

January 16, 2024

The Board of Garfield County Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, 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 reviewed and approved the minutes from both previous meetings.

Chairman Dixon called for public comment. There was none.

Road Supervisor, Steve Gormsen, gave the road report. He stated that the whole crew was plowing snow and sanding roads last week. He did call the crew into work on Friday to keep the roads open. There were several trees down throughout the county that the crew had to clean up. In the shop, there were a couple trucks that had issues (E259 and E251) and they also worked on pickup E207. Today they are going through the trucks in the shop to make sure everything is running well, as it looks like more weather is coming. Steve updated the Board that the Meyers pit was closed, and the county received everything they needed to from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to close it. The county can still use it for a stockpile site, but Steve does not foresee that happening. There was discussion regarding why graders are typically used on gravel roads instead of trucks, and Steve stated that they try not to use trucks on gravel because it pushes a lot of the gravel off the road. He also informed the Board that due to the weather forecast the crew is planning on working Friday and the crew is going in early (5:00 a.m. start instead of 6:30 a.m. start) so the roads are in good condition for the school buses.

Engineer Wege joined the Board to give them his weekly update. He stated that he communicated with the Department of Ecology (DOE), as well as Asotin County and Columbia County (the other two counties that are part of the SE Washington Coalition) regarding the Shoreline Grant. He previously submitted for the grant as the coalition, but the coalition was not aware of the submission. The project manager with DOE said that they could revise the grant to just include Garfield County instead of the coalition because they wouldn't be able to get the other members of the coalition involved early enough. He said this isn't set in stone yet, but they are working on it and seeing if this is a viable option. He stated that the original grant amount was \$165,000 and it allowed for the county to keep \$15,000 for administering the grant. There was discussion on whether the amount would change if the grant was revised to only include Garfield County. Chairman Dixon stated that Garfield County only has two areas of shoreline and one of them is in the wilderness and the other is mostly, if not all owned by the Corp of Engineers. Chairman Dixon asked if this was a state requirement and Engineer Wege stated that it was not a requirement and that this is not an update of the Shoreline Management Program, but instead a grant that would allow funding to develop an online tool to manage the permits that pertain to shoreline going forward. Engineer Wege continued that the consultant that is responding to the request for proposals wasn't already doing this for other jurisdictions he would pull resend his grant submission. Chairman Dixon asked what kind of permits he was referring

to, and Engineer Wege stated that any permit that affects shoreline areas will be tracked and managed in this new tool; building permits, zoning permits etc. This is to ensure that Garfield County has no net loss of shorelines. Chairman Dixon asked if Garfield County has ever had any net loss of shorelines, and Engineer Wege stated that he wasn't sure but that this tool would allow them to track it. Engineer Wege stated that he spoke with Ecology about it, and because the funding is there, they didn't foresee having a problem modifying the grant to only include Garfield County or changing the funding amount. He continued that the likely consultant/contractor that is submitting a proposal is building the same or a similar tool for other jurisdictions. Chairman Dixon pointed out that the grant funding is not free money, and that someone is paying for it. There was discussion on what the additional grant funding would be used for since the scope would potentially be narrowed to just Garfield County, and Engineer Wege stated that the consultant said they could provide more outreach and educational services for disadvantaged individuals. He did state that the Department of Ecology had not made any decisions. Chairman Dixon asked that Engineer Wege inform the Board before moving forward with any decisions. Engineer Wege informed the Board that a consultant plans on mailing their response to the Request for Proposals today.

He continued with his weekly update stating that Puget Sound Energy had sent their emergency response plan to him last week. He stated that this is updated every year and that he hasn't had a chance to go through it yet, but there were no significant changes. He also informed the Board that Public Works has started receiving emailed comments regarding the Appaloosa Solar Project. Chairman Dixon asked if the comments that had been received were negative or positive, and Engineer Wege stated that they weren't really either, but mostly asking that the County be aware of certain items and how it pertains to the project.

Engineer Wege gave the Board an update on the Kirby Mayview Project. He stated that they received the preliminary scope and quote from the engineering consultant. It was more than he was expecting, and he sent it to the Local Programs Department at Department of Transportation, as well as, Mark Story, Whitman County Engineer, for them to review and give him feedback. He stated that the original engineering costs that were submitted for funding for this project were \$140,000 with Grant Morgan (previous County Engineer) and Ron Weeks (previous assistant engineer) doing it in-house. He stated that the quote he received was \$600,000 for the consultant. He also stated that their scope shows an advertisement going out March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. This concerned him because during the interviews a consultant spoke about getting the advertisement in for the fall bid cycle in case there were any changes that needed to be made, but this proposal shows the advertisement being published in the spring bid cycle. Chairman Dixon spoke about the elevation of the jobsite, stating that contractors could probably do the job in the winter, so someone might bid it as an off-season project. Engineer Wege stated that he would like to see the advertisement ready by this fall. He also informed the Board that he has the scope of work and quote from the consultant available if the Board wants to see it. He stated that he is waiting to hear back from DOT's Local Programs Department and Mark. Commissioner Ledgerwood asked what the Local Programs department will do. Engineer Wege stated that they will review the form because it's a DOT form, and they will give him feedback as to what they have seen other consultants submit. He did state that the consultant's labor cost is \$180,000 which is comparable to what was submitted for Grant and Ron's quote of \$140,000. He wrapped up his weekly update stating that there is more snow expected in the forecast and that he has been in communication

with the post office regarding their routes. They called and were looking for the county's plow schedule, but there isn't a set schedule, so Engineer Wege went down and spoke with them and explained that it is dependent on conditions. He informed them that they could call in if they were having trouble on their routes and the crew keeps a log of road conditions that is used when planning plow routes for the day.

The Board went into executive session at 9:30 a.m. to discuss union negotiations with Prosecutor Newberg. Chairman Dixon stated that they expected executive session to last 20-25 minutes and that they would recess after it ended until the Public Health Board met. Executive session ended at 9:58 a.m.

The Board met with the Public Health Board at 10:00 a.m. and adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

The Board recessed from 10:25 a.m. until 10:31 a.m. when they went back into regular session.

The Board discussed the remaining Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Funds (LATCF). McKenzie stated that she had emailed the Board this morning with last week's changes. The only changes were from the Public Works department. They requested to remove four previous requests, modified four requests with updated quotes, and added two new requests to the list. Chairman Dixon stated that the Board needs to allocate these funds and that he thinks it's in the Board's best interest to speak with department heads that have made requests so they can make a priority list. While reviewing the list of requests, Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that he thinks the shop lighting would be a big benefit to the County. Chairman Dixon stated that he thought it wasn't very long ago that Flynn's Electric did updates to the shop's lighting. Commissioner Ledgerwood brought up discussion regarding the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) special assessment supporting the National Center for Public Land Counties. He stated that he thought the requested \$4,875.00 could provide more benefit being used within the county than paying it for this special assessment, but the Board should let WSAC know what their intentions were instead of not providing an answer. There was discussion regarding the other nine counties that had not paid. Commissioner Nelson is in favor of funding the special assessment supporting the Public Land Counties, for the good of the order. Commissioner Ledgerwood was not in favor of paying it. Chairman Dixon stated that there is a lot of public land in Garfield County, and he thinks the right thing to do is to support the other counties. The Board moved forward with the decision to pay the special assessment in the amount of \$4,875.

There was additional discussion regarding the LATCF allocations, and the Board approved the purchase of a new copy machine for the Clerk's office. The Board discussed a request from Public Works for a GPS system for the spray truck. Chairman Dixon stated that some of the systems are very reliable and some of them are not. He stated that they are also obsolete very quickly. He doesn't think these systems can account for wind drift, temperature, etc. He isn't sure that this is the right application for what these systems are intended to be used for. Chairman Dixon continued that the intent is to reduce over run, but the spray tips that are being used in the spray truck are the most overrun you can get. He stated that it does map, but it doesn't map if the wind carried the spray. Chairman Dixon stated he thinks that the staff is more than capable of spraying without this program.

Chairman Dixon informed the Board that there was an article in the Lewiston Tribune last week that the Governor has released some gray wolf management protocols to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission. He continued that these have been voted down three or four times by the commission previously. Chairman Dixon asked that everyone pay attention to these protocols and that if the Board gets a chance to voice their concerns than he requested they would.

Chairman Dixon also stated that Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has multiple proposals on the table that will impact the future of hunting in the state of Washington and the hunting of predators in the state of Washington. The testimony is open January 25-27 for public comment.

Chairman Dixon stated that he will meet with the Veteran Services department of Asotin County, to discuss services they plan to provide to Garfield County. The City Council has offered their City Council Chambers as a meeting place for the veteran services. Chairman Dixon stated that he is also going to offer them the use of the Commissioners' Chambers as well.

The Board reviewed a request from Michelle Kelp, 4H Coordinator, regarding a new key policy, and a request for the locks to the Dick Brown Building be replaced due to an issue with keys floating around. Commissioner Ledgerwood made a motion to approve the request to change the locks and, pending the review of the Prosecutor, approve the proposed policy. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that there would be a fair board meeting tonight he would communicate this information to them.

The Board recessed from 10:53 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.

The Board met with the County Transportation Authority at 11:00 a.m. and adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

The Board went into executive session to discuss employee performance from 11:34 a.m. until 11:57 a.m. The Board recessed from 11:57 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

The Board went into executive session at 12:30 p.m. to discuss employee performance and contract negotiations. The executive session ended at 1:43 p.m.

The following voucher payments were approved for payment:

#### **Claims Clearing Fund**

Numbers: 70855      Through: 70889      Totaling: \$6,795.79

#### **Payroll Clearing Fund**

Numbers: 23127      Through: 23134      Totaling: \$14,924.19

## Electronic Payments

Dated: 1/10/2024

Number of Payments: 58

Totaling: \$148,427.46

The Commissioners regular meeting adjourned at 1:43 p.m. with the next regular meeting set for Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, 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