

ESC / Directors' Update / COVID-19

August 20, 2020

3 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Fund, Commissioner Jackson, County Manager Erik Martin, Tammy Martin, Lara McRea, Lee Napier, Larry Grove, Eric Eisenberg, Cullen Gatten, Katharine Humphrey, Tom Stanton, Scott Tinney, Brittini Rogers, Alison Puckett, Gary Fredricks, Undersheriff Wes Rethwill, Graham Gowing, Kim Amrine, Megan Sibbert, Scott Smitherman, Marni Larson, Katie Conradi, Dianne Dorey, Meja Handlen, Susie Palmateer, Grace Jimenez, Casey Mauermann, Daleyn Coleman, Darci Miller, Tailor Albright

Recorder: Rieva Lester

ESC

Gov. Inslee's letter regarding flooding: Commissioner Fund and Erik Martin discussed a recent letter from Gov. Inslee in which he announced that the state had paused the SEPA regarding the Chehalis Basin project. However, they noted, documentation of mitigation efforts for the water retention facility still continues.

Remote learning / work-from-home policies (including policies related to at-home learning for employees with school-age children): Jonathan Meyer suggested creating education hubs to accommodate employees' school-age children.

President's executive orders: The group briefly discussed a presidential order delaying the collection of payroll taxes.

Salary Commission report:

Prosecuting Attorney Jonathan Meyer said the Salary Commission's recommendations regarding 10 percent raises for the commissioners went into effect immediately, whereas the commissioners would need to decide whether to approve the recommended raises for the remaining electeds.

Clerk Scott Tinney said it would be unconscionable for the commissioners to ignore the Salary Commission's recommendations regarding the electeds' salaries.

Treasurer Arny Davis spoke in favor of approving the pay increases and suggested tying electeds' salaries to the judges' salaries to take the politics out of the equation.

Commissioner Stamper asked if the decision can be deferred. He was told the commissioners' raises are immediate and not subject to BOCC approval.

Commissioner Fund outlined the history leading up to the Salary Commission report. She said she is not comfortable approving raises during times of economic uncertainty and would prefer to review the raise recommendation during the budget process.

Commissioner Jackson echoed Commissioner Fund's sentiments and said he is not prepared to approve the recommended raises. All three commissioners agreed that the other electeds were overdue for pay increases, noting that county employees have received cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) while the electeds have not.

Jonathan said it sounds like to commissioners trust themselves to redeposit their raises into the community but that they are not allowing the same for the other electeds for whom the Salary Commission reviewed salaries.

Commissioner Stamper said he is in support of approving the Salary Commission's recommendations.

In response to a question from Commissioner Fund, Becky Butler said it is difficult to pinpoint the budgetary impacts of the pandemic. She noted that Coronavirus Relief Funds expire Oct. 31. Becky noted that the deadline could be extended and that additional funding may become available.

Strategic Plan update: Erik Martin said a draft will be available soon.

Matt Patana said the courthouse elevator will be down for repairs Aug. 31.

Directors' Update

Josh Metcalf discussed the proposed vacation of a portion of the Theo. Hoss Road No. 132.

Matt Jaeger discussed a resolution authorizing the Director of Information Technology Services to execute a purchase order with Ednetics and Cisco. Matt said the hope is that the Administrative Office of the Courts will fund the project using its portions of CRF.

Andy Caldwell discussed a resolution adopting of the August 12, 2020, Hydrological Drought Plan as an Annex to the Lewis County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Lee Napier discussed a resolution to appoint Frank Corbin to the Lewis County Planning Commission.

The commissioners said they would like to send a thank you letter to the member who stepped down.

JP Anderson discussed a resolution to approve a contract amendment between Lewis County and Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason, & Thurston Counties.

JP Anderson discussed a resolution to approve an amendment for CJTA Funded Treatment and Recovery Support Services between Washington Health Care Authority and Lewis County.

JP Anderson discussed a resolution to approve an amendment between Salvation Army and Lewis County to extend duration and add funding for the Homeless Shelter and Isolation & Quarantine Facility.

Commissioner Fund discussed a resolution to approve a .09 ("Distressed Counties") grant agreement with the Port of Chehalis for the Tenant Improvement Package project.

Tamara Hayes discussed a resolution to approve a \$150,000 grant to Breeze to provide broadband services in Lewis County.

Commissioner Fund made a motion to move two consent items and nine deliberation items to the Monday, Aug. 24, 2020, BOCC agenda.

Commissioner Jackson seconded the motion.

Motion passed 3-0.

COVID-19

Cases, response, supplies, services, policies, Coronavirus Relief Funding: JP Anderson said the county has learned of 13 new confirmed cases.

Becky Butler provided an update on possible funding opportunities.

Steve Wohld discussed a new face shield available as an accommodation for those unable to wear a traditional face mask.

Becky said the county's new grant for nonprofit affected by the pandemic is now available.

JP Anderson discussed a planned meeting to outline a plan to reopen schools.

Katharine Humphrey said she dislikes a proposal to create learning hubs for the children of county employees. She said this will deepen an existing divide.

Jonathan said his proposal was designed to keep PA staff working during the school closures.

Commissioner Stamper said he would like the commissioners to submit a letter of support regarding Twin Transit's effort to secure a grant to extend services.

Wednesday Workshop

The commissioners agreed to provide Twin Transit a letter of support regarding its effort to secure grants to establish a direct link from Centralia (Mellen Street) to Intercity Transit in Tumwater.

Becky said the cost to the county to approve the Salary Commission's recommendations regarding the other electeds' raises would be \$20,000 for the remainder of the year.

The commissioners said they would revisit the topic the following week.

Meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.