

Directors' Update

January 5, 2022

9:01 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, Commissioner Grose, County Manager Erik Martin, Steve Wohld, Matt Jaeger, Becky Butler, Lee Napier, Chris Panush, Doug Carey, Josh Metcalf, Connie Riker, Austin Majors, JP Anderson, Alison Puckett, Graham Gowing, Lara McRea, Mindy Brooks, Patrick Schults, Sherri Dokken, Ross McDowell (9:14 a.m.), Michelle Sauter, Grace Jimenez

Guests: Eric Rosane, Nic Scott

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Commissioner Swope made a motion to amend the agenda to include discussion about a proposed resolution to amend the salary grid for the Corrections Guild representing the Sheriff's Corrections group and the Lewis County Deputies Guild representing the Sheriff's Operations Bureau and the Teamsters Local No. 252 representing the Sheriff's Sergeants and Lieutenant group.

Commissioner Grose seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Connie Riker discussed a resolution to dissolve the Lewis County Outdoor Recreation & Tourism Commission. She noted that the members would continue to guide the county in tourism plans.

Commissioner Grose read the following into the record:

“As the tourism industry becomes more important to our local economy, we must continue to recognize the importance access to our national forest is to that economy. In recent years, road and trail closures and the destruction, deterioration and elimination of signage have made navigation in our Gifford Pinchot National Forest difficult at best. With new leadership at the local and regional level, groups such as the Backcountry Horsemen, OTV/ATV, snowmobile clubs, and Packwood Trails have become an integral part of our tourism economy package.

“The elimination of the Lewis County Outdoor Recreation and Tourism group is not intended to reduce the impact these groups are having on revitalizing access to the GP. To the contrary, it is hoped that this move on our part will give these groups even better access to county agencies and partners in the tourism industry. We must keep them involved and be receptive to their comments and suggestions.”

Connie Riker discussed a resolution to accept a grant from the Washington State Department of Agriculture Fairs Program toward a remodel and restructured use of the Swine area on the Southwest Washington Fairgrounds. She said the grant totals \$250,000. Steve Wohld noted that the improvements will make the building a multi-use site.

Rieva Lester discussed a resolution to appoint Kevin Ryan to the Civil Service Commission.

Becky Butler discussed a hearing for the Lewis County 2021 budget, emergency and supplemental appropriations to and transfers within current expense and other funds.

Josh Metcalf discussed a hearing regarding the proposed vacation of a portion of 1st and Pine Streets and adjacent alleys in Dryad. The group discussed accessibility for potentially land-locked parcels.

Chris Panush discussed a resolution to amend the salary grid for the Corrections Guild representing the Sheriff's Corrections group and the Lewis County Deputies Guild representing the Sheriff's Operations Bureau and the Teamsters Local No. 252 representing the Sheriff's Sergeants and Lieutenant group. Chris noted that the agreement includes retro pay back to April 1, 2021.

Commissioner Swope made a motion to move two consent items, four deliberation items and two hearings to the Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2022, BOCC agenda. Commissioner Grose seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

COVID-19

JP Anderson reviewed COVID-19 data for the most recent reporting week, Dec. 26, 2021, to Jan. 1, 2022:

- 265 new COVID-19 cases, an increase from the previous reporting week
- 16 new hospitalizations, an increase from the previous reporting week
- 1 new death, an increase from the previous reporting week

JP noted that the omicron variant appears to be more contagious than previous strains. However, he noted that it appears to be less deadly than previous strains.

Chris Panush provided an updated decision tree for the commissioners' review.

Commissioner Grose made a motion to adopt the updated COVID-19 decision tree policy. Commissioner Swope seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Inclement weather

Ross McDowell said he will meet with the National Weather Service later in the day. He said the east end of the county could see flooding due to snow melt and rain. He expressed concern about a log jam along the highway that could cause issues. Ross said the sand bag station is being prepared. He said the flood risk is expected to ease up by Sunday.

Josh Metcalf noted that some roads already have standing water and that Public Works already is closing some roads to traffic.

Roundtable

Matt Jaeger said IT is placing 50 PCs in the first quarter. He noted that Windows 10 is being replaced by Windows 11. Matt said the audio-video project for the courts and the body cam project for the Sheriff's Office will be completed in the first quarter.

Becky Butler said all budget information must be reviewed by the end of the day for 2021 year-end.

Lee Napier said she will attend the Fire Chiefs' meeting later in the day. Lee said a housing forum is planned for the Packwood area. She discussed a Subarea Plan for the Packwood area. Lee said FEMA maps have been submitted.

Connie Riker invited the commissioners to a Jan. 27 recognition dinner at the fairgrounds.

Meeting ended 9:59 a.m.