

## **COVID-19 Update**

**May 5, 2021**

**10:35 p.m.**

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Erik Martin, Becky Butler, Richard DeBolt, JP Anderson, Matt Jaeger, Tailor Albright, Lara McRea, Suzette Smith, Willie Painter, Meja Handlen

Guests: Edna J. Fund, Frank Corbin, Nic Scott

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Becky Butler discussed the county's plans for allocating American Rescue Plan funds, noting that the county will tie its spending to the county's five-year Strategic Plan.

Becky noted that she has reached out to the U.S. Treasury regarding approved uses.

Becky provided the following possible roadmap for allocations:

### **PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY RESPONSE & COMMUNITY SAFETY**

#### **Public Health Emergency Response**

- Flexible funding for positions to manage contracts and financials as a result of new funds and services
- Funding for continued COVID response and recovery, including testing and vaccine work
- Department of Emergency Management equipment and coordination

#### **Housing and Homelessness**

- Countywide housing study to analyze housing inventory needs and zoning to create housing opportunities for all residents of varying income levels

#### **Childhood Wellness and Recovery**

- Public Health Youth Services Coordinator to coordinate with local healthcare partners, state agencies, and schools to maximize funding opportunities

#### **Summer Youth Support Programs**

- Engage youth with local programs and employment opportunities
- Nonprofit grants for youth summer programs

## **RESPOND TO OR MITIGATE THE PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY OR ITS NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS**

### **Economic Stabilization and Recovery Programs**

- MOU with EDC to coordinate stakeholders and maximize funding utilizing a “dig once” strategy
- Business and nonprofit support through coordination of available funding, outreach and business development and training

### **Community Response and Resilience**

- Linkage to services to create better health outcomes
- Facilitate community needs and provide education
- Education and outreach to provide pathway to services
- Develop programs for social connectivity and reengagement

### **Nutrition Services**

- Provide flexible gap funding for senior enrichment and nutrition programs, match funds for other state and federal funding opportunities

### **Workforce Development Program to Return People to Work**

- Partnership with Centralia College and apprenticeship programs

### **Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment and Referral/Coordination Programs**

- Work with LC Drug Court, public safety, LC Public Health, the courts and community partners to identify program needs, gaps in services and funding for treatment

## **NECESSARY INVESTMENTS IN WATER, SEWER AND BROADBAND**

### **Broadband**

- Coordination with service providers to expand access in areas of limited or nonexistent coverage

### **Water and Sewer Infrastructure**

- Complete a countywide water and sewer infrastructure study in order to develop coordinated projects to better position the county and utilities for priority funding from state and federal partners
- Develop Water Bank Program for future economic development
- Partner with cities and utilities within Lewis County to identify needs and coordinate projects

## **COUNTY GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

### **Essential Government Services**

- Lost revenue

- IT infrastructure and equipment to create increase telework capabilities
- Lost revenue (Fair, Roads MVFT, Courts, Jail contracts...)
- Increased services in Juvenile programs as a result of pandemic and school closures
- Backlog in court cases, alternate court facilities and staffing impacts
- Continued access to government services, public meetings and online services

Becky said the county should hire a grants manager and then identify points of contact in each office and department to seek other outside funding.

The group discussed possible expansion of the Urban Growth Area (UGA) to accommodate housing needs as well as needs to help expand broadband capability and water / sewer infrastructure. Becky said the county could hire a consultant to identify infrastructure needs.

Richard DeBolt discussed studies the state has commissioned for internet service.

JP Anderson discussed ways in which community members could participate in long-term resiliency efforts, such as food security, economic development, farming, etc.

Richard said Thurston County Chamber of Commerce has overseen workforce retraining efforts on behalf of the Chehalis-Centralia Chamber of Commerce. He said the Chehalis-Centralia Chamber is looking to reclaim local workforce retraining efforts.

The commissioners directed Becky to move forward with creating a Personnel Authorization Form for a grants coordinator position and to also continue working with the EDC to establish an MOU.

Commissioner Swope suggested the commissioners create a scorecard with which to gauge the merits of upcoming proposals.

JP said Health is looking to develop a community outreach project position. The commissioners directed him to move forward with the position.

Commissioner Pollock said she wants to fund the PUD's request for fiber.

Meeting ended at 11:55 a.m.