

Mayors' Meeting

September 7, 2018

9:01 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Edna J. Fund, Commissioner Gary Stamper, Commissioner Bobby Jackson, County Manager Erik Martin, Pe Ell Mayor Lonnie Willey, Dale Lewis of U.S. Rep. Herrera Beutler's office, Wes Anderson of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Centralia City Manager Rob Hill, Chehalis City Manager Jill Anderson, Sync Lead Staff / Policy and Data Manager for the state Public Works Board Buck Lucas, Morton Mayor Dan Mortensen, Winlock Mayor Don Bradshaw, Centralia Mayor Lee Coumbs, Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh, Chehalis Mayor Dennis Dawes, Human Services Executive Director Colleen Kuhn, Lewis County EDC Executive Director Matt Matayoshi, Rebecca Tripp of the EDC

Guests: Susan DeLaire, Elijah White, Douglas Reed, Linda Williams

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Lee Napier, Director of Community Development, discussed a shared services agreement between the small entities throughout Lewis Counties, which allows the smaller entities to coordinate the sharing of staffing coverage, tools, etc. Lee said the agreement will expire at the end of the year and asked if representatives of the area entities would be interested in continuing the agreement for another five years. Lee said it could move forward as a mere addendum. Members of the group supported moving forward with the agreement.

Buck Lucas, Sync Lead Staff / Policy and Data Manager for the state Public Works Board, discussed regionalization of water utilities. He said the state Legislature has tasked the group with fixing infrastructure across the state and that water is the group's first focus. He noted that Lewis County's sharing of services and staff sets an example for others across the state. Buck said consolidation and shared services agreements are viewed as the best ways to help small entities that are struggling.

Commissioner Stamper left at 9:21 a.m. and returned at 9:22 a.m.

Buck said the state Public Works Board is trying to streamline and standardize applications and interest rates to help small entities. He said future improvements could include website portals, revamped applications, etc. Buck encouraged members of the group to provide feedback regarding their experiences using a shared services agreement.

Colleen Kuhn, Executive Director for the Human Services Council, discussed the Accessible Transportation Coalition Initiative (ATCI). Colleen said her entity serves Lewis, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz,

TO-DO LIST / RECAP

Mayors: Send a list of communities' needs to Matt Matayoshi by Sept. 21 so he can present to the lawmakers one document outlining all of Lewis County's needs.

Legislative Roundtable topics: Broadband, public records requests, the Office of the Chehalis Basin, jail costs, LEOFF funding, PERS and culverts

Pacific and Grays Harbor counties. Colleen said the coalition is designed to ensure all individuals have access to transportation. She said ATCI represents one of 10 communities across the nation to receive an ESPA grant. She said ATCI's grant totals \$100,000, which the group plans to use to help develop accessible, coordinated and sustainable regional transportation choices.

Commissioner Fund invited members of the group to the Oct. 5, 2018, Legislative Roundtable.

EDC Executive Director Matt Matayoshi discussed a recent meeting with area internet service providers (ISPs) regarding CERB funding available. He said the concern is that ISPs could spend the money on expansion and then not attract the needed customers. Matt suggested entities send him by Sept. 21, 2018, a list of their communities' needs so he can present to the lawmakers one document outlining all of Lewis County's needs.

Chehalis Mayor Dennis Dawes said public records requests need to be addressed and that small governments need to be included in the Legislature's conversations about common-sense fixes to public disclosure. Members of the group echoed those sentiments.

Commissioner Jackson left at 9:57 a.m.

Chehalis City Manager Jill Anderson said the Office of the Chehalis Basin's needs also need to be addressed. Commissioner Fund said the OCB will be meeting with state lawmakers.

Commissioner Fund discussed the need to address unfunded mandates regarding the jail.

Centralia Mayor Lee Coumbs said the LEOFF retirement program also should be addressed. Commissioner Fund said PERS also needs to be reviewed.

Mayor Dawes discussed a pre-LEOFF tax that Chehalis collects. He said something similar could be a possible fix.

Commissioner Jackson returned at 10:03 a.m.

County Manager Erik Martin discussed the thousands of culverts across the county that will need to be replaced with a bridge-like structure. He said the county fears that it will become a mandate.

Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh said the cities within Cowlitz County pool their money and then take turns with larger projects using that pool.

Roundtable

Morton Mayor Dan Mortensen discussed upgrades to the city park, including new playground equipment. He said the city's water tower is under construction and that the city received a grant to install sidewalks. He said the city has been given a building and may relocate City Hall to the new site.

Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh discussed Toledo's recent festivals and Walk in the Park event.

Chehalis City Manager Jill Anderson said the city's summer programs have been well-received. She said the city has applied for a grant to undergo park improvements. She discussed asbestos removal of the

Chehalis fire station and noted that Lewis County Fire District #6 is hosting the fire department as repairs take place. She also noted transportation projects are taking place across town.

Chehalis Mayor Dennis Dawes said the Chamber Way overpass project will be completed by the end of fall. He said the Hands-On Children's Museum project is moving forward and that construction of one of two new schools has been completed. He said a developer is eyeing a 17-acre site in Chehalis.

Lewis County EDC Executive Director Matt Matayoshi discussed the EDC's "Smart Tank" event held in June. He discussed work to attract business to the region.

Winlock Mayor Don Bradshaw said the bridge-opening ceremony took place earlier in the day. He said the city has issued a call for bids to extend water service to the freeway. He noted that the city has the funding to finish paving but has not been able to secure a contractor. He said a landowner has broken ground on 110 acres and plans to build an RV park between Knowles Road and Interstate 5.

Centralia Mayor Lee Coumbs discussed a new building being constructed in Centralia. He said there are plans to expand the sports center. He said the George Washington statue has been installed.

Centralia City Manager Rob Hill thanked the Flood Authority for its help on the China Creek project. He said work has begun on a new substation.

Commissioner Stamper congratulated Chehalis for its new schools. He said there are plans to mark the freeway exit as access to Mount St. Helens. He and Mayor Dawes thanked WSDOT for its efforts on recent transportation projects.

Commissioner Fund discussed the work the Lewis County Health Department does. She also discussed boosts in local tourism as well as the recently released Lewis County Trail Guide.

Commissioner Bobby Jackson congratulated Chehalis for its new school.

Pe Ell Mayor Lonnie Willey said Pe Ell has constructed a new gazebo. He said FEMA money will be used to repair the city's dam. He invited the group to pumpkin-chucking planned for Sept. 30.

Dale Lewis of U.S. Rep. Herrera Beutler's office discussed efforts Herrera Beutler is working on, including forest management, sea lions and a distillery bill.

WSDOT representative Wes Anderson recapped some of WSDOT's current and upcoming projects, including the Chamber Way overpass, guardrails and trees along I-5, and roundabouts on Rush Road.

County Manager Erik Martin discussed his new role with the county. He said the Coal Creek bank stabilization project is under way and under budget. He said a public meeting regarding Borst Avenue is planned for Sept. 18. He said the county has begun the process to replace him as the Public Works Director and that the county is looking to map out its capital facilities plan. He said the county is working on its budget. He commended the Sheriff's Office, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and the Lewis County courts for their swift and thorough work on Randolph Graham's murder trial.

Commissioner Fund invited the group to the Chehalis Basin Strategy presentation planned for 2 p.m. Sept. 19.

Meeting ended at 11:01 a.m.