



**BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Regular Meeting

Work Session

Monday, January 9, 2023, at 9:00 am

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

1/9/2023 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Called to Order at 9:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Chair LaDon Linde, Commissioner Amanda McKinney, Commissioner Kyle Curtis, Legal Counsel Don Anderson, Clerk of the Board Julie Lawrence, Deputy Clerk of the Board Erin Franklin, Facilities Director Brian Griff, Environmental Services Director David Haws, Solid Waste Manager Karma Suchan, Senior Project Planner Julia Loudon, Zoning/Subdivision Planning Manager Jason Earles, Long Range Planning Manager Noelle Madera, and guests.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment Received.

3. FACILITIES SERVICES (15 Minutes)

Brian Griff gave a brief overview of Facilities' Capital Projects in 2022, and then went on to discuss the details of the recent Juvenile Justice boiler installation. Four boilers were installed for plant heat, and two for domestic water, with the addition of more isolation valves and emergency shut-offs. Staff completed this project internally, saving the County about \$100,000 and likely saving even more on future gas bills due to the newer, more efficient system. Brian also shared a few pictures of the project. The Commissioners expressed their thanks to the Facilities team for putting their skills to work, saving taxpayer dollars, and improving County facilities.

4. PUBLIC SERVICES (45 Minutes)

1. David Haws and Karma Suchan discussed consultant findings from the latest Solid Waste Management Plan update and rate study. Karma stated that the key issues include: impacts on Capital Projects from new legislation, fees needed to cover costs of the landfill/transfer stations, inflation, lower staff pay and understaffing issues compared to other counties, other capital projects (such as anticipated expansions to the Terrace Heights and Cheyne transfer stations over the next 5-6 years), and meeting funding requirements for landfills (closure/post-closure costs). She noted that Yakima County currently has the lowest garbage tonnage rates in the state, and will need to increase these slightly: the consulting firm suggested a \$6 increase for 2023, plus additional \$2 increases in 2025 and 2027.

In response to Commissioner Curtis' question, Karma explained that Solid Waste has purposefully tried to keep rates low in the past, but that may have been shortsighted, both in terms of accumulating adequate funding, and in terms of discouraging people from other counties from taking advantage of dumping their garbage here at a cheaper rate. While staff tries to prevent people from dumping out-of-county, there is not always adequate staffing to thoroughly and expediently check everyone's address. The Board agreed that they would like to explore potential solutions for this problem; Commissioner McKinney suggested having customers sign up for a digital or hard copy pass, perhaps with a QR code, in order to save time.

Commissioner Linde asked Karma about the potential of selling gas from the landfill commercially. She responded that hopefully when the new collection system comes through, there might be more interest; however, due to our climate, we are not high-producing or even the best quality producers.

Karma further shared examples of inflation for equipment and fuel, and stated that although wages are set to increase for 2023, Solid Waste is still understaffed for now, processing far more garbage per employee than other counties. She noted that Solid Waste also wants to encourage curbside collection, which is cheaper and better for the environment. Commissioners McKinney and Curtis noted that increasing garbage tonnage rates might help with that goal, and suggested looking into what other counties have done. Commissioner Linde asked about the potential of burning garbage as opposed to burying it, noting that in Europe, it's used to produce power. Karma responded that Spokane County does, and King County is considering it. However, incinerators are expensive to maintain, so it can drive prices up. However, hopefully costs will go down in the future as technology improves.

Commissioner McKinney requested that David and Karma look into some of the solutions discussed, and that the Board revisit the matter at a future work session by the second quarter. She also noted that the wage increases Karma had alluded to earlier were not reflected in today's proposal, and were suggested by a different independent contractor than was used for the County's pay study. In response to Commissioner Linde's question, David stated that he emailed the proposed tonnage rate increases to the Board for further review; Karma noted that Solid Waste is required to give commercial haulers 75 days' notice of any rate changes.

2. Julia Loudon, Jason Earles, and Noelle Madera were present to discuss a long plat application for a 22-lot subdivision, under the project name of Golden Ridge Phase 1 (LSP2022-00002/SEP2022-00020). Golden Ridge Phase 2 has also been proposed on the adjacent lot, within Yakima city limits. Most of the surrounding properties are in the County's single-family residential (R-1) zoning district. The Washington State Department of Ecology provided comment regarding water quality, toxics clean up, and water resources. The City of Yakima provided comment regarding Coolidge Road improvements, required permits for work within City right-of-way, and keeping internal improvements consistent with Golden Ridge Phase 2. The project is determined to be compliant with the Yakima County Comprehensive Plan (Horizon 2040), Yakima County Code Title 19, and the Master Interlocal Agreement for Growth Management Act Implementation in Yakima County. County Staff and the Hearing Examiner both recommend approval, subject to conditions.

Two special issues include the proposed annexation of Golden Ridge Phase 1 into the City of Yakima (possibly due to the sewer lines), and the proposal of a private road. The Board stated that they would like to know more about potential revenue loss resulting from annexation, and about the possibility of de-annexing Golden Ridge Phase 2 instead. They also asked for more information on the parameters for private roads, and potentially modifying County Code to remove the 16-home limit if that number is simply arbitrary. Noelle Madera was directed to look into these matters before scheduling a closed record hearing with the Board.

#### 5. COMMISSIONER UPDATES/ GENERAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners gave updates on individual committee/board assignments for the week of January 2, 2023-January 6, 2023.

#### 6. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Curtis asked about the upcoming EFSEC hearing on Wednesday, January 11th. Commissioner McKinney stated that she has been providing comment and will continue to do so, including at the hearing along with staff. The County's main points of concern are that 1) fire issues have not been resolved, despite EFSEC's assertions, and 2) these individual solar projects do not seem to truly meet the requirements to qualify as "major" energy facilities, such as the Grand Coulee Dam. She also stated that the County will probably need to extend its solar facility moratorium again to give more time for County Code to be amended via ordinance; she hopes to get an update from staff next week. Commissioner Linde commented that "green energy" can no longer be considered green if it does not properly plan for fire prevention and protection.

#### 7. ADJOURN

Commissioner Curtis MOTION: To Adjourn

Commissioner McKinney SECOND

Motion Passes to Adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 10:15 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

JAN 24 2023

BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

*LaDon Linde*

---

LaDon Linde, Chair

*Amanda McKinney*

---

Amanda McKinney, Commissioner

*Kyle Curtis*

---

Kyle Curtis, Commissioner

*Constituting the Board of County Commissioners  
for Yakima County, Washington*

