

BOCC Wrap-Up

August 23, 2021

9 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Erik Martin, Becky Butler, Meja Handlen, Shad Hail, Kevin McDowell, Andrew Logerwell, Chris Panush, Doug Carey, John Abplanalp, Austin Majors, Taylor Arrington, Alison Puckett, Casey Mauermann, Kati Conradi, Lara McRea, Tammy Martin, Lee Napier, Michelle Sauter, Sherri Dokken, Undersheriff Wes Rethwill

Guests: Claudia Yaw, Nic Scott, Edna J. Fund

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Citizens Budget Committee: The commissioners postponed their discussion until Aug. 24.

2021 for 2022 lodging tax allocations: Commissioner Swope said the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) recently met and recommended that the commissioners set 2022 funding allocations at \$600,000 to \$700,000. The commissioners postponed their discussion until Aug. 24.

Southwest Washington Fair recap: The commissioners said the fair went well. They commended staff for its efforts to hold the fair.

Mandatory vaccines: Commissioner Swope said he will never be in favor of mandatory vaccines. Commissioner Stamper echoed Commissioner Swope's stance. Commissioner Pollock said she will address her stance a little later in the meeting. She noted that the mandate takes vaccines from an informed decision to coercion.

Activity reports

Commissioner Stamper: Attended fair.

Commissioner Pollock: Attended Fire Commissioners' Meeting, during which the group discussed the vaccine mandates. Commissioner Pollock said the mandate could leave area fire districts without personnel. She said she would like to draft a letter to the governor outlining the impacts the mandate could have for residents and travelers. She discussed the affect the vaccine mandate will have on operational reliability.

Commissioner Swope: Attended fair. Met with Scott Crossfield regarding the rock quarry. He and Commissioner Stamper noted that the quarry expansion would have to go through the SEPA process.

2021 Employee Picnic: Erik Martin said staff continues its work on the picnic.

TransAlta / IPAT lands: Commissioner Swope said Bob Guenther has shared information on TransAlta.

COVID-19: John Abplanalp discussed current COVID-19 cases and provided the following statistics regarding Lewis County's cases:

- Fourth in the state for 14-day rate of new cases as of the week of Aug. 12.
- Second in the state for seven-day rate of new hospitalizations as of the week of Aug. 8.

Calendars: Commissioner Pollock noted she would be out of the office the week of Aug. 30. Erik Martin discussed a DELTAWRX meeting scheduled for Aug. 24.

Minutes: The commissioners approved minutes for the week of Aug. 9, 2021.

Governor's mandated vaccination proclamation / Juvenile facility

At 9:23 a.m., Commissioner Pollock announced that the Board would be going into Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) for 30 minutes to discuss Governor's mandated vaccination proclamation / Juvenile facility.

Executive Session started at 9:25 a.m.

Executive Session ended at 9:55 a.m. Commissioner Pollock noted that no decisions had been made.

Shad Hail said Juvenile has options regarding plans to relocate its juvenile inmates during Juvenile's seven-month remodel. He said he'd like the county to consider contracting with Cowlitz County, which would cost roughly \$159,600, excluding local overtime costs. Shad said the cost would be offset by savings in medical care, meals, utilities and supplies, pushing the actual total down to roughly \$120,000.

Shad said the county would not use casual employees under that scenario, but that regular employees would not lose their jobs. Doug Carey noted that the project has gone out to bid. He said contractors are seeing costs increase by more than 1 percent each month, so he'd rather not delay the project.

Commissioner Pollock provided a recap of the county's options regarding housing the juvenile inmates during Juvenile's construction project:

- Contract with the Department of Corrections to use Maple Lane, an option surrounded with uncertainty because it's unclear how or whether state vaccination mandates would apply for county employees.
- Re-evaluate how to complete the construction project – possibly in phases to allow for juvenile inmates to remain onsite – an option that could increase costs significantly.
- Contract with Cowlitz County to have Cowlitz County house Lewis County's inmates.

The commissioners said they would prefer to contract with Cowlitz County. Commissioner Pollock directed Shad to move forward with the Cowlitz County option.

Shad said he has a week to work out the details. Doug said he would work with Shad to draft a resolution.

Meeting ended at 10:08 a.m.