



BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting
Work Session

Friday, June 24, 2022, at 9:00 am

BOCC Conference Room, Room 232, 128 N 2nd Street, Yakima, WA 98901 or Zoom

Yakima County Welcomes You to Join Our Open Public Meeting In-Person or Virtually.

Meeting Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84767080878?pwd=MjBKcjFsRmpWYlk1NW9qU1V4VnVFdz09>

Meeting ID:

847 6708 0878

Meeting Passcode:

352892

Meeting Phone Number:

1-206-337-9723 (ID & Passcode Above)

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

If you would like to speak during Public Comment, please raise your hand or if on Zoom type your name in the chat box and the Commissioner will call on you in order.

3. HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE (15 Minutes)

- o Reminder discussion of 3% one-time payment based on Union CBA's, non-bargaining, attorney's, and direct reports.

4. YAKIMA COUNTY DRAFT INTERIM PLAN (60 Minutes)

- o Josh Weiss & Annika Vaughan of Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Affairs to discuss the Yakima County Draft Interim Plan.

Documents:

[YAKIMA COUNTY 2022 INTERIM PLAN.DOCX](#)

5. FINANCIAL SERVICES (10 Minutes)

- 2022 Budget Letter Discussion

Documents:

[BOCC LETTER.DOCX](#)

6. AGENDA ITEM REVIEW (30 Minutes)

Review of all Agenda items Submitted for Tuesday's Regular Agenda Meeting.

7. COMMISSIONER UPDATES/ GENERAL DISCUSSION

1. Board of Health Interview Questions - Commissioner Linde

8. ADJOURN

All work sessions are recorded and will be available to view on the BOCC website at <https://www.yakimacounty.us/AgendaCenter/Board-of-Commissioners-2>.



MEMO

DATE: May 24, 2022

TO: Yakima County Commissioners

FROM: Josh Weiss, Partner
Annika Vaughn, Government Relations Consultant

CC: Craig Warner, Financial Services Director

RE: Interim Work Plan

Introduction

Legislative interim is an important time to be strengthening relationships, monitoring the political and policy context, and developing strategies for in-session lobbying.

During this time, we will be engaged in a variety of activities, including:

- Tracking state political trends and elections, including meeting new candidates
- Participating in legislative work sessions, hearings, and tours
- Attending WSAC meetings and following the development and adoption of their legislative priorities
- Yakima County's process for adopting legislative priorities and setting the foundation for those priorities' success during session
- Building even stronger relationships with current legislators
- Attending various local government conferences

Further, legislators and our legislative partners are engaged in the following work groups or task forces of particular interest to Yakima County:

- Yakima Basin Integrated Plan (YBIP) Implementation Committee
- WSAC/AWC Workgroup on Broadband Best Practices – Microtrenching
- Department of Commerce GMA Phase III Review

We will include relevant updates on these activities in our written interim reports.

So that we are budgeting our time in alignment with the County's priorities and are on track to be prepared for next session, this memo outlines two interim activities in additional detail.

Establishing Yakima County's 2023 Legislative Priorities

While the 2023 session will be a "long" 105-day session, it is crucial to have a narrowly focused set of priorities that our delegation will support established before session begins. Given the current economic and political volatility in Washington and the nation, it is particularly important that we are able to adjust our priorities following the general election on November 8.

We recommend the following activities and timeline:

1201 Pacific Ave, Suite 2100
Tacoma, WA 98401
Phone: (253) 620-6500
Fax: (253) 620-6565

www.gth-gov.com

203 Maryland Ave., NE
Washington, DC 20002
Phone: (202) 544-2681
Fax: (202) 544-5763



- May through August
 - Discussions with internal stakeholders to brainstorm possible priorities
 - Assess delegation priorities
 - GTHGA meet candidates for 15th legislative district
- September and October
 - Narrow possible priorities to those that are most viable
 - Begin to develop facts and narratives to support them
 - Begin to secure external stakeholder support and legislative champions
- November
 - Assess impact of election and state revenue forecast on possible priorities
 - Finalize priorities
 - Finalize legislative champions
 - Develop supporting materials (one-pagers, budget request forms, letters of support, talking points)
- December
 - Assess impact of Governor's proposed budget
 - Delegation send-off meeting
 - Coordinate with legislative champions to plan lobbying strategy
- January 9 – Session starts

Issues of Special Emphasis

We can anticipate some topics that the Legislature is likely to consider during the 2023 session that are of particular interest to Yakima County, or items that the County may want to proactively advance. We want to improve our advocacy by developing a deeper understanding of these issues and how the County wants to allocate its political capital.

Yakima Basin Integrated Plan

GTHGA has participated in the work of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan (YBIP) for several years on behalf of Yakima County. While GTHGA has been extremely active in past lobbying efforts for the program, over the past year, our participation in YBIP efforts has decreased as the County has prioritized spending political capital on other legislative issues. As we enter the biennial budget year and as the group applies for federal funding opportunities, the County may consider reprioritizing participation in the Integrated Plan to ensure the County's voice is incorporated.

It is unknown what YBIP's priorities will be for the 2023 state legislative session, and recent Integrated Plan meetings have focused on opportunities for federal funding. The County could influence the Plan's development of legislative asks through anticipatory, active participation in Implementation Committee meetings. The County could also set up individual meetings with key legislators to highlight priority projects within the Integrated Plan over the interim. We propose spending time this summer with internal staff and the full Board of Commissioners determining the County's interest in developing a strategy for this work, including determining how YBIP advocacy ranks among our other priorities. The County could also consider coordinating advocacy with partners that align with Yakima County's priority projects.

With new legislators joining Yakima County's delegation, we also recommend highlighting and re-iterating past and future work within the Yakima Basin to ensure these legislators are informed on the importance of YBIP's work.



Funding Source for County Jail

Shifts in state criminal justice policy have resulted in increased costs for Yakima County to operate County jails. The County's facility capacity no longer meets the demand for jail beds, resulting in higher costs to operate jail facilities for existing jail occupants. The need for additional funding to cover these increased costs has come up in several of our conversations with the County.

The WSAC Legislative Steering Committee (LSC) voted to consider legislative proposals for a new funding source to cover criminal justice costs, including the costs associated with operating a new jail or funding for County Sheriff departments.

Given the current and projected makeup of the Legislature, we anticipate difficulties advancing this proposal. We recommend that the County make engagement in WSAC's process a priority. The County should consider nominating one of the Commissioners to participate in this workgroup. We also recommend discussing this topic with our delegation and other key legislators throughout the interim. Legislative dynamics on this issue may shift slightly following the November elections, which may offer more opportunities for bi-partisan engagement on this issue.

Conclusion

We intend this to be a living document that can be amended or modified as needed. We are particularly interested in whether there are any other issues that you would like us to place a special emphasis on.

As always, we look forward to continuing our work together.

**To: The Citizens of Yakima County
Elected Officials and Directors of Yakima County**

2022 Budget Message

Thank you for your interest in the 2022 Budget for Yakima County. There is a lot to the County's annual budget and the following information represents how Yakima County plans to spend the precious resources the citizens have provided to us for 2022. These services are broken into eight priorities of government:

- Economic Development
- Governmental Services
- Health and Human Services
- Justice
- Law
- Public Safety
- Public Services
- Quality of Life

There are also specific sections included in the budget related to capital, debt and internal costs that support the eight priorities above.

The central focus of our annual budget is the General Fund, which supports the day-to-day operations of core County services. The County struggles to fund critical services within existing revenues, particularly in the Law, Justice and Public Safety areas, where the General Fund allocates almost 81% of expenditures to these areas.

It is anticipated that revenues, particularly sales tax, will continue to grow year over year, but we are watching this income very closely as Federal stimulus funds dissipate. We anticipate that revenues will stay consistent with the changes of the consumer where on-line retail keeps the sales tax dollars here in the Valley, versus the tax dollars being spent in other parts of the State.

Property taxes continue to be our single largest revenue stream, but with the limitation of 1% total growth plus new construction, it is challenging to keep up with the demands for services. New construction has helped us stay static but limits our ability to meet the needs of our growing community.

The Board of Yakima County Commissioners has focused on the following priorities listing for 2022 to provide enhanced services and support to our citizens:

Capital

- **Sheriff's Office Relocation** – The Sheriff is in leased space that has limited ability to update without significant cost and is in a location that limits response times to incidents in both the upper and lower valley.
- **State Fair Park Updates** – The County issued a capital bond funded with lodging taxes to significantly upgrade existing facilities at State Fair Park. These projects will continue to be completed up to the limitations of the funding available.

- **Jail Contingency Plans** – The jail in downtown Yakima is now at 37 years old and in need of significant capital updates. Additionally, the design of the facility did not anticipate the significant issue with felons and gangs that we have with today’s inmates.

Operational

- **County Classification/Pay Restructure** - As almost all businesses can attest, finding educated and skilled labor, is anticipated to continue to be a challenge for the County in 2022. A full review of all positions at the County for proper classification, along with a pay study of comparable counties and other entities that have employees with similar classifications, will be conducted in 2022 with the anticipation that the results will be used to support development of the 2023 Budget.
- **Ambulance Request for Proposal (RFP)** – The County will be sending out an RFP for ambulance services for the County with the overall goals of lower cost, providing newer equipment and improved response times.
- **New Health Board per HB1152** – The 2021 State Legislature, per House Bill 1152, requires the counties to make changes to the local health boards. It is required to be updated and in place by July 1, 2022.
- **Contract for Services** – Working with the Yakama Nation to provide services on this land within the Nation has always been a challenge for the County. Developing a relationship with the Nation to work with them to gain Federal support for issues on this land within the Nation is a priority for Yakima County.
- **YCWRS Well Drilling Code Update**-It is Yakima County’s goal to allow for providing access to water in two areas of the County currently not allowed to drill wells. These areas include the Wenas Valley and the Ahtanum Valley area. Yakima County is working to find mitigation measures to overcome the issues in these two areas.
- **Regional Dispatch** – There are currently three main dispatch functions in Yakima County. It is the vision of the County to be able to work to consolidate these services to provide better communications between partner entities and provide better communication services in the event of a significant event.

Other

- **ARPA Funding/Allocation** – Yakima County plans to allocate the Federal ARPA funds to the community through a grant process that will open for applications in April of 2022. Presented projects will be reviewed and awarded contracts later in 2022.
- **Mental Health Sales Tax Allocation** – Yakima County began collecting a mental health sales tax in 2020 just as the COVID pandemic arrived. This has delayed our ability to spend these resources, but there have been many positive steps towards determining the future use of these funds. The County has completed the adult SIMS mapping and is in the process for the juvenile SIMS mapping.
- **Single Countywide Radio System for First Responders** – Yakima County has entered into an agreement to review our radio system used by our first responders. This includes all law enforcement agencies and fire agencies in the County. Results will provide options for a future capital project to fund a system that will resolve communications during a crisis.

In addition to these priorities within the County, the County is very active with priorities for the State Legislature to ensure that State law makers meet their responsibility to fund critical County services.

There has been a significant impact on the Yakima County community over the past couple of years due to the COVID pandemic. Yakima County has supported our community with the allocation of the Federal CARES act funds to our community through our businesses, food banks and other organizations. The County has supported our employees with leave advances and time off when in need. Yakima County will continue to work to support the residents of the County as the ARPA funds are distributed.

While the budget process is never easy, we are proud of the cooperative effort shown by Yakima County's elected officials and department heads during the 2022 budget development. These leaders are committed to providing the best possible service to the public, exploring ways of providing more information and involving the public in our decision making. We invite you to join us in this effort.

The Board of Yakima County Commissioners

Amanda McKinney, Chair

LaDon Linde, Commissioner

Ron Anderson, Commissioner