum. Mayor Dawes discussed exploring grants to reduce bottlenecks at the railroad tracks. He said paving projects are planned, troubles with the city's fire station are being addressed, and annexations are in the works.

Wes Anderson of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) gave an update on planned road projects.

Lewis Economic Development Council Executive Director Matt Matayoshi said the economy appears to be strong. He said trucking companies, a horse-related firm and a biotech firm are eyeing Lewis County. He discussed the EDC's legislative agenda, as well as the upcoming Smart Tank event. He said the EDC's annual banquet is Feb. 21 at the Jester Auto Museum.

Christine Nhan of Sen. Murray's office discussed work to promote apprenticeship programs as well as the senator's work on the Paycheck Variance Act regarding the Equal Pay Act. Christine said Feb. 15 is the lawmakers' next budget deadline.

Vader Mayor Ken Smith discussed the city's extensive work to secure grant funding for its water treatment plant. He said the city also has been working on paving projects.

Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh discussed the city's upcoming Vision Toledo meeting.

Lee Grose discussed Packwood's appreciation for help regarding the flood plain. He said Packwood just celebrated its most successful crab feed ever. He said three new businesses have opened in the area. He said the Mountain Festival will be the first weekend in May. He said the Dual Pro will take place in Packwood.

Public Works Director Josh Metcalf discussed upcoming projects, including those on Pigeon Springs Road, Silverbrook Road, Borst Avenue and North Fork Road. He said the new Vader tank is in and that work continues to ready it.

County Manager Erik Martin said the Flood Control Zone District continues work on the water retention facility. He said RES America continues its work on the wind farm. He said the county is working on its Capital Facilities Plan and Strategic Planning.

Centralia Port Commissioner Peter Lahmann said work continues on the off-ramp. He said the Historical Society is holding its annual meeting Feb. 2. He said a Vietnam veterans group plans an open house on Feb. 9.

Centralia City Manager Rob Hill said the city continues work on the historic train depot. He said the 1.3 million square-foot distribution center is slated for completion on April 1.

Winlock Mayor Don Bradshaw said the city is wrapping up work on its water line extension and its water treatment plant. He invited the group to the evening's potato bar.

Centralia Mayor Lee Coumbs discussed the removal of Kemp Hall and three other buildings. He said six or eight more will be demolished to make room for a new sports complex. He said phase II of China Creek will kick off soon.

Commissioner Stamper discussed an upcoming meeting regarding charging stations. He said he is working on getting Toledo added to the Forest Service map of routes to Mount St. Helens.

Commissioner Fund discussed the Timberland Regional Library's upcoming TRL Community Chats events. She cautioned that TRL has abandoned talks of closure but that it still is looking at reduced hours. Mayor Bradshaw said TRL also is still exploring unmanned hours, which would require the use of key cards. Commissioner Fund also noted that FEMA has reimbursed the county for the Chandler Bridge, which washed away 11.5 years ago.

Commissioner Jackson discussed the recent County Road Administration Board (CRAB) meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.