

## **BOCC Wrap-Up**

**March 28, 2022**

**9 a.m.**

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, Commissioner Grose, County Manager Erik Martin, Becky Butler, Chris Panush, Susie Palmateer, Stacey Werner, Austin Majors, Connie Riker, Doug Carey, Josh Metcalf, JP Anderson, Lara McRea, Lee Napier, Mindy Brooks, Sherri Dokken, Wes Rethwill, Steve Wohld, Tammy Martin, Tiffanie Morgan, Treasurer Arny Davis

Guests: TC Voetberg, Isabel Vander Stoep, Nic Scott

Recorder: Rieva Lester

### **Business Meeting**

Erik Martin said the county is considering using contract work for radio equipment maintenance and support due to staffing challenges.

Commissioner Swope made a motion to add to the March 29, 2022, Business Meeting the following:

- **Resolution 22-079:** Issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Radio Equipment Maintenance and Radio System Support Services for Lewis County.
- **Resolution 22-085:** Transfer oversight of the Lewis County Public Health & Social Services (PHSS) Advisory Board to the Board of Health.

Commissioner Grose seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

### **Superior Court**

**Audio / video needs:** Susie Palmateer said Superior Court is budgeted for three court reporters but is facing a worker shortage and has only been able to fill one position. She said only one courtroom, Courtroom 4, is equipped for audio / video. Susie said she is working with IT to identify the costs because the stopgap – portable recorders – is not sustainable in the long run. Susie noted that the court reporter shortage is a problem nationwide.

**Ongoing offsite jury selection needs:** Susie said offsite courtrooms are still being used. Commissioner Swope discussed concerns regarding additional sites that are either not used or not needed. Susie noted that the state Supreme Court's decisions regarding speedy trials allowed the courts to postpone jury trials during the COVID-19 pandemic. The group discussed the use of R.E. Bennett and the fairgrounds as sites for jury selection and trials, including the additional costs associated with those sites.

Commissioner Swope asked if the courts could use just R.E. Bennett and stop using the fairgrounds. Susie said the judges have been discussing the use of those facilities and that the group will reach out to the commissioners for a future discussion.

**Courthouse security contract:** Susie said the county contracts for courthouse security. She said the courts would like to increase the contracts to cover “armed” instead of “unarmed” guards. She said the use of unarmed security has created a revolving door for contract personnel and that the contractor ends up having new personnel every two weeks or so. Susie said the contractor’s new employees often end up having the same questions regarding what’s allowed, what’s required, etc., and that hiring armed security – who are paid better than unarmed security – would help ease the issues with retaining staff. Susie said she would provide an estimate of what costs would be associated with moving to armed security. Erik suggested the courts reach out to the contractor and ask that it better prepare its new hires with the answers to the basic questions before they begin.

Susie and Stacey Werner left at 9:38 a.m.

### **Indemnification and defense for Tracy Mitchell**

At 9:39 a.m., Commissioner Pollock announced that the Board would be going into executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) for 3 minutes to discuss indemnification and defense for Court Commissioner Tracy Mitchell.

Executive session started at 9:41 a.m.

Executive session ended at 9:44 a.m. Commissioner Pollock noted that no decisions had been made.

Andrew Logerwell left at 9:45 a.m.

### **Two-year contract with Economic Alliance**

Commissioner Pollock expressed concerns regarding the administrative fees the county pays for the Economic Alliance (EA) to shepherd the .09 Distressed Counties fund. She asked if anything could be done to streamline the efforts so that the fees would cover reporting assistance to the small cities, noting that while the cities would benefit from grants – such as Commerce grants or Community Development Block Grants – they often don’t apply because they don’t have the expertise needed to meet the reporting requirements. The commissioners discussed the economic growth the EA has helped spur, especially recently.

### **Port letter of support**

The commissioners said they would sign a letter of support regarding the Port of Chehalis’s efforts regarding its transload site.

### **Meat-processing facility study**

Commissioner Pollock discussed a proposed multijurisdictional meat-processing facility study. She said it would look at the need and whether a facility should be sought. Commissioner Pollock said Thurston and

Pierce counties have pledged funding and have suggested Lewis County provide \$10,000 to \$15,000 toward the study. Commissioner Pollock said she would share more information as it becomes available.

### **Zoom for quorum meetings**

Tammy Martin provided stats regarding virtual attendance – by the public, press and county staff – at recent meetings. The commissioners deliberated the usefulness of and staffing required for Zoom.

The commissioners opted to leave Zoom as an option for all meetings.

### **LAND Steering Group tour**

Erik Martin said the PA's Office has indicated two or more commissioners can attend the tour as long as they don't discuss with – or loud enough that the other can hear – anything having to do with county or flood control district matters.

### **Calendars**

Erik said he remains on call for jury duty.

The commissioners noted there would not be a quorum for the April 1 Mayors' Meeting.

Commissioner Swope said he will be out of office April 24 through May 4.

Commissioner Swope reminded that group that the forum for the night-by-night shelter will take place March 31.

### **Correspondence**

Commissioner Pollock noted that the commissioners had received correspondence regarding daylight savings time.

Commissioner Grose said he continues to be contacted regarding biosolids. Erik said the Toledo applications have been withdrawn. He noted that Ecology reaches out to the county's environmental health department for comment when it receives an application. The commissioners said they would schedule a meeting with the individual who spoke at recent community gatherings.

### **Approval of minutes**

Commissioner Grose made a motion to approve minutes for the week of March 14, 2022. Commissioner Swope seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

**Announcements**

Commissioner Swope praised the Economic Alliance's efforts to create the "dig-once" approach.

**New business**

Treasurer Arny Davis said interest rates for short-term investments are improving. He said rates for long-term investments (those for 5.5 years or longer) are at 2.5 percent. He said he predicts rates will continue to rise. He said the county should reinvest funds it has in the LGIP to take advantage of those increased interest rates.

Meeting ended at 10:24 a.m.