



## BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting  
Work Session

Friday, June 10, 2022, at 9:00 am

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

6/10/2022 - Minutes

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Called to Order at 9:01 a.m.

PRESENT: Chair Amanda McKinney, Commissioner Ron Anderson, Legal Counsel Don Anderson, Clerk of the Board Julie Lawrence, Deputy Clerk of the Board Erin Franklin, Human Resources Director Jacqui Lindsay, Human Services Director Esther Magasis, Lance Larsen (Human Services), Melissa Holm (Human Services), and guests.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

### 3. HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE (15 Minutes)

Jacqui Lindsay shared an out-of-class request from the Sheriff's Office. A lower-level employee is currently being trained and used as a dispatcher on an as-needed basis, and would receive out-of-class pay only when utilized as a dispatcher, through the end of the year. Both commissioners gave their assent.

Jacqui also presented a request from the Department of Assigned Counsel for a pay exception and accrual exception for rehiring a former employee. This attorney worked for DAC from 2015 to 2018, and would resume work at his previous pay and accrual rates. Due to the current attorney shortage and the employee's previous experience with the department, both commissioners gave their assent.

Finally, Superior Court requested the transfer of a Juvenile Court position from the 430 Cost Center to the 460 Cost Center. The budget would not be negatively affected – the employee's salary would simply be coming from a different funding source. Both commissioners gave their assent.

### 4. AGENDA ITEM REVIEW (30 Minutes)

Julie Lawrence reviewed for the Board all Agenda items submitted for Tuesday's Regular Agenda Meeting.

Don Anderson detailed his contact with the Cowiche Sewer District in an effort to determine how many members the Board of County Commissioners needs to appoint in order to fill current vacancies. After speaking with Yakima County Prosecuting Attorney Joe Brusica and reviewing information submitted by various parties from the sewer district, Don's conclusion was that Joe Trepanier did not in fact resign from the sewer district board because the other board members had either resigned or were not present, therefore there was not quorum, therefore there was no meeting, and therefore the meeting minutes that were submitted could never have been approved by a quorum of the board. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Brusica's recommendation was to appoint one member to the board, and then allow the quorum of remaining

members to decide on any additional appointments. Don noted that the board's legal counsel, Brian Snure, seemed erroneously aligned with General Manager Bob Merritt as opposed to the board. Commissioner McKinney stated that Mayor Dewane Ashbrooks of Tieton had reached out to her with his concerns about the situation at the sewer district. Commissioner Anderson agreed that she should reach out to him for his feedback on Don's proposal before the BOCC moves forward with making their final decision. The commissioners agreed to continue the discussion at Monday's work session in order to potentially draft a resolution in time for Tuesday's agenda.

## 5. HUMAN SERVICES (150 Minutes)

Esther Magasis presented on the 2022 Homeless Housing Assistance RFP. Human Services received 28 applications from 8 agencies requesting of total of \$5,220,379.71 from 7 grant funding categories. She noted that some of the funding categories have been over-applied for, and others have been under-applied for, but only some of the categories include funding that can be reallocated to other categories.

Additionally, there is a required minimum award amount for some categories (mainly the rent/housing categories) in order to receive complete funding in all categories. Esther thanked Anthony (Tony) Wood, Corey Hodge, and Susan Martin for their dedicated work as the application scoring committee. She proceeded to outline the 7 funding categories, the details of each application, and any comments from the scoring committee. The categories included Coordinated Entry (Crisis Response), Outreach (including a one-year grant for a pilot program), Rental Assistance/Rapid Rehousing, Housing & Essential Needs, Permanent Supportive Housing, Shelter, and Capital Projects.

It was noted that Commissioner Linde is on the Homeless Coalition, and Commissioner McKinney expressed an interest in getting his input at Monday's work session, both on the applications and on the 5-Year Plan Goals.

Commissioner McKinney had previously asked Esther to reach out to Rhonda Hauff from Yakima Neighborhood Health Services for more clarity about whether people receiving hotel/motel vouchers are achieving success in improving their situations long-term. She did not feel that the response she received sufficiently answered this question. She expressed once again her desire to allocate grant money (from taxpayer dollars) wisely to programs that are proving to be effective in people's lives. Both commissioners voiced concerns that accurate data be kept on how often people are utilizing services and whether lasting success is being achieved. Esther stated that some usage data is available on the Human Services website. Lance Larsen and Melissa Holm explained the use of the HMIS database for cataloging and coordinating the services that people receive; accurate use of this database by service providers is required for monthly reimbursement. The team also shared that they are working on scheduling required training sessions over the summer to help service providers learn to be as accurate and specific as possible in their HMIS reporting. It was also noted that some services don't require government-issued identification; clients identify themselves voluntarily and are recognized by case managers.

Commissioner McKinney requested that hotel/motel vouchers only be offered in cases of documented domestic violence (in which case they would be referred through organizations like the YWCA and placed in hotels/motels for safety reasons) – not other situations like emergency winter weather, unless there are no other shelter vacancies. Her concern is that many people who could enter shelters opt for hotels/motels instead, where there is no oversight preventing substance abuse or other illegal activity. Esther did note that hotel/motel vouchers occasionally make use of rental assistance funding if the voucher is only used briefly for someone who is about to transition to another housing unit.

It was also noted that Yakima Neighborhood Health Services does have a respite program in conjunction with Memorial Hospital for patients that must be discharged but were denied for other care facilities and have nowhere to go except the street. YNHS has agreements with local hotels/motels and apartment complexes to temporarily house these individuals while they continue to recover, allowing for additional case services to be brought to them instead of losing contact with them, and potentially preventing them from needing to be re-hospitalized in the short-term. A registered nurse case manager from Memorial makes the referral and works with a YNHS case manager.

Esther noted that Camp Hope is the only shelter that does not turn away sex offenders, and felt that she would be remiss in her duty if she didn't remind the Board of this fact in relation to the young adult program,

"Jesse's Place", onsite at a Camp Hope. Commissioners McKinney and Anderson still expressed support for the way this program serves the community and noted that these facilities are still much more supervised than the streets.

Yakima Neighborhood Health Services applied for the One-Year Outreach Project Funding for their proposed Hygiene Facility, hoping to prevent health issues stemming from lack of hygiene, remove barriers to securing jobs or housing, and create a contact point for offering other services. While the commissioners acknowledged this as a very humane outreach program, they both questioned what kind of follow-up would be required in order to make use of this service, or if having this service provided would simply make it easier for people to continue to remain homeless. Commissioner McKinney noted that shelters already offer these amenities and other services, with the caveat of requirements such as prohibiting drug and alcohol use. She also referenced an article written about a similar program in southern California that has resulted exactly according to her and Commissioner Anderson's concerns. She and Commissioner Anderson concurred that they would like Commissioner Linde's input on this program.

In reference to Yakima Neighborhood Health Services' funding application for Permanent Supportive Housing, both commissioners requested that YNHS provide data on their success rate specific to Yakima County instead of nationwide. Also, although this is an understood policy, both commissioners requested that all grant award contracts contain specific language that any shelter and housing facilities be strictly drug- and alcohol-free zones.

Melissa was directed to contact Grace City Outreach for the required financial documents that were due in March 2022. She was also directed to reach out to Rod's House to make sure the financial documents in their application are the most up-to-date possible. The commissioners thanked the Human Services team and the scoring committee for all their hard work on this RFP.

#### 6. COMMISSIONER UPDATES/ GENERAL DISCUSSION

None.

#### 7. ADJOURN

Commissioner Anderson MOTION: To Adjourn

Commissioner McKinney SECOND

(Commissioner Linde was absent.)

Motion Passes to Adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

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>.

APPROVED DATE

DATE/Minutes