



BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting
Work Session

Monday, June 13, 2022, at 9:00 am
BOCC Conference Room, Room 232, 128 N 2nd Street, Yakima, WA 98901 or Zoom

6/13/2022 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Called to Order at 9:02 a.m.

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

3. COWICHE SEWER DISTRICT APPOINTMENT DISCUSSION (15 Minutes)

Don Anderson summarized the situation with the Cowiche Sewer District for Commissioner Linde, who had been absent during the previous Friday's work session. He recommended the Board appoint one individual to the sewer district board, working under the belief that Joe Trepanier never officially resigned.

Commissioner McKinney restated her intention to reach out to Tieton Mayor, Dewane Ashbrooks, noting that he had previously contacted her with his concerns about the situation. She added that he did not want the Cowiche Sewer District to be absorbed by Tieton. The Board directed Julie Lawrence to publish an advertisement for one open position with the sewer district. The ad will run for the standard two weeks to see if there are any other interested parties besides the two individuals already recommended to the Board.

4. TECHNOLOGY SERVICES UPDATE (30 Minutes)

Dale Panattoni updated the Board that he is in the process of resurrecting the Information Technology Committee and hopes to hold the first meeting in July or August of this year. He has already selected a number of County staff, but is still looking for someone in the private sector.

Dale went on to report that he has filled a number of the job openings in Technology Services, but with anticipated budget restraints in mind, he's holding off on filling the few remaining positions to assess whether or not they're essential. He's also asked everyone to refrain from working from home more than two days a week; most staff have returned full-time, and only one person has been utilizing the full two days at home. Daily morning meetings have increased team connection and communication.

Dale's primary focus over the last month has been analyzing and adjusting the budget, and he thanked Craig Warner and Stephanie Truex in Financial Services for all their help and expertise along the way.

Looking ahead, Dale stated that he's currently researching different ticketing systems for next year that

would provide better data reports on how many help tickets are being addressed by their due date. He's also been looking into clarifying ILA's with the different departments so that they're more consistent and straightforward.

Additionally, Dale has been developing a 5-year life cycle plan for computers, printers, and monitors that would allow TS to keep the technology in all departments up-to-date. TS would be able to plan ahead, buy technology in bulk for a better price, and prevent delays caused by supply chain issues. Assuming all departments are already budgeting for technology, this may not affect the budget at all. Dale has also been investigating the possibility of bringing all departments together onto one uniform cell phone plan, as well as standardizing cameras, printers, and copiers, so that all technology is consistent and easier to service.

5. HUMAN SERVICES (60 Minutes)

Commissioner McKinney reiterated her desire for contract language stating that service providers must ensure that all other shelter/housing routes have been exhausted before handing out hotel/motel vouchers, except in cases of documented domestic violence. Lance Larsen confirmed that he is working with corporate counsel to add this language, as well as the language requiring that all service providers maintain strictly drug- and alcohol-free shelter/housing environments. Esther Magasis added that all requested financial documents from Friday's work session have since been submitted by Grace City Outreach and Rod's House.

The Commissioners agreed not to fund the proposed "hygiene station" project, as those services are already available at other programs and shelters, with parameters (such as no drugs or alcohol).

Commissioner McKinney mentioned again the article she read on how hygiene programs in larger cities are not proving effective at bringing about lasting change in lifestyle or situation.

Melissa Holm outlined data from Yakima Neighborhood Health Services' medical respite program. 199 COVID-19 patients each stayed for an average of 9 nights, totaling 1,799 nights altogether. 96 non-COVID-19 patients each stayed for an average of 12 nights, totaling 1,114 nights altogether. 50% of people served were admitted for SUD, abscess, infections, cellulitis, and wound care. Commissioner McKinney asked if it would be possible to find out, still adhering to HIPAA guidelines so that all patients remain anonymous, how many of these conditions developed due to drug use, which is a common cause. She felt it's important to have a clear understanding of how much continued drug use and addiction impacts the medical system and taxpayers through the funding of these programs, not for the purpose of removing services, but in order to ensure that the root causes are being addressed. Melissa said she would reach out to YNHS, but they would likely need that data from the Memorial Hospital. She confirmed that she would try to add that as a data point going forward.

Melissa noted that not all service providers are sub-grantees of Yakima County, and thus not all of them are required to utilize HMIS for reporting. Commissioner McKinney asked Esther to work with corporate counsel to ascertain whether the County could require in its contracts that service providers use HMIS reporting for all their programs, even those not funding through the County. Esther noted that the difficulty with that course of action is that not all their programs are related to homelessness, and HMIS only tracks certain data points. Lance added that he would reach out to the Washington State Department of Commerce, which "holds the keys" to HMIS. Esther followed up by sharing how HMIS helps prevent duplication of services, and regular Coordinated Entry Committee meetings help coordinate services between providers so that clients don't fall through the cracks.

Regarding permanent supportive housing, Melissa shared that in 2021, 74 households were served, of which 36 were newly enrolled and 38 were continuing from previous years. Of the total households, 32 exited to other housing, 2 experienced deaths, and 9 returned to homelessness. Commissioner McKinney asked if it would be feasible to continue to track success over a 5-year period. Melissa noted that it isn't always easy to keep in contact with clients over that length of time. On a similar note, she added that she's working on a data agreement with the Yakima Police Department to better communicate who has received or is receiving services. Commissioner McKinney agreed that sharing this data should be made as convenient as possible for both parties.

Finally, Esther walked the Board through the process of awarding grants to the various applicants under each funding category. For "Shelter/Sanctioned Encampment", the Commissioners decided to fully fund the request from Generating Hope for the Noah's Ark Homeless Shelter, as it is the only shelter in the Lower Valley. The funding requested by the other applicants was reduced by an equal percentage in order to align with the remaining budget. For "Domestic Violence Shelter", the Board agreed to fully fund the YWCA program. For "Extreme Winter Weather Shelter", the Board agreed to fully fund the request from Rod's House because of the young adult component, and split the remaining funds equally between the other two applicants. For "Capital Project", the Board agreed to fully fund both project requests, using leftover funds from the Domestic Violence category.

For "Youth and Young Adults Shelter" the Board agreed to fully fund both project requests, using additional leftover funds from the 2163 Fund Type, and pulling slightly from the YNHS Capital Project for overages, as that project would have additional avenues open to them for securing funding (as opposed to Rod's House). For "Coordinated Entry (Adults)", the Board agreed to fully fund Farm Workers Clinic and award the remaining funds YNHS (again, because of other funding avenues). For "Coordinated Entry (Young Adults)", the Board agreed to fully fund Rod's House instead of YNHS (again, because of other funding avenues). For "Outreach", the Board agreed to fully fund Generating Hope, Rod's House, and Yakima Union Gospel Mission, and then split the rest of the funding between YNHS and Grace City Outreach. They also agreed to use the funds from the "One-Year Outreach Project" that they did not want to fund (the hygiene station) and add those one-year funds to YNHS and Grace City Outreach.

For "Rental Assistance", "Housing and Essential Needs", and "Permanent Supportive Housing", the Board agreed to fully fund each request and return any extra money to the State. The one exception was for Justice Housing Yakima, which was not eligible for funding (as discussed at Friday's work session).

Esther confirmed that she would send out award letters, process the contracts, send them to corporate counsel, and bring them back for the Board's approval. The Board thanked Esther and the Human Services team for all their hard work.

6. COMMISSIONER UPDATES/ GENERAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners gave updates on individual committee/board assignments for the week of June 6, 2022- June 10, 2022.

7. ADJOURN

Commissioner Anderson MOTION: To Adjourn

Commissioner Linde SECOND

Motion Passes to Adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 10:53 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