

County Manager Update

March 15, 2021

11:12 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Erik Martin, Becky Butler, Chris Panush, Steve Wohld, Matt Jaeger, Lee Napier, Meja Handlen

Guest(s): Frank Corbin, Joh Jones, Edna Fund, Morgan Arts Centre, Member(s) from the Chronicle.

Recorder: Tammy Martin

Discussion about the American rescue Plan (ARP) act funds. Erik would like to discuss general use of funds. He also said Lewis County will have until the end of 2024 to use \$15.7 million. Erik said he was open to ideas and suggestions.

Becky said there is a meeting to discuss COVID-19 funds on Wednesday. Looking at one-time revenue with one-time costs instead of having a long-term impact and not being able to pay it 2025. Becky is concerned about staffing for funds and project management. These could be temp positions. Internal and external projects will be discussed as well. These funds are different from CRF funds. We receive the funds up-front vs. with the Corona Virus Relief fund, where Lewis County had to seek reimbursements.

Commissioner Pollock said she would hope to consider long-term assets such as drinking water needs, water rights, renewable sources and other assets for the county that can be used in the long term. She is leaning towards long-term sustainability.

Becky said the county could partner with the cities to ensure projects aren't duplicated.

Public Health could possibly receive additional funds as well and can determine they can utilize those pots of money.

Erik said Josh Metcalf is drafting a letter to Dave Fleckenstein in regards to the airport study. Commissioner Stamper would like for the Toledo Airport to be considered for general aviation, not commercial or cargo traffic.

Erik said staff has compiled an infrastructure wish list to send to Senator Murray. He said it included WSDOT projects. Asks from Lewis Count concerning WSDOT projects would be considered additional support. This helps create a list of needs and the ability to tailor them to fit into the categories they would like to fund. The city of Winlock submitted a culvert project. Commissioner Swope wanted to have the Packwood Sewer as a more priority and improvements are needed for the Enchanted Valley / Vader water System. Improvements to both Vader and the Packwood systems would allow growth for the cities if they were approved.

Chris said 9 of the county's 13 contracts with collective bargaining groups have been signed and that he expects them to be finished up this week. He does not foresee any issues. Chris thanked the Auditor's office and Megan for all of their hard work and said the contracts should be finalized soon.

Erik said for the next few weeks starting March 25, 2021, vaccines will be distributed 3 days a week through April 25, 2021, and the medical teams will distribute approximately 1000 vaccines each week. He said there has been great partnerships with Birdseye Medical, Providence, Public Health, the city of Centralia, United Way and Twin Transit.

Erik said going forward, press release frequency for COVID-19 updates will be once a week. Commissioner Pollock agreed that this was a great idea with vaccines being distributed and positive testing numbers are declining.

The combined user committee (CUC) will receive additional information and then will bring their determinations back to the board to make a decision.

Community Development staffing has seen some recent turnovers and Lee is trying to gage actual needs. Lee said she will brief the Board if changes are needed. There have been openings in the planning staff as well. She is committed to providing a high level of service.

Adjourned 12:09 p.m.