

August 21, 2023

The Board of Garfield County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday August 21, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Chambers at the Garfield County Courthouse.

Present were: Chairman Justin Dixon, Member Larry Ledgerwood, Member Jim Nelson, Clerk of the Board McKenzie Lueck and the public.

The Board started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board opened the meeting for public comments. There were no public comments.

Road Superintendent Steve Gormsen gave the road report. The road report was for the weeks covering 8/7 to 8/17. There was fabrication work done on a fuel tank to stop a water leak. The crew also worked on spot grading the following roads; Willow Gulch, Hastings Hill, Ping Gulch, Rice Bar, Wildhorse, East Lynn, Valentine, Malone Hill, Elsensohn, Alpowa Creek, Peola, Lewis, Browns Gulch, Ball Grade, Tatman Mountain, and Kimes. Steve also stated that the crew raked a few roads to help with washboards. There is some construction work being done at the fair grounds for the turnaround by the hog barn. The crew did vegetation work throughout the county which included trimming trees being on Debow and Rickman and spraying weeds on Bell Plain, Fairview, Neber, Bowman, Beale Road, and Kirby Mayview. In the shop they worked on a moving the suspension of a dump truck and remounting the conveyor, repaired a locked up break on a semi, repaired a crack in the fuel tank of a pickup, fixed an a/c in a pickup.

Steve stated that over the last two weeks the county has had to put the sign up at the bottom of Wildhorse twice. He stated they are going to move it out a little to see if that helps. There are multiple signs that need put back up after the wind last week. Steve is working on the 2024 project list for CRAB. He informed the Board that they have been getting complaints about the roads but the crew has been waiting on moisture. Steve said they are going to start running and see what they can do regardless of moisture. Chairman Dixon said the drainage is as important as anything and the berm on the edge of the road needs taken care of because when we do get the moisture the water needs to be able to drain. Chairman Dixon wanted to remind everyone that the roads are a work in progress. Steve stated that it's a challenge because they grade the roads and try to move the big rocks to the side of the road, but when they get rid of the berms those rocks come back into the roadway. Chairman Dixon stated that he thinks everything looks good for the summer they've had.

Engineer Wege joined the Board to give them an update that County Road's budget had been submitted to the Auditor's office last week. He stated that getting the fund balance up in ERR is critical and he plans to increase the rental rates to help accomplish that. He's spoken to Nick Waldher and has a plan to move forward with resolving the issue with land that the county owns but is sitting unused due to the vacation of a county road. Chairman Dixon asked for an update regarding an ad for consultants. Engineer Wege stated that he is still working with CRAB on getting the specifics finalized for the ad before he can get it in the paper. He stated that there were changes made in legislation that state the goals need to be listed in the ad but Engineer Wege stated that he doesn't have the goals yet. Chairman Dixon asked that the ad be posted and

the goals be set when we have them. Commissioner Ledgerwood agreed with Chairman Dixon, stating that someone has probably already advertised so if we could get a draft or a copy of another county's that could be very helpful. Engineer Wege stated he would be happy to get the ad to them this week.

John Hirsch, City Councilman, joined the Board to discuss an issue the City of Pomeroy has been dealing with. The city recently had an inspection of a city well done which was located in the County Road's lot near the impound lot. This inspection was done by the Department of Health. Mr. Hirsch stated that there was a significant finding due to the location of the impound lot in relation to the well. He stated that Mike Lockard, City Superintendent, went to Sheriff Hyer and did not receive any assistance and the meeting did not go well. The letter the city received was dated July 28th. Mr. Hirsch stated that they have a limited amount of time to correct the issue per the letter they received. The city has to submit a picture to prove they have resolved the issue. Engineer Wege stated that he has been working with Mike to resolve the issues by moving the vehicles away from the well. There was clarification that the impound vehicles were causing the issue, not the deputies vehicles. Commissioner Nelson asked Engineer Wege if there was a corner in the back of the county shops' lot to impound vehicles if there was a need. Engineer Wege stated that he has spoken with the Sheriff and the Sheriff doesn't foresee impounding vehicles in the future, however, Engineer Wege stated that County Road would make room if there was a need. He did state that sanding chips will start to be hauled and stored in the lot so the lot will start to be more crowded.

Mr. Hirsch brought up discussion about the city potentially using the Commissioners' Chambers for City Council meetings. Mr. Hirsch stated that he was aware that County was potentially updating their doors to a badge key system and asked if it would be possible for the City Clerk to get a key badge in the event that the city held a meeting outside of business hours. Chairman Dixon requested that the city hold its meetings during business hours if they decided to use the Commissioners' Chambers.

The Board discussed ARPA funds. Auditor McKenzie Lueck stated that the Board previously allocated \$45,503.16 to a Daycare/Childcare facility, however, they needed to lower that to \$42,377.20 due to already obligating \$3,125.96 to the food bank at the beginning of 2023. McKenzie stated that she missed the food bank allocation due to the transition of positions. Lowering the daycare allocation will zero the ARPA funds, which is currently over obligated due to the missed food bank allocation. The Board has allocated additional funds from LATCF to the daycare/child care facility. Commissioner Ledgerwood made a motion to lower the ARPA daycare allocation and Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Katie Magill, District Court Administrator/Courtroom Coordinator, joined the Board to discuss the Courthouse Security Key Badge Project. She stated that she received the final quote from VECA on behalf of Pacific Office Automation. She stated that after scoring the vendors on different components including warranty, cost, and usability, VECA was the best option. The other two vendors had higher costs and their warrants were not as good as VECA's. Katie stated that after VECA did a walkthrough of the building, they gave quotes for wireless options that would be less invasive and these quotes were still less than the other two vendors. VECA's

option also ties into the County's current camera security system, as Pacific Office Automation was the vendor that the County worked with on that project. Chairman Dixon asked if there will still be physical keys as a backup system. Katie and McKenzie were unsure of the answer to this and stated that they would get clarification prior to the next meeting. Katie informed the Board that she requested \$109,000 for Court Security Grant Funds which has a 15% match. She stated that \$104,000 of the request was for the Courthouse Security Key Badge Project and \$5,000 was for the judge's bench project. The Board decided to wait until the next meeting set for September 5th to make a decision on obligating LATC funds so they know how much they will need to obligate to the Courthouse Security Key Badge Project based on if the Court Security Grant request gets accepted.

There was discussion of the Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund allocation; based on the previous Courthouse Security Key Badge Project conversation, McKenzie stated she updated the tracking spreadsheet for the County's LATCF to include an estimate of \$130,000 for the Courthouse Security Key Badge Project. She stated that this spreadsheet is showing a rough estimate of about \$400,000 in requests for funds from different departments now. The County has received \$487,555.22 from the federal government. These funds can be used on a broad range of things with restrictions that apply to lobbying activities. Engineer Wege expressed concerns about inefficiencies in tooling of the County Road's shop. He may have additional requests for funds at a later time.

The Board reviewed two requests from County Road; one to transfer an expenditure to a different fund and one to transfer a revenue to a different fund. The request to transfer the expenditure was due to a Pacific Power bill being paid out of the Solid Waste Fund when it was supposed to be paid out of the ERR fund. The second request was due to a revenue being deposited into the Sheriff's ERR fund when it was supposed to be deposited into County Road's ERR. The Board reviewed the requests and approved them to be transferred as requested.

Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that he spoke with the Fair Board President after the meeting a few weeks ago regarding the fair laptop. He stated that there's been a request to purchase a laptop for the fair since he has been a commissioner and after his conversation with the Fair Board President it is definitely within use of their state money. Commissioner Ledgerwood made a motion to allow the IT Coordinator, Greg Sharp, purchase a laptop for the fair and Commissioner Nelson seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Greg Sharp, IT Coordinator, joined the Board to discuss the potential email migration to Office 365. He has been working on getting the county's email count down to a number that is accurate as there are costs associated with each email account. He gave the Board the quote for the migration which is in the amount of \$6,510.00 annually. Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that Office 365 met the security requirements for the cyber insurance. Greg brought discussion up regarding the County's website because the County is in need of a new host for the website. Greg stated that there are three different options; the County could stay with our current website provider and have them host the DNS which would cost roughly \$3,000.00 annually, there's another vendor that would have additional set up costs and then would be \$6,000.00 annually, or there was a third vendor that is based out of Walla Walla that would cost roughly \$20,000.00 in set up fees but would be \$1,000.00 annually after that. McKenzie questioned switching when it

seems like the current website is working fine and is the most cost effective, and Greg stated that he has received concern from staff regarding the lack of support and usability of the current website provider. The Board agreed to move forward with the email migration to Office 365. Due to the time restraint on needing a new DNS host, the Board requested that Greg move forward with the current website provider, but further discussion regarding other options in the future can continue.

The Board recessed at 9:50 a.m. until 10:00 a.m.

There was a Public Health meeting from 10:00 a.m. until 10:41 a.m.

There was a County Transportation Authority meeting from 11:00 a.m. until 11:12 a.m.

The Board returned to regular session at 11:14 a.m. The Board discussed a letter from the Eastern Washington Council of Governments (EWCoG) to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission regarding the Commission's proposed draft management policy. Commissioner Ledgerwood received a call from a local producer because the letter was published in the Lewiston Tribune with most of the surrounding counties signed onto it in support of the letter but Garfield County was not listed. Commissioner Ledgerwood suggested Chairman Dixon reach out to have Garfield County added to the list of supporters and sign on to the letter. The Board agreed to support the letter. Chairman Dixon will reach out on behalf of Garfield County in support of the letter.

Treasurer Tereasa Summers came to the Board to discuss the website. She stated that she has been working with Shanda and Greg on meeting with website providers to explore other options. She wants to keep the options open because the current website isn't very user friendly and their support isn't very good. Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that the Board is keeping their options open but to move forward immediately, they are going to move forward with the current website provider to get the DNS hosted and get the emails transitioned. Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that if the county continues to have more issues with the website they can look into switching. Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that he would appreciate Tereasa's and Shanda's input on the website. Tereasa asked what the timeline was and Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that he didn't know, stating that we have to set up the DNS provider, but then it could go fairly quickly. Tereasa stated that she wants to be involved moving forward. The Board stated that there will be additional conversations at the next meeting, as Greg would be bringing quotes from the other website providers forward.

Sheriff Hyer joined the Board upon request of the Board. Chairman Dixon stated that there were concerns regarding the Sheriff's Department. He stated that there were only 10 citations written in the month of July in Garfield County. Chairman Dixon stated that he doesn't think with the amount of money the County pays for this department that the County is getting what they need from this department. The Sheriff's office is responsible for protecting the citizens of Garfield County and he doesn't think that is happening to the best of its ability. Chairman Dixon stated that as the budget season is upon us they need to work together to better serve Garfield County. Chairman Dixon stated that he sees that Sheriff Hyer is requesting 8 correctional officers in his budget when other counties of similar sizes are dealing with lawsuits due to their jails and their

shortcomings and he is asking for a better explanation of his request. Chairman Dixon elaborated that he is questioning why we need 8 correction officers when we have 4 deputies and only 10 citations written in the month with only 4,000 miles driven for the month.

Chairman Dixon stated that there is a request from the Sheriff's office for \$10,000 for Search and Rescue. He asked Sheriff Hyer how long he has been the sheriff of Garfield County and Sheriff Hyer replied 7 years. Chairman Dixon stated he hasn't seen any change in Search and Rescue in 7 years. Chairman Dixon stated that he is struggling with the financial side of this when the productivity of this department isn't meeting expectations. Chairman Dixon asked Sheriff Hyer how many citations he wrote when he was a deputy and he stated around 20+ citations a month. Chairman Dixon stated that there was only 36 interactions for the month of July. Commissioner Nelson asked if there were any type of performance reviews. Sheriff Hyer replied that there were. Commissioner Nelson asked how often they were reviewed and Sheriff Hyer replied quarterly by the Undersheriff. Commissioner Ledgerwood asked who's responsibility it is to follow up on the performance reviews and Sheriff Hyer stated that it was the Undersheriff's.

Commissioner Nelson stated that he thinks there needs to be a balance. He understands that the request for correction officers is coming from the incident that occurred last year, but the report from July shows that Garfield County had an average of .95 inmates and then the Board gets a request that doesn't have any financial numbers with it, just a request for 8 correctional officers. Commissioner Nelson stated that as a long time law enforcement officer the numbers don't make sense.

Sheriff Hyer informed the Board that Deputy Kris Taylor is now the head of Search and Rescue. Sheriff Hyer stated that there will be trainings for Search and Rescue and that it will be much more active than it has been in the past.

Chairman Dixon asked how many vehicles the County has in the Sheriff's ERR and Sheriff Hyer said he doesn't know right now but when it's all said and done he will have nine. Chairman Dixon asked how many deputies we have hired right now, and Sheriff Hyer stated six. Chairman Dixon said, "In conclusion, as elected officials of Garfield County we are responsible for protecting our community and county and we are not doing that and are opening our door for litigation right now." Sheriff Hyer stated that he doesn't want to mandate stats and the Board agreed, saying they don't want that either.

Chairman Dixon stated that he has been contacted by another county the possibility of doing a tri-county jail facility and housing our inmates. Chairman Dixon would like to meet with Sheriff Hyer at some point to discuss this option and see if it's a possibility for the County.

Chairman Dixon stated that his intent of this conversation is to bring awareness to the fact that there are people that are not happy with the department and the Board wants to know where we go from here. Chairman Dixon said he likes to see Sheriff Hyer at the Board meetings when he is available so there is an open line of communication. Commissioner Ledgerwood stated he has had several city councilman ask where the city patrol is, and the Board has seen deputies patrolling in town frequently.

Sheriff Hyer stated that he would like the signing bonuses to be increased. Commissioner Nelson asked that Sheriff Hyer bring the request to the Board in writing. Commissioner Nelson stated that he would like to look further into it and see what they could do other than increase the sign on bonus after he was told from a deputy that those don't mean a whole lot. There was discussion regarding the deputies' salaries; Chairman Dixon pointed out that they are within 3% of the surrounding communities per the salary study that was done last year and Sheriff Hyer pointed out that they are still in negotiations and have not gotten any raise since 2022. Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that the Board approved the Sheriff's budget last year to bring the salaries up to within 3% of the average of the salary study. Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that if the performance of the department was better they would be happy to discuss that further. Chairman Dixon stated he isn't asked for 40 citations per deputy per month, but they need to meet in the middle somewhere between that and what was accomplished in July. He is not impressed with the performance the County is getting. Commissioner Nelson stated that what the deputies do impact a lot of other departments in this county, including the prosecutor's office and the court system. Commissioner Nelson pointed out that discretion is always on the officer but, Sheriff Hyer and Undersheriff Dansereau set those guidelines. Sheriff Hyer stated that the call volume isn't here like it is in surrounding areas. The Board thanked Sheriff Hyer for joining them.

Commissioner Nelson informed the Board that the Washington State Association of Counties Legislative Steering Committee (WSAC LSC) meeting will be here October 11th for a county tour.

Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that he stopped by the courthouse on Friday and Chris Lueck stated that there were issues with the bathroom doors locking and she asked for permission to buy new doors/locks. The Board approved Chris to purchase new doors/locks for the bathrooms in the courthouse to remedy the issue.

The Board went into executive session at 12:10 p.m. to discuss employee performance with no action afterwards.

The following voucher payments were approved for payment:

Claims Clearing Fund

Numbers: <u>69538</u>	Through: <u>69572</u>	Totaling: <u>\$6,578.61</u>
Numbers: <u>69639</u>	Through: <u>69672</u>	Totaling: <u>\$53,001.75</u>
Numbers: <u>69688</u>	Through: <u>69707</u>	Totaling: <u>\$95,308.43</u>

Payroll Clearing Fund

Numbers: <u>22697</u>	Through: <u>22705</u>	Totaling: <u>\$16,111.05</u>
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Electronic Payments

Dated: 8/10/2023 Number of Payments: 57 Totaling: \$152,225.88

The Commissioners regular meeting adjourned at 12:48 p.m. with the next regular meeting set for Tuesday, 5th, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioner's Chambers at the Garfield County Courthouse.

/s/ McKenzie Lueck
Attest: Clerk of the Board

/s/ Justin Dixon
Chairman, Board of Garfield County Commissioners

Adopted