

Wednesday Workshop

January 24, 2024

9 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Brummer, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Ryan Barrett, David Bailey, Grace Jimenez, Graham Gowing, Becky Butler, Meja Handlen, Eric Eisenberg, John Abplanalp

Guest(s): Lisa Striedinger

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Public comment: Lisa Striedinger urged the county to speed up its completion of the homeless shelter.

Data / information request: At 9:03 a.m., Commissioner Brummer announced that the Board would be going into executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) until 9:18 a.m. to discuss a data / information request.

At 9:18 a.m., Commissioner Brummer extended executive session until 9:21 a.m.

Executive session ended at 9:21 a.m. Commissioner Brummer noted that no decisions had been made.

Lodging Tax reimbursement guidelines: The commissioners discussed allowing the use of grant funding for promotional items. The commissioners set the maximum reimbursement at \$10 per item for a maximum reimbursement of \$500 for the life of the grant. The commissioners indicated they would allow the purchase of T-shirts for staff.

Shelter update: Eric Eisenberg discussed work taking place at the interim shelter in the old Washington State Employees' Credit Union (WSECU). He said work at the Community Development building, which has been pegged for the permanent shelter, is estimated to cost at least \$3.3 million, with the bulk of the expenses coming from an HVAC unit (\$1.1 million) as well as the construction of a commercial kitchen and bathrooms / showers. He noted the county received \$2.5 million from the state for the project.

Eric proposed three options to ensure the project can be completed within budget.

- **Option 1:** Postpone HVAC until later phase and seek additional outside funding.
- **Option 2:** Stay in the WSECU interim shelter for longer and seek additional outside funding.
- **Option 3:** Turn the WSECU interim shelter into the permanent shelter and abandon plans to convert the old Community Development building into the homeless shelter.

The group discussed potential funding options and the steps that would be required to convert the temporary shelter into a permanent shelter.

The commissioners directed staff to move forward with using the WSECU building as the home for the permanent homeless shelter.

Commissioner Pollock made a motion to add a discussion about Century Link disruptions to the agenda. Commissioner Swope seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The commissioners directed staff to draft a letter to the Utilities Commission regarding the interruptions with CenturyLink service.

Meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.