

PA Update

March 17, 2020

11:10 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Fund, Commissioner Jackson, County Manager Erik Martin, Jonathan Meyer, Steve Wohld, Janelle Kambich, Cullen Gatten, Steve Walton, Daleyn Coleman, Becky Butler, Amber Smith (by phone), Kevin McDowell (by phone), Eric Eisenberg (by phone)

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Jonathan Meyer said the Board of County Commissioners has the authority to issue mandatory closures. He said violating the governor's order would be a gross misdemeanor.

Jonathan said the county should review calendars for upcoming events to determine what, if any, steps should be taken.

Jonathan discussed staffing needs. He said Janelle Kambich is leaving. He said he'd like to split her position back into two positions: office administrator and paralegal. He said he'll also need to add a legal assistant. He said he is requesting an additional \$10,500.

Daleyn Coleman said HR will need to meet with the PA's Office to address any compression issues. Eric Eisenberg said there would be no compression issues if a top-level paralegal were to make the equivalent of a new DPA.

The commissioners said they'd like the PA's Office to work with HR before making a decision. Daleyn noted that paralegals can be paid out of class until a determination is made.

The commissioners said they would meet again the following day to give a decision.

Jonathan asked if the county can prepay for county employees' college tuition instead of paying for it afterward. Daleyn said it would be outside of policy but doable. The commissioners said they would further discuss the matter March 18.

Amber Smith said Water-Sewer District 5 has signed the transfer agreement. She said the county is waiting for the real estate agreement with Ditre Properties. Erik Martin said the landowner's representative met with him the previous day and provided comparables to consider. Amber discussed the possibility of setting a hearing, even though the agreement is not yet in place.

Erik Martin said HR and the PA's Office are drafting HR policies.

At 11:39 a.m., Commissioner Stamper announced that the Board was going into Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) for 10 minutes to discuss pending and / or potential litigation.

At 11:49 a.m., the Board extended Executive Session for 5 minutes.

At 11:54 a.m., the Board extended Executive Session for 5 minutes.

Executive Session ended at 11:59 a.m. Commissioner Stamper noted that no decisions had been made.

Cullen Gatten suggested the commissioners reaffirm their emergency declaration from March 16, 2020.

Commissioner Fund made a motion to reaffirm the commissioners' decision to declare Lewis County in a state of emergency (Resolution 20-100) as related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commissioner Jackson seconded.

Motion passed 3-0.

Commissioner Stamper said he would like to continue discussions about the northern spotted owl litigation the following day.

Erik Martin said he plans to present to the BOCC later in the day a resolution to close county buildings to the public.

Chief of Internal Services Steve Wohld said Zoom likely would not work due to staffing.

Cullen and Jonathan discussed OPMA concerns. Jonathan said he feels the county can shut the doors as long as the resolution includes specific language that cites the governor's declaration as well as RCWs governing open public meetings.

Rieva Lester suggested a call-in line from which the public can listen. Jonathan suggested having a TV station broadcast it.

Commissioner Fund said she'd like to tell the public the ways they can contact the commissioners.

Commissioner Jackson said he will follow up with the radio station later in the day.

Commissioner Fund played a phone message from Mayor Sue Luond, who said she is not in favor of a government shutdown.

Commissioner Jackson said the Auditor and Treasurer will use ballot drop boxes to collect payments, etc.

Erik said the county's priority should be government services. He said meetings can be canceled if needed.

Erik asked the PA's Office to attend the 4 p.m. March 17 COVID-19 update.

Meeting ended at 12:38 p.m.