

## **Mayors' Meeting**

**June 4, 2021**

**9:02 a.m.**

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, Becky Butler, Peter Lahmann, EDC Executive Director Richard DeBolt, Centralia Mayor Sue Luond, Centralia City Manager Rob Hill, Chehalis City Manager Jill Anderson, JP Anderson, Willie Painter of the Lewis County PUD, Vader Mayor Joe Schey, Wes Anderson of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Chad Hancock of WSDOT, Christine Nhan of Sen. Murray's office, Pam Peiper of Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler's office, Pe Ell Mayor Lonnie Willey, Chris Panush, Steve Wohld, Chris Roden of the PUD, Sarah Kohout of Sen. Cantwell's office, Fionna Velazquez, Yvonne Rivera, Centralia Port Commissioner Kyle Markstrom

Guests: Claudia Yaw, Olga Miller, Nic Scott, Edna J. Fund, Susan DeLaire

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Becky Butler discussed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). She said the county has received the first half of its funding. She said the Board of County Commissioners is reviewing potential allocations, noting that the commissioners already have green-lighted a few proposals, such as the hiring of a grants administrator and the completion of countywide housing and water-sewer infrastructure studies.

Becky said the EDC will hold an ARPA planning meeting for stakeholders July 21. Richard DeBolt said the EDC is creating an overlay map that identifies potential projects to help identify multijurisdictional projects that would qualify for various funding sources.

Becky said the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) has issued guidelines for cities' funding allocations.

Commissioner Swope said he'd like to keep the July and September Mayors' Meeting to provide an opportunity to

### **PUD update**

Willie Painter discussed a broadband study the PUD spearheaded. He noted that more than 77.2 percent of respondents qualify as "unserved." Willie said the PUD is working on a network design, identifying ways the county can expand broadband technology using funding available.

Willie said the PUD will begin its LED conversion of municipal street lights at the beginning of 2022.

Willie said the PUD secured \$3.5 million from the state Legislature toward its \$12 million substation / transmission project in Winlock.

## **TransAlta**

Commissioner Swope discussed the Department of Fish and Wildlife's decision to put on pause its decision about acquiring the TransAlta property.

## **COVID-19**

JP Anderson discussed the recent increase in COVID-19 cases countywide, noting that there were 161 new cases the week of May 23-29.

Becky said county offices will meet June 8 to discuss potential impacts related to recently passed legislation.

## **Announcements**

Centralia City Manager Rob Hill discussed a groundbreaking event planned for June 8. He said the city has started its China Creek project and is working with the PFD to expand the Sports Hub. Rob said Summerfest will return July 4.

Chehalis City Manager applauded the grand opening of the new Penny Playground as well as the recently revamped ball fields. Jill discussed road work on Pacific Avenue, Main Street and elsewhere. Jill said the city also is working on a temporary and a new fire station. She said the pool will open July 1 and that Music in the Park will return over the summer.

Vader Mayor Joe Schey discussed a new playground being installed in the city. He said grant funding will cover chip sealing efforts.

Pam Peiper of Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler's office said Rep. Beutler plans further follow-up in response to the state's decision to house a COVID-19 quarantine and isolation facility in Centralia without any outreach.

Christing Nhan of Sen. Murray's office is helping finalize infrastructure allocation prioritization.

Wes Anderson of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) provided updates on projects on Highway 6, Twin Oaks, state Route 507 and state Route 508.

Yvonne Rivera of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) discussed the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Program.

Peter Lahmann discussed PacMtn's WorkEx program, which partners employers with transitioning service members, veterans and spouses.

Kyle Markstrom discussed the Port of Centralia's work with business tenants, noting that businesses are struggling to fill employment vacancies.

Sarah Kohout of Sen. Maria Cantwell's office discussed a bipartisan bill Sen. Cantwell is working on to improve train safety and alleviate congestion.

Commissioner Pollock and Steve Wohld discussed the Southwest Washington Fair, planned for Aug. 17-22. Steve said County Chicks will take place at the fairgrounds June 11-12 and that 4-H, the livestock sales and vendors will be back for the fair.

Commissioner Swope discussed Twin Transit's recent ribbon-cutting event.

Peter Lahmann invited the group to join the Clean Team for a June 5 cleanup event.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.