

Mayors' Meeting

January 8, 2021

9:00 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Erik Martin, Angie Hartmann, Kirsten York, Centralia Port Commissioner Peter Lahmann, Becky Butler, Centralia Mayor Sue Luond, Chehalis Mayor Dennis Dawes, Jill Anderson, JP Anderson, Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh, Edna Fund, Meja Handlen, Centralia City Manager Rob Hill, Wes Anderson DOT, Sarah Kohout, Pam Peiper, Lee Napier, Morton Mayor Dan Mortensen, Lara McRea

Guest(s): Member (s) from the Chronicle

Recorder: Tammy Martin

Chehalis Mayor Dennis Dawes said there will be a TCOMM general meeting in February. Mayor Dawes asked for better representation for the cities. Commissioner Stamper said that he would provide better communication and have a comprehensive report after the meeting.

Meja Handlen and Kirsten York both spoke about the assistance contract. This contract with the Community Action Council, provides funding for those needing help with rent and utility assistance based on their income and eligibility. Kirsten York said that the Community Action Council (CAC) has guidelines that are both city specific and county specific for funding. The CAC will provide information with requirements to apply to Meja Handlen and that information will then be distributed to each city in Lewis County.

JP Anderson said that any of the vaccines that come to Lewis County will go to health care facilities. Some entities are in process of ensuring communicating the availability of supplies. There is considerable coordination between providers to distribute the vaccines based on Washington state guidance. JP said that Lewis County received 975 doses preparing the system of distribution by partnering with area pharmacies in order to distribute supplies when they do become available.

Data issues for reporting COVID -19 cases are still being fixed. This is amounting to higher numbers of confirmed cases and deaths.

Phase three opening will be different than previously proposed based on new state guidance from the governor. Washington State Department of Health is looking for benchmarks of decreased amounts of positive cases by 10% in a 2 week period, hospital admissions being on the decline and the overall ICU capacity by region. Lewis County is grouped with Thurston County, Pacific County and Grays Harbor County. These statistics will be available through a Washington State risk assessment dashboard.

Mayor Dawes stated it was hard to trust information when there is miscommunication and not enough information. He feels there needs to be better tracking of statistics so all counties are up to date and on the same page. Mayor Mortensen wanted to make sure that storage was not an issue for future

vaccines. JP said storage wasn't an issue at this time because there are several options available for storage. Mayor Dobosh is concerned about the amount of vaccines available.

Chehalis Mayor Dawes said there has been an interest in building activity in the city and he is looking towards a positive future. He has invited Governor Inslee to Lewis County to discuss with the mayors as well as other citizens.

Centralia Mayor Sue Luond was grateful the city dodged major flooding. Approximately 42,000 people viewed the Borst Park Lights. Mark Westley was recently selected to replace Peter Abbarno. They are looking to turf the baseball fields. Mayor Luond is concerned the perception of other states being reopened. She would like for the Governor to hear from local legislators.

Morton Mayor Mortensen provided updates for the current sewer system. They are still looking for funding to complete the project. He's been hearing from local businesses about current frustrations due to the impact of COVID-19. There have been several business that have had to permanently close.

Toledo Mayor Dobosh reiterated a lot of what Mayor Mortensen said. Unfortunately they have lost businesses as well. He's disappointed in the pushback from the state to keep businesses closed.

Centralia City Manager Rob Hill noted the Sports Hub has expanded its courts and the turfing of the nine ball fields will be to its advantage.

Centralia Port Commissioner Peter Lahmann asked on behalf of the Historical Society if there were any individuals looking to seek membership of the Board.

Wes Anderson WSDOT Assistant Area Engineer provided updates on projects that affect the community. State Route 6 has a fish passage project including bridge footing and two fish barrier removals. There will be shoulder closures at the Rush Road interchange to work on luminaires. State Route 508 will be work on an underdrain and slope stabilization for about 2 months. State Route 507 has a project that will require partnership between WSDOT and the City of Centralia for ADA improvements to the sidewalks on Marsh Street, Pearl Street, Tower Street, and Centralia College Boulevard in Centralia. Wes suggested watching the website for current projects and updates.

Pam Peiper said there are letters of support for firefighter safety assistance grants. If needed, please reach out to your representative.

Sarah Kohout seconded the letters of support for the firefighter safety assistance grants.

Commissioner Pollock is looking forward to the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines.

Commissioner Swope encouraged participants of the meeting to reach out to the new EDC director Richard DeBolt and let him know what kinds of businesses each city is looking for.

Commissioner Stamper thanked the Lewis County schools for working with LCPHSS and care providers for making some form of in-person learning possible. He also commended the cities for their holiday spirit. Commissioner Stamper welcomed the new EDC director Richard DeBolt.

Centralia Mayor Sue Luond spoke to the Boundary Review Board appointee. They have two people seeking to apply. Glenda Forga and Larry McGee both have sent in applications. Centralia Mayor Sue Luond made a motion for the Mayors to approve of the nomination for Glenda Forga, Chehalis Mayor Dennis Dawes seconded. Toledo Mayor Steve Dobosh and Morton Mayor Dan Mortensen agreed.

Motion passed 4-0.

Meeting adjourned 10:42 a.m.